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TORONTO

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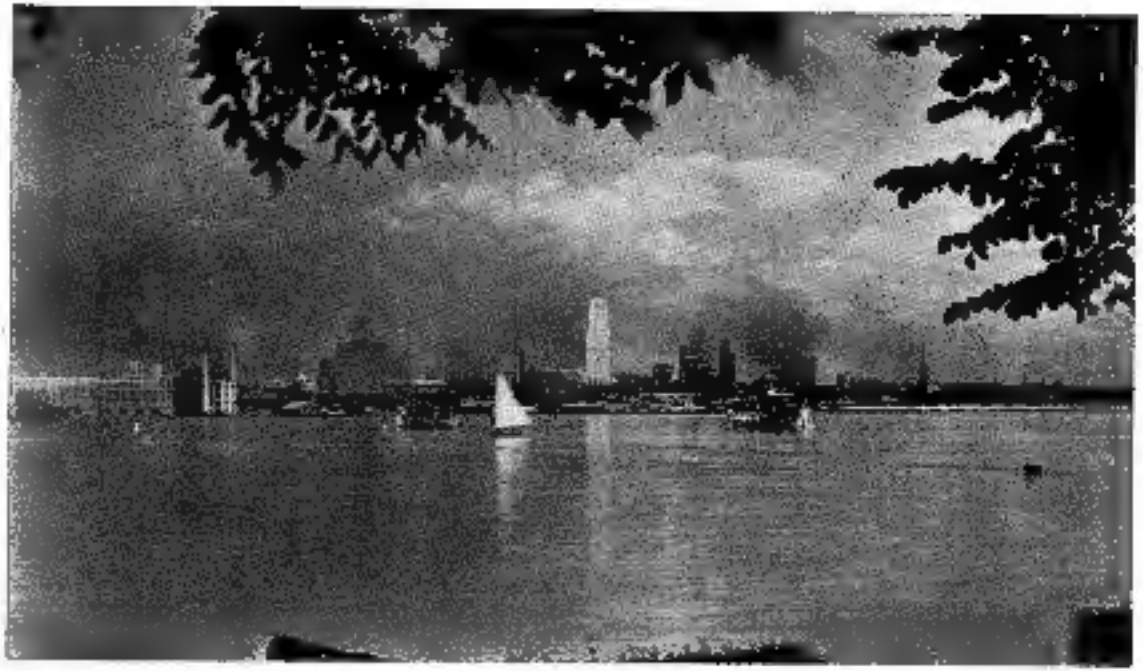

TORONTO FROM THE ISLAND

TORONTO
FROM
TRADING POST TO GREAT CITY

By

EDWIN C. GUILLET, M.A.

Author of "Early Life in Upper Canada."

With 167 Illustrations
selected and arranged by the Author.

"I never saw a more beautiful, pleasant place in all my life than Little York is."

—*Letter of Sophia Hill, 1833.*

TORONTO:
THE ONTARIO PUBLISHING CO., LIMITED
1934

TORONTO FROM THE ISLAND

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To

A. H. U. COLQUHOUN, B.A., LL.D.

Deputy Minister of Education,
Ontario.

FOREWORD

By Colonel the Honourable Herbert A. Bruce,
R.A.M.C., M.D., L.R.C.P. Lond., F.R.C.S. Eng., F.A.C.S., LL.D.
Emeritus Professor of Surgery, University of Toronto.
Member, Board of Governors, University of Toronto.
Knight of Grace of the Order of St. John.
Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario.

In the year 1842 Charles Dickens described Toronto as a city "full of life and motion, bustle, business and improvement," and it is the measure of Mr. Edwin Guillet's accomplishment as a historian that he has succeeded in reproducing not merely the life of the past but its liveliness, and has set in motion not the all too customary marionettes of history books, conveniently labelled and dated for students, but the living, breathing men and women who laboured and fought, played games and danced, hunted and fished, skated and rode in sleighs, quarrelled and made friends, voted at elections, cooked meals, attended concerts, built schools, endowed churches, opened stores, and by strenuous faith built a great city.

For over one hundred years the site on which Toronto stands has been a stage trodden by the feet of generations, —a stage across which has marched an unbroken succession of men and women in search of a new life in a new country. As the years pass and the drama is unfolded, with interludes of frank comedy, the stage becomes larger, more crowded. There are many entrances and exits; the actors are forever changing. And because of the indefatigable energy of the community of people who form its *dramatis personæ*, the very scene of all this activity appears to change, although it is but the erection and substitution of new "properties" necessitated by the swift growth of the hamlet, the town, the city, by the inflowing tide of immigrants, by commercial development, and by all those exigencies of unpredictable circumstance of which these pages are so moving a record.

The skill with which the author has extracted from historical sources the quinteessential facts, that succession

of events which gives body and texture and form to this history, will be all the more adequately appreciated by the reader, who is also the privileged spectator of these events, when he glances at the bibliography which is an informing appendix of this book. For it is a tribute not only to his industry in historical research, but indubitable testimony also to his merit as a historian that Mr. Guillet has sought to write not an easy, romantically coloured narrative which is plausible and ingratiating because it has a certain historic verisimilitude, but he has succeeded in the far more difficult task of presenting an authentic and authoritative marshalling of facts. The result is that once again truth proves to be more interesting than fiction. Far from depriving his story of that glamour which a free use of the imagination is commonly supposed to give, the fidelity with which the author mirrors Toronto's past invests his work, as the reader will see, with an urgency, a freshness, an inevitability of cause and effect which make it a vital record of millions of British subjects who, at one time or another, have made the city of Toronto their home.

Therein lies the considerable feat which Mr. Guillet has accomplished. For it is given to but few historians, and they only the best, to recapture and preserve between the covers of a book the men and women of the past without, in the process, crushing the very breath of life out of them. Without that life they would appear to the reader as but a dull catalogue of names and descriptions, a number of wooden automatons dusty with age, colourless, and motivated by nothing more than the ascertained facts of history.

I congratulate the author, therefore, upon the success with which he has unearthed a dead past and presented it to us as a living spectacle. By so doing he has made not only an extremely valuable contribution to Canadian history, but he has produced a book of extraordinary interest.

Innkeepers and taverns; fire brigades and military garrisons; merchants; the coming and going of canoes and sailing-ships, schooners and steamships in the harbour; sidewalks and bridges and ferries; the old town pump, and the Island when it was still a peninsula; Orangemen and immigrants; soap and candle factories; horse-drawn boats and street cars; squatters and Indians; schools and forts

and blockhouses; pioneers and the streams that were often their only roads—the story of these is told in these pages. It is the story of more than a century, during which Toronto came into being and attained its present stature in this the one-hundredth year of its incorporation.

Finally, as a visual aid to the imagination of all those who in these pages will relive the past, there are nearly two hundred illustrations. They are most happily chosen. Looking at them, the reader is afforded those glimpses of the past which illuminate and are in turn illuminated by the author's written account of persons and places and incidents of old. No verbal or written description, of course, can hope to rival in precision and compactness the presentation of the past in pictorial form—whether that form be etching, drawing or contemporary photograph. And it was doubtless the consciousness of this that led Mr. Guillet to make his story even more graphic by the inclusion of illustrations which alone and in themselves constitute a historical record of great value and absorbing interest. Outstanding among them are a large number from a publication of an earlier generation—the *Canadian Illustrated News*. As a result of research into the dusty pages of these rare volumes the author has been able to include fascinating sketches of those elements of city life which were so seldom recorded in pictorial form prior to the days of photography and the motion picture. Grand balls, soirées and receptions, partisan processions, riots and notable conflagrations are here depicted with remarkable fidelity, and they are reproduced in this volume for the first time.

I cordially invite the reader to raise the curtain and gaze upon "the swelling scene".

PREFACE AND INTRODUCTION

The recording of local historical material is a field which the enthusiast has largely to himself, for the professional historian, though in general a more highly-trained research worker, does not often delve deeply into local history. While such records may properly be considered as the basis of national history there is a disposition in some quarters to regard them as trivial, and perhaps at times they are. But a nation is a collection of cities, towns and villages plus a great mass of rural inhabitants, and the development of any one district is perforce a cross-section of life as a whole; to which may be added in connection with Toronto that it has for more than a century been the capital as well as the most important city of Ontario, and its history is consequently something greater than merely an example of town life. Several million people have at one time or another lived in Toronto or have been closely connected with the city in political, economic or social relations, and more Canadian citizens are familiar with it than with any other city in the Dominion.

Toronto is fortunate in having had among its inhabitants a very considerable number of men for whom the collection and compilation of records was a hobby in which they persisted with unlimited enthusiasm; and though in that connection one thinks immediately of the Rev. Henry Scadding and John Ross Robertson, whose records of the past are the most extensive and valuable, yet there have been many others, among whom the editors of newspapers, directories, guidebooks, and other publications of the kind are in the front rank. Those, too, who, in an official capacity or otherwise, have been careful to preserve manuscripts, handbills, pamphlets and other fugitive material deserve the thanks of subsequent generations. In spite, however, of the large amount of historical information available, there are many subjects in which our knowledge is deficient, and in almost every instance the work of combining the present material into co-ordinate relation has been most difficult, a fact borne out by the mere recital of the numerous sources.

The files of newspapers, when such exist, form the backbone of local history. Many modern publications elaborate upon lurid and sensational news items, but early newspapers, while containing a large amount of foreign news from two to five months old, often ignored local events which would now be featured in headlines. They did, however, contain market reports and merchants' "announcements", and they usually recorded in great detail the most important social events—such as the celebrations accompanying the visits of royalty and other distinguished personages, the parades and festivities connected with the Firemen's organisations, the National Societies and other lodges, and the proceedings upon the occasion of the inauguration of important public buildings. From these accounts and from other obscure sources the writer has drawn a large amount of fascinating material, almost all of which has never been available before; and much new matter has similarly been obtained from early travel literature and from unprinted records of the City Council and the various departments connected therewith. The printed sources are in almost every instance scarce if not rare. As also applied in connection with the compilation of *Early Life in Upper Canada*, it has been an important part of the plan of this book to quote copiously from the original sources. This is undoubtedly valuable in itself, and at the same time reproduces material compiled by the enthusiasm of earlier writers whose works, if printed at all, are all but inaccessible to the general reader; and while acknowledging our debt of gratitude by citing their work, we at the same time frequently add life and romance to subjects not inherently vivid. Though in many instances quoted material could be greatly improved from a literary point of view, no change has been made in any of it except in the matter of paragraphing and punctuation, which has been modernised where necessary. A considerable number of errors in earlier publications have been discovered, but it is not claimed that none will be found in the present work; for, since many of the sources of information used by former writers have long since disappeared, there is in most instances no means of checking the material, and we are forced either to take it or leave it.

In presenting this volume to the citizens of Toronto the author wishes to express his indebtedness to some two hundred earlier writers whom he quotes, and whose labours have so enriched our city's heritage of the past. Yet, although much has been written, the historical material hitherto published has in general been arranged in chronological, topographical or biographical divisions, and but little effort has been made to assemble all available information in a topical arrangement. It is intended in this volume, consequently, to present—insofar as the scattered and often meagre records will allow—comprehensive accounts of some of the more important aspects of the development of the city, and, in other chapters, to describe in some detail the social, educational, cultural and religious life of its inhabitants; and as it is the first work in which an extensive bibliography and detailed references have been provided, readers and research workers will be able to locate the sources with a minimum of effort.

During the preparation of the work many persons have co-operated in providing material or in offering suggestions concerning subjects upon which they are recognised authorities. Colonel the Honourable Herbert A. Bruce, Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario, has kindly written a foreword for the book, and others to whom the author is indebted for courteous assistance are Dr. George Locke, Miss Staton, Miss Smith and staff of the Toronto Public Library; Mr. Arthur Wilgress, Miss King and staff of the Legislative Library of Ontario; Mr. T. A. Reed; Dr. A. H. Young; Mr. James W. Somers, City Clerk; Mr. R. C. Harris, Commissioner of Works; Mr. V. M. Roberts, Librarian of the Toronto Harbour Commission; Mr. D. W. Harvey, General Manager of the Toronto Transportation Commission; Mr. Edward J. Tucker, Assistant General Manager and Secretary of the Consumers' Gas Company; and Mr. M. C. Powell, Chief Statistician of the Toronto Hydro-Electric System. A number of individuals and corporations have permitted the reproduction of illustrations, and in each case they are so credited where they appear. The Public Library, particularly, has afforded every facility for the use for that purpose of the John Ross Robertson Collection and of rare items of Canadiana. My wife has again aided in

compiling the index and seeing the book through the press, and the publishers, engravers and printers have co-operated fully in its technical production; Mr. T. Wilbur Best, in particular, has contributed greatly to the volume, not only as its publisher but by suggestion and enthusiasm arising from his well-known interest in Canadiana.

As for the book itself it is based upon the same general plan as *Early Life in Upper Canada*, which met with the approval of the critics and the general public: the annotations and references in each chapter are independent of all others, and the bibliography and index have been similarly compiled. Since extensive treatment was given so recently to the American occupation of York and to Toronto's part in the Mackenzie Rebellion these subjects are not repeated in detail in the present work. Much miscellaneous material, it may be of value to point out, has been included within the confines of the first and last chapters, the contents of which alone are of a somewhat general nature. The illustrations, many of which have never been reproduced before, are largely contemporary with the scenes portrayed, or have been faithfully drawn from the most accurate plans and descriptions available. The attempt has been made to produce a work comprehensive without being in any sense exhaustive; to be informative and accurate in statistical facts, but at the same time to elaborate upon material with strong human interest; to record the activities of the poor and humble as well as the life of citizens in high places; and to catch something of that public spirit and initiative which has always characterised the inhabitants of Toronto, and which, in the face of natural obstacles by no means small, has resulted in the great developments of the past century and a half.

E. C. GUILLET,
Toronto, May, 1934.

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TORONTO
FROM TRADING POST TO GREAT CITY

CHAPTER I

Two Centuries of Progress

When the first explorers visited the interior of America they followed the great waterways which had for centuries been the highway of the Indian. Well-defined portage trails supplemented river and lake where it was necessary to avoid waterfalls or make a short-cut between river systems, and one of the most noted of these was the Humber-Holland portage or, as it was long called, "the Carrying-Place of Toronto". After the middle of the seventeenth century the portage was largely an Iroquois route, but its earliest use by a European appears to have been in 1615 when Etienne Brûlé passed southward from Lake Simcoe on a recruiting expedition for Champlain and his Huron allies. In after years, when the fur trade with French, Dutch and English posts developed on a large scale, le *passage de Toronto* was extensively used by Indian and trader, explorer and *voyageur*, and was coveted by each nationality. The site of Toronto was for over one hundred years, therefore, characterised chiefly by traffic with the Indians—particularly in liquor.

The appellation "Toronto", which was variously spelled, was probably first applied to Matchedash Bay, later to Lake Simcoe and, through faulty maps, to the Trent System generally, and finally to the district of which the trading post near the mouth of the Humber was the commercial outlet. Authorities do not agree upon the derivation of the name, but the Indian equivalent of "place of meeting" is most generally accepted, both from their traditional employment of the peninsula (now the island) for that purpose, and from circumstances of the same nature arising from the continual use of portage and post by Indians and traders; it is quite probable, indeed, that the more general suggestion of "carrying-place" better suits the name's significance.

There is some evidence that a French trader was located near the Seneca village Teiaiagon ("a crossing") as early

as 1668, and Joliet's map of 1673 marks the village's site as upon the east bank of the Humber near its mouth—its exact location was undoubtedly the district now called Baby Point. Again about 1720 a trading post, the *Magasin Royal*, was established by Sieur Douville. It is thought to have been at Teinaigon, and was in successful operation for some ten years. Further official recognition of the importance of the district as a centre of Indian trade arose from the fact that British merchants at Chouéguen (Oswego) were attracting much of the commerce which had formerly passed to Detroit, Niagara and eastern posts; it was therefore considered advisable by the French Government to establish a palisaded fort at a point which would protect the harbour as well as the trade route. The first fort which resulted from correspondence between the officials in Canada and the French Colonial Minister, Rouillé, was a small structure mounting four guns, erected in the summer of 1750, on the east bank near the mouth of the Humber; and it was succeeded in 1751 by a more elaborate fortification comprising several buildings, but located some two miles eastward, at the foot of the present Dufferin Street.

Though never a first-class trading post, Fort Rouillé, or Toronto, as it was more commonly called, carried on an annual trade of some 36,000 *livres* ($6,833), and its staff in 1754 numbered an officer, five soldiers, two sergeants and a storekeeper. During the early part of the Seven Years' War it was frequently in danger of attack by the British, and in 1759 the French burned the post to prevent its capture. The remains of the works were distinguishable for over a century, but in modern times the encroachments of the lake wore away portions of the site.[2] In 1878 the ground was levelled and a pillar erected to mark the spot.

The change of ownership of the land did not end trading

[1] The most notable researches into the history of the Toronto Carrying-Place have been made by Mr. Percy Robinson, who published in 1934 an exhaustive and scholarly work, *Toronto during the French Régime, 1615-1793*. This volume contains so much that is new that it entirely supersedes all partial accounts hitherto available.

[2] A summary of the correspondence relating to the establishment of these posts, as well as travellers' references to Fort Toronto or its ruins, may be found in E. C. Guillet: *Early Life in Upper Canada*, 1933, pp. 80 et seq. The documents are in the Public Archives of Canada, Correspondance Générale, Volumes 91, 93, 95 and 97.

activities at Toronto. Almost immediately after the destruction of the fort several independent traders were established near the mouth of the Humber. One of these, Jean Baptiste Rousseau, commonly called St. John, had a post on the east side of the mouth of the river, which was on that account long called St. John's Creek. In the early seventeen-sixties at least two others—Messrs. Baby and Knaggs—were debauching the Indians by the rum trade, and in 1763 British troops under General Gage seized Knaggs and his supplies. Among the most interesting descriptions of a journey across the Toronto Carrying-Place is that of the famous fur-trader, Alexander Henry, who tramped over the portage in 1764 while virtually a prisoner of the Indians. After a short stop on the north shore of Lac aux Claies (Simcoe), the expedition continued southwards:

"On the 18th of June we crossed Lake aux Claies, which appeared to be upward of twenty miles in length. At its further end we came to the Carrying-Place of Toronto. Here the Indians obliged me to carry a burden of more than a hundred pounds' weight. The day was very hot, and the woods and marshes abounded with mosquitoes; but the Indians walked at a quick pace, and I could by no means see myself left behind. The whole country was a thick forest, through which our only road was a foot-path, or such as, in America, is exclusively termed an Indian path. Next morning at ten o'clock we reached the shore of Lake Ontario. Here we were employed two days in making canoes out of the bark of the elm tree, in which we were to transport ourselves to Niagara. . . . On the 21st we embarked at Toronto, and encamped, in the evening, four miles short of Fort Niagara, which the Indians would not approach till morning."[3]

In 1787 the British Government recognised the importance of the trade route by buying a considerable amount of the land from the ruins of Rouillé northward, the tract being the second district in Upper Canada to be purchased from the Indians, though the sale was not entirely completed when the first palaver was held at the Carrying Place, Bay of Quinté. On August 1, 1805, a second meeting with the Indians took place on the Credit River, when

[3]Alexander Henry: *Travels and Adventures in Canada and the Indian Territories, 1760-76.* 1807, pp. 179-80.

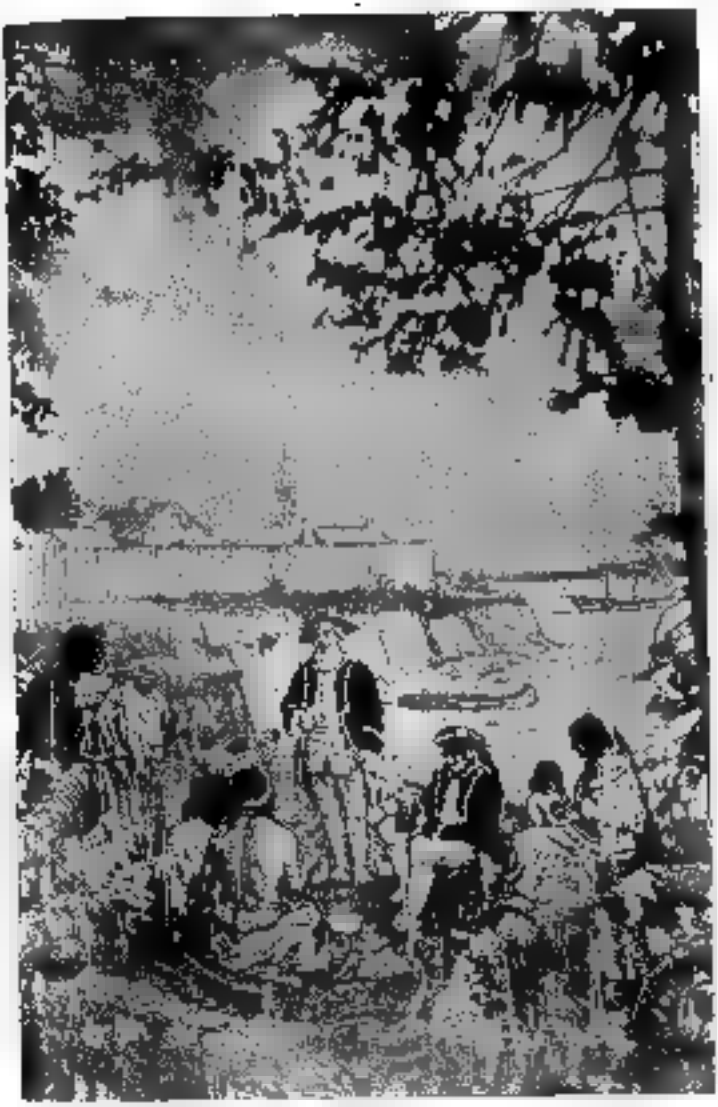
250,608 acres, made up largely of York, Etobicoke, Vaughan and King Townships, was transferred to British control for £1,700 sterling in cash and goods.

Some years prior to the creation of the Province of Upper Canada the British Government had decided to establish a town at Toronto. In 1788, in fact, a site was surveyed by Alexander Aitkin at the order of Lord Dorchester, and later in the same year Captain Gother Mann made similar investigations. Nothing resulted from these activities and plans at that time, but three years later Surveyor Augustus Jones was busy examining the same district. The first capital of the province, however, was Niagara (Newark), although Kingston desired the honour, and the Lieutenant-Governor himself would have preferred the present site of London when he learned that Fort Niagara, close by the infant capital, was in United States territory and about to be garrisoned by American troops. This choice of Simcoe's, "Georgina-upon-Thames", was made during his first tour of the Western District in February, 1793; but the Governor-General disallowed it, and Simcoe had to content himself with Dorchester's choice of Toronto—at first intended to be merely an arsenal.

When Surveyor Joseph Bouchette visited the Bay of Toronto in 1792 he noted that only two families of Indians dwelt in the dense forests which then covered the entire shore.* The wigwams in which these Mississaugas lived had probably been constructed many years earlier, and had been used by various Indians passing back and forth over the trade route; for there is no record of a permanent Indian settlement on the site of Toronto, though references to the Indian village Teiaiagon, mentioned previously, are found in accounts of travel written in the last quarter of the seventeenth century by such men as Hennepin and La Salle, both of whom visited the village on the Toronto River.

From Mrs. Simcoe's diary we obtain a knowledge of the Governor's arrival at Toronto, and of early life there, that was not available when Dr. Scadding wrote his *Toronto of Old*. On May 8, 1793, the Governor, accompanied by seven officers, made his first visit to Toronto, the expedition fol-

*J. Bouchette: *The British Dominions in North America*, 1831, Vol. I, p. 89 fn. Bouchette's survey is dated November 16, 1792.



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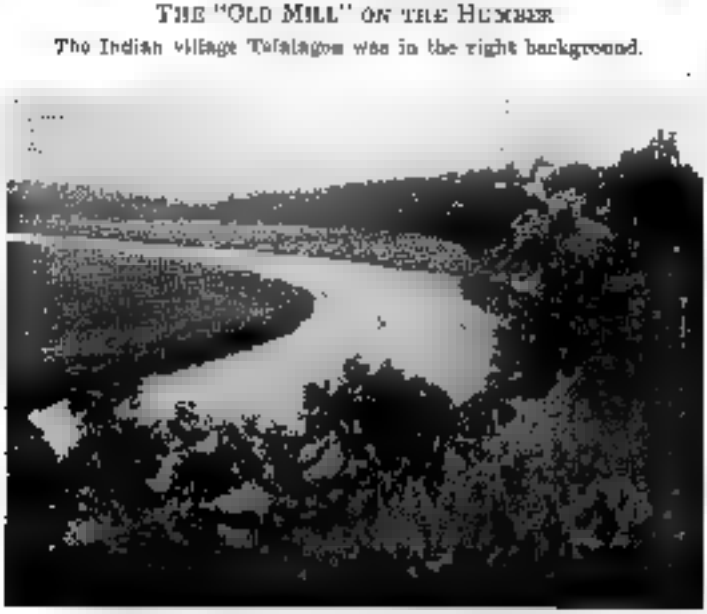
FORT ROUILLÉ, 1751-1759

This fort, at the foot of the present Dufferin Street, was the third French military post in the vicinity of Toronto.

THE "OLD MILL" ON THE HUMBER

The Indian village Teiaiagon was in the right background.



THE MOUTH OF THE HUMBER RIVER

In Indians days the River Tau-a-hon-ate; in the French Period the Toronto River; and in trader Rousseau's time called St. John's Creek. The Carrying-Place ended at the French fort (later the site of Rousseau's post), where now is situated the Silver Slipper Dance Hall.

lowing the shore line in a bateau around the head of Lake Ontario. Governor Simcoe was immediately impressed by the fine harbour, and set his men to work developing the site of the future capital. On May 18th Mrs. Simcoe wrote in her diary: "Colonel Simcoe returned from Toronto, and speaks in praise of the harbour, and a fine spot near it covered with large oaks, which he intends to fix on a site for a town."[1]

On July 29th Mrs. Simcoe sailed to Toronto on the sloop *Onondaga*, and the party camped in tents just east of the present Old Fort. While the soldiers were clearing away the trees and preparing the "canvas houses", the Governor's wife "went in a boat two miles to the bottom of the bay, and walked through a grove of oaks, where the town is intended to be built".[2] Soon after, Augustus Jones surveyed a series of lots on the shore of the lake from St. John's Creek (the Humber) eastward, leaving spaces for proposed roadways. In his notes he mentions "the Blacksmith's old house", which Dr. Scadding suggests was a forge near the ruins of Fort Rouillé where the Indians and traders had repaired their implements and guns.[3]

For the first few weeks after its establishment the town was known as Toronto; but on August 26th the Governor changed the name to York, and at noon the following day a salute was fired in commemoration of the change, which was made to honour the Duke of York who had won a notable victory over the French. Some people objected to Simcoe's policy of anglicising the place-names of Upper Canada: for instance, Isaac Weld, who travelled in Upper Canada in 1796, wrote: "It is to be lamented that the Indian names, so grand and sonorous, should ever have been changed for others. Newark, Kingston, York are poor substitutes for the original names of the respective places Niagara, Cataraqui, Toronto." Weld also mentions that before he arrived in Niagara "orders had been issued for the removal of the seat of government from Niagara to Toronto" (Weld would not use the new names!); and he

[1] *Diary of Mrs. John Graves Simcoe*, May 18, 1793.
[2] *Ibid.*, July 30, 1793.
[3] Henry Scadding: *History of the Old French Fort at Toronto, and its Monument*. 1887, p. 22.

says that "the projected change is by no means relished by the people at large".[3]

The first official plan of York harbour, drawn in 1793 by Alexander Aitkin, shows the townsite to the west of the Don, the proposed battery on Gibraltar (now Hanlan's) Point, and the barracks to the east of the present Exhibition grounds; this was very different from the plans in the survey of 1788. Simcoe tried to prevent York from becoming a straggling village by setting aside the entire waterfront of the western section of the Bay as a Garrison Reserve, and to his action we owe the availability of the land for the great Fair over three-quarters of a century later. Until modern times the Island was a peninsula, joined to the mainland at the foot of the present Woodbine Avenue. The small sandy connection was gradually weakened, and in 1858, when the waters of Lake Ontario broke through during the course of a heavy wind, the island was created.

Apart from the military works, no buildings were erected in York until 1794, when the first homes of officials were built. In Simcoe's time the boundaries of the town were George Street on the west, Ontario Street on the east, Duchess Street on the north, and Palace (Front) Street on the south. The main thoroughfare was King Street. Ontario Street appears to have followed the course of the trail leading to the canoe landing, where it was usual to carry small boats across the narrow neck of land between the lake and the bay. Palace Street was so called because of the plans to erect a residence for the Governor there, though the structure became the Parliament Buildings; and from 1797 to 1824 the seat of government was at the corner of Parliament (now Berkeley) and Palace Streets.

We owe to Mrs. Simcoe's artistic ability the only pictures of York before 1800, and from her diary we catch a glimpse of life there during the first years of the town.[4] She describes rides she took on the peninsula, and along the north shore of the lake "till we were impeded by large trees on the beach"; of rowing in "Mr. Grant's (the surveyor's) boat to the highlands of Toronto. They appeared so well that we

[3] Isaac Weld; *Travels through the States of North America*, 1799, p. 296.

[4] John Ross Robertson, the editor of Mrs. Simcoe's diary, reproduced most of her Canadian sketches.

talked of building a summer residence there and calling it Scarborough".[10] On another occasion she "walked two miles to the old French Fort, but there are no remains of any building there".[11] One day some Ojibway Indians "brought the Governor 'a beaver blanket to make his bed', as they expressed themselves; . . . . and invited him to visit their country".[12] On September 11, 1793, Mrs. Simcoe "rowed six miles up the Don to Coons', who had a farm under a hill covered with pine".[13] The diary contains a detailed account of the Governor's trips northward to Georgian Bay and westward to Detroit, expeditions which were made by canoe, or on sleds in winter.[14]

During the spring of 1794 Castle Frank, a combined summer residence and Government House, was built; it was a frame building, on the heights overlooking the Don Valley, just beyond the northern boundary of the present St. James' Cemetery. The location was very dear to the Simcoes, but after they left Canada the building was but little used, and in 1829 was burned by a fire left by careless fishermen.

The first bridge over the Don was known as Playter's because it was on land granted to Captain George Playter, an early Loyalist settler in York. The bridge was located at the foot of Winchester Street, and Mrs. Simcoe thus describes it: "I passed Playter's picturesque bridge over the Don; it is a butternut tree fallen across the river, the branches still growing full leaf. Mrs. Playter being timorous, a pole was fastened through the branches to hold by. Having attempted to pass it I was determined to proceed, but was frightened before I got half way."[15] Mrs. Simcoe had another adventure in June, 1796, when she and and her little daughter Sophia accompanied the Governor on a lake trip during a severe storm. They were proceeding east from Burlington in a canoe and were surprised how well their frail boat rode the waves; but Mrs. Simcoe felt much more at ease when they landed at the mouth of the

[10] *Diary*, August 4, 1793.
[11] *Ibid.*, August 5, 1793.
[12] *Ibid.*, August 9, 1793.
[13] *Ibid.*, September 11, 1793.
[14] *Ibid.*, September 26, 1793, *et seq.*
[15] *Ibid.*, July 6, 1796.

River Credit, where "numbers of Indians resort to fish for salmon".[16]

Governor Simcoe wished York to be a very English town, but under his *régime* it developed chiefly as a military establishment. The garrison of some 200 Queen's Rangers formed the great bulk of the population, and these men were set to work constructing buildings and opening up roads, especially Yonge and Dundas Streets. The fort of Simcoe's day was on the bay shore, with Garrison Creek on two sides of it. As will be described shortly, the military works were quite extensive; but none of them survived the American occupation of 1813, the present structures having been erected at various times after the close of the War of 1812.

Advertisements in Upper Canada's first newspaper give us some knowledge of the early development of York. In the Niagara *Upper Canada Gazette, or American Oracle* of July 10, 1794, appears the following: "Wanted—Carpenters for the public buildings to be erected at York. Applications to be made to John McGill, Esq., at York, or to Mr. Allan MacNab, at Navy Hall."[17] John Ogden visited York, "called by the natives Toronto", and observed the preparations: "A town is here in great forwardness, and should the seat of government be removed from Newark thence, as is contemplated, it will soon become a flourishing place".[18]

The first few years of the town were filled with activity, and the soldiers did the greater part of the work. A landing-pier and a canal or navigable opening into Garrison Creek was also being constructed, a warrant being signed by the Lieutenant-Governor authorising the Commissioner of Stores, Mr. McGill, "to supply from time to time from the Government stores such quantities of rum as may be required to be given to the men (Queen's Rangers) employed on the wharf and canal at York".[19]

[16]*Ibid.*, June 18, 1796.

[17]*Upper Canada Gazette*, July 10, 1794.

[18]John Ogden: *A Tour through Upper and Lower Canada*. 1799, pp. 100-2.

[19]Quoted in Henry Scadding: *Memoirs of Peter Dunsdee of York, Upper Canada*. 1884, p. 21.

From a report[20] concerning public property in Upper Canada, issued by the Hon. Peter Russell in 1799, we learn the extent of the first military works at York. A saw-mill had been erected on the Humber to supply boards and other materials. Round log huts were constructed in 1793 and 1794 as quarters for the Queen's Rangers, as well as a similar structure in the latter year for the commissary of stores. Canals, locks and wharves were built at the Garrison to aid in landing provisions and supplies safely, and to provide a shelter for the three bateaux. A bridge was also constructed there, and a roadway pushed westward as far as the Humber, presumably as part of Simcoe's projected highway, Dundas Street.

In 1795 a powder magazine of squared hemlock logs was erected, and the intervals between the log huts were gradually stockaded; a similar protection was raised in front of the huts on the Parade, and gates with locks and bars were put up. A large blockhouse barracks was also constructed and occupied by the soldiers, and a storehouse of two storeys for the Indian presents. The Hon. Peter Russell states that 40,000 bricks had been supplied at one time or another for the building of new barracks, chimneys and ovens.

Two one-storey brick buildings, originally intended as the wings of a residence for the Lieutenant-Governor, were erected in the town. They were each twenty-five feet by forty, and were about 100 feet apart. The houses in their rear were advanced to the front as guardhouses, and some of them were later incorporated into a sort of gallery or passageway between the brick wings; here it was that the sessions of the second parliament of Upper Canada were held, and the building served also as a court of justice.

In 1795 La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, a French duke, found about twelve houses in York, chiefly located along the Bay near the Don. One of these was the Scadding cottage, erected in 1796 on the east side of the Don; this is the York Pioneers' log house now located in Exhibition Park. The Duke shared in the love of his nation for the United States, and consequently grasped the opportunity to cast a slur on

[20] Report concerning public property in Upper Canada, 1799. This valuable document is in the Toronto Public Library.

William Berczy's settlers in Markham Township, who had in the previous year abandoned the Pulteney settlement across the lake, in the Genesee River district, and had come to Upper Canada. In describing York he says: "The inhabitants do not possess the fairest character. One of them is the noted Baty, the leader of the German families. . . . In a circumference of 150 miles the Indians are the only neighbours of York."[21] The reference was undoubtedly intended, therefore, to apply to the German settlers up Yonge Street, though it must be admitted that there were some inhabitants of York to whom it would have been more applicable.

When the Simcoes left York on the *Onondaga*, on July 21, 1796, Mrs. Simcoe felt so badly that she wept all day, for the town was about to take on a new importance as the capital of Upper Canada, the climax of the plans of the Lieutenant-Governor and his wife who had so thoroughly enjoyed themselves in the little garrison settlement in the wilds; they had been the founders of the town which was soon to be variously called "Little", "Muddy", or "Dirty" York.

One of the noted achievements of Governor Simcoe was the opening of Yonge Street to Lake Simcoe. The road had been commenced both by the Rangers and by Berczy's settlers in 1794, but it was not open for the whole distance until February 16, 1796. Augustus Jones was the surveyor in charge of this work, as of many other early surveys in Upper Canada. Simcoe's dream of a highway across the province from east to west was not realised until long after his death, though a start was made in 1793 on some sections of Dundas Street west of Burlington Bay.

After Simcoe's departure, Acting-Governor Russell wrote from Niagara to an official in York that, as the legislature would meet there on the 1st of June, "You will therefore be pleased to apprise the inhabitants of the town that twenty-five gentlemen will want board and lodgings during the session, which may possibly induce them to fit up their houses and lay in provisions to accommodate them".[22] The

[21] La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt: *Travels through the United States of North America*. 1799. Vol. I, p. 203. "Baty" is presumably a translator's error for "Berczy".

[22] Scadding, *Four Decades of York*, p. 28.

officials of the government sailed in the *Mohawk* for York, at the end of May, 1797. Perhaps they were not all taken care of satisfactorily, for a traveller who visited the town in 1798 described it as "a dreary dismal place, not even possessing the characteristics of a village. There is no church, schoolhouse, nor in fact any of the ordinary signs of civilisation. There is no inn; and those travellers who have no friends to go to, pitch a tent and live there while they remain".[11] It would appear, however, that Abner Miles' Inn was in operation at that time, but the accommodation was not extensive.

In 1797 York consisted of twelve city blocks immediately north of the Parliament Buildings, which were located close to the waterfront at the foot of Parliament (now Berkeley) Street. Six of these blocks were on the north and six on the south of the present King Street, and most of the street names were in honour of the Royal Family. At that time even Church Street was remote from the business district of York, while the present corner of King and Yonge Streets was not even a cross-road! Upper Yonge Street was approached by a trail along the route of the present Parliament Street, the section of Yonge Street below Yorkville having fallen into disuse soon after it was opened by Surveyor Jones. Hospital (Richmond) Street and Lot (Queen) Street were the usual routes by which one entered the town. Russell Abbey, the residence of the President of the Provisional Government of Upper Canada, was located at the corner of Palace and Princes (now Princess) Streets.

In the early years of the new century all the buildings in York were of wood except the parliament buildings and Quetton St. George's general store; and almost all were of log construction, though frame clap-board houses were occasionally found. John Ross Robertson states that St. George's brick store was erected in 1807, but, as in his reference to the government buildings' being of wood, he is mistaken in saying that the bricks brought by St. George from the United States were the first used in York. George Heriot states that the government (parliament) buildings

[11] Memoirs of Mrs. Brakenridge, daughter of Dr. W. W. Baldwin, quoted in William Canniff: *History of the Settlement of Upper Canada*, 1868, pp. 680-1.

were of brick, and if further proof is necessary it is supplied by the journal of David Thomson, the first settler in Scarboro Township. Thomson was employed as mason and brick-layer in York in 1797, and noted in his account book on July 26th that he began "to wall the government brick houses"; and he also stated that 53,500 bricks at 17s. 6d. per thousand were used, the cost totalling £46 16s. 2d. The government house, or residence for the lieutenant-governor, must not be confused with the parliament-house which in early times was always referred to as "the government buildings". Russell Abbey, where the Hon. Peter Russell lived—and died, was erected in 1798, and George Heriot considered that it was "sufficiently commodious for the present state of the province".[34]

The material development of York during the next few years was very gradual, but many events are of interest in that they form the very foundation stones of a great city. "Our Town of York", as the governors called it in their proclamations, remained a very small settlement for a quarter of a century. Officials, merchants and tradesmen gradually occupied the original townsite and spread westward along the shore towards the Garrison, but at no point did the straggling town extend northward more than a few hundred feet. Dr. Scadding describes the course of development as commencing at the government buildings, "the Westminster of the New Capital", and spreading along its "Strand" towards the fort: "Growing slowly westward it developed, in the customary American way, its hotel, its tavern, boarding-house, wagon factory, tinsmith shop, bakery, general store, its lawyer's office, printing office, and places of worship."[35]

In 1797 George Street was the western boundary of the town, but in June of that year, D. W. Smith drew up a *Plan for the Enlargement of York* by which Peter Street was the new boundary. For some years, however, comparatively few of the inhabitants lived west of George Street. A small wharf stood at the foot of Frederick

[34]George Heriot: *Travels through the Canadas*. 1807. p. 139. See also, in connection with the references in this paragraph, John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Canada: What Art has done for Canadian History*. 1917. p. 84. David Thomson's account book is quoted in David Boyle: *The Township of Scarboro*. 1896. p. 37.

[35]Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old*. 1873. p. 28.

Street, and above the beach, on an embankment some ten or fifteen feet high, was a path often used as a promenade. The shores of the Bay were in most parts well covered with a growth of small cedars, while the waters abounded with rushes and seaweeds. Mosquitoes were consequently very numerous, and the inhabitants of York were frequently stricken with intermittent fever carried by the mosquitoes and aggravated by the general dampness of the climate, which also led to severe colds, or agues as they were long called. At the mouth of the Don was an extensive marsh, and early plans of the town note that the inhabitants are permitted to cut the hay in these beautiful meadows.

Soon after York replaced Niagara as the capital the official publication of the government was transferred to the town. The original name of the newspaper was *The Upper Canada Gazette, or American Oracle*, and the first number to be printed in York appeared on October 4, 1798. Another result of the increased importance of York was that a post office was established there in 1799. The public mail was brought at infrequent intervals by couriers or other travellers on foot, horseback or in sailing-ship, though a purely governmental service by Schenectady boat began in the summer of 1794 and was carried on weekly during the season of navigation. The York postmaster appears to have had his share of troubles, and announces his resignation in 1801:

"To prevent disappointment and trouble, the public is requested to take notice that some time ago Mr. Willcocks resigned his place as Postmaster for York, his reasonable charges for the rent of an office, stationery, fire, candles, and a servant to attend being disputed; although by his assiduity and attention the revenue was productive beyond expectation, as appears by the accounts he rendered and the money he remitted to the Postmaster-General at Quebec."[28]

The inhabitants of York at the close of the century consisted largely of the garrison and the official class. In addition to the merchants and tradesmen to be found in any town, there were also a few members of the professions and a number of negroes, some of whom were

[28] *Upper Canada Gazette*, December 19, 1801.

slaves of the officials, while others had escaped from the United States. Among the earliest families to settle in or near York were the Denisons, Baldwins, Allans, Ketchums, Crookshanks and Playters; while the official class included Peter Russell, John McGill, John Small, Thomas Ridout, Captain Lippincott, William Jarvis and William Willcocks. One of the first lawyers in York was Dr. Baldwin, who added that profession to those of medicine and teaching, which presumably had not proven sufficiently remunerative. He was admitted to the bar in 1803, and carried on all his professions for some years. In 1800 Chief Justice Elmsley presided over the Court of King's Bench, and he was assisted by Mr. Justice Powell and Mr. Justice William Henry Alcock.

Many other aspects of early life in York are treated separately and need not be repeated here; but it may be said that in general the town was a mere police village in size, and it was for many years governed by the township meeting, supplemented in respect to the issuance of licences and the enforcement of law by the Court of General Quarter Sessions of the Home District, of which it was the only town. Some interesting details of activities in York may be obtained from the minutes of this court. The arbitrary appointment of citizens to the position of Constable, Collector of Taxes, Pathmaster, etc., was not always appreciated by the recipient of the office, and frequently was refused on conscientious or other grounds. In 1800, for example, Samuel Marther said "he would never serve the office of Constable", and Robert Willson also declined serving.* They were given two days to provide substitutes or pay the fine, which was usually £2. On one occasion an official benefitted financially by this system of compulsory public service and alternative fines. The Court records show that "in 1816 the Magistrates appointed John Murchison Town Clerk without consulting him. On his modestly pleading that he did not consider himself capable of holding that exalted office they fined him [illegible] for contempt and appointed Jonathan Cawthra instead. The latter, on refusing, was also fined £[illegible]. Then Jonathan Post was ap-

*Minutes of the Court of General Quarter Sessions, April 22, 1800. See *Report of the Archives of Ontario, 1932*, p. 5.

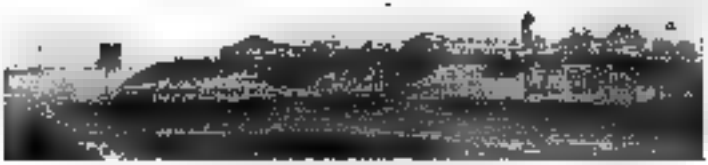
John Reid Robertson Collection. Mrs. John Graves Simcoe.

THE GARRISON AT YORK, 1796

Reproduced by courtesy of the Imperial Life Insurance Company. S. Varner.

THE OPENING OF THE SECOND PARLIAMENT OF UPPER CANADA, AT YORK, 1797

Toronto's first Parliament Buildings were small brick structures at the foot of Parliament (now Berkeley) Street.



John Ross Robertson Collection. James Hamilton.

OLD FORT, YORK, 1832

Until 1868 the only entrance to the harbour was from the west, and the fortifications were built to protect the approach to the town. The barracks and blockhouses may be seen in this illustration.

Reproduced by Courtesy of the Artist. J. D. Kelly.

THE BIRTH OF TORONTO'S WATERBORNE TRADE

For over a century the name Toronto applied to the Humber-Holland Carrying-Place, and the mouth of the Humber was a centre of the fur trade.

pointed and in turn fined £2 for refusing. Finally one Wm. Barber was called in and accepted. He got his reward in the next month by being allowed to keep the three fines in addition to his salary".[29]

A pound in which to place wandering hogs and other animals was early established in York. In 1800 the members of the Court ordered "that the Pound in the Town of York do contain the one-eighth of an acre, that it be a square of 52 feet each side, and that it be divided, for the present, into three Compartments".[30] Poundkeepers were entitled to receive the following fees for impounding animals:

For each horse	2s. 6d.
For each ox	2s.
For each pig or hog	1s.
For each sheep	1s.

At the next meeting, however, it was stipulated that the poundkeeper should be entitled "to ask and receive the sum of Five Shillings for each and every Hog he shall take up and empound".[31] Ten years later it was decided to apply to the Lieutenant-Governor for a piece of ground opposite the Gaol for the purposes of a pound. Hugh Carfrae agreed to erect the enclosure "at the rate of 1s. Halifax Currency per picket, and to be six feet from the ground and pointed, to be completed this fall, and agrees to wait 'till April for his pay, with interest thereon".[32] Very stiff penalties were enforced against anyone guilty of "pound-breach" (stealing impounded animals), and fines imposed upon those who failed to keep their swine at home. John Murchison, when called before the Court for allowing his hogs on the street, made the unique plea "that the swine by *undermining* its stye forced his way out";[33] and even though not particularly grammatical it was successful in enabling him to escape a fine.

Hugh Carfrae, gaoler in 1810, also placed pickets around the gaol of the Home District, receiving for the

[29]J. Edmund Jones: *Pioneer Crimes and Punishments in Toronto and the Home District*, 1924, p. 151.
[30]Minutes, April 25, 1800. See *Report*, p. 6.
[31]*Ibid.*, July 8, 1800. *Report*, p. 7.
[32]*Ibid.*, September 1, 1810. *Report*, p. 168.
[33]Jones, op. cit., p. 143.

work 1s. 10½d. per picket. The agreement made between him and the magistrates stipulated that "each picket is to be squared and joined close together and to be placed four feet in the ground; that those pickets which can afford to make two are to be sawed by Carfrae for that purpose, and paid for exclusively by the Court; and also that the nails and spikes requisite, for putting up said pickets as well as rib-hand for strengthening the work are to be paid for or found by the District; and lastly that Hugh Carfrae do perform and completely finish the said undertaking on or before the first day of June, 1810".[30]

In the following year the gaol had to be repaired, and, as there were no spike nails available in York apart from those in the King's Stores, application was made to the Lieutenant-Governor requesting that he direct that a requisite number be furnished from that source. Upon the Clerk of the Peace making an official call upon the Hon. Francis Gore he issued an order for 1500 spike nails for the purpose.[31] Times have greatly changed since the day when one visited the highest official in the province on such business.

There has been criticism of the Toronto Gaol in recent years, but conditions are greatly improved over those described by the Sheriff in 1811. He wrote to the Court "that the Prisoners in the Cells of the Gaol of the Home District suffer much from Cold and Damp, there being no method of communicating heat from the Chimnies, nor any Bedsteads to raise the Straw from the Floors, which lie nearly, if not altogether, on the ground". The Sheriff suggested, therefore, "that a small Stove in the Lobby of each range of Cells, a rough Bedstead for each Cell, together with some Rugs or Blankets, will add much to the Comfort of the unhappy Persons confined". After the matter was thus brought to their attention the Magistrates ordered "that the Treasurer do procure two small Mottle Stoves, and pipes, and direct them to be put up in the Lobby of each range of Cells, and furnish such Bedsteads, Blankets or Rugs as may be found necessary for the Prisoners".[32]

[30] Minutes, November 1, 1809. *Report*, pp. 148-9.
[31] *Ibid.*, May, 4, 1811. *Report*, p. 186.
[32] Sheriff John Baldwin's letter to the Court may be found in the Minutes of December 4, 1811. *Report*, pp. 202-4.

The days of slavery in Canada seem very remote, but in early York they were a reality. Two items in Court records concern the slaves of William Jarvis, who was, by the way, Chairman of the Court. On January 16, 1801, Kitty, a negress, was brought before the magistrates for sentence, having previously pleaded guilty to a charge of assault. Upon the application of her master, however, she was dismissed and ordered to return to her duty, "on which condition the punishment of whipping has been remitted"; but she replied she was not guilty and would not return to Mr. Jarvis, whereupon she was remanded to prison.[20] In 1811, when Thomas Ridout was Chairman of the Court, William Jarvis informed the magistrates "that a Negro Boy and Girl, his Slaves, had the Evening before been committed to Prison for having stolen Gold and Silver out of his Desk", and he prayed that some action might be taken against them and against one Coackley, "a Free Negro also committed to Prison on suspicion of having advised and aided the said Boy and Girl in Eloping with their Master's property". It was decided that the boy should be committed to prison, the girl sent back to her master, and Coackley discharged.[21]

A pleasant description of York as it appeared in the early years of the century is given by George Heriot, Deputy Postmaster-General, who wrote that the town, "according to the plan, is projected to extend to a mile and a half in length. . . . The advancement of this place to its present condition has been effected within the lapse of six or seven years, and persons who have formerly travelled in this part of the country are impressed with sentiments of wonder on beholding a town which may be termed handsome, reared as if by enchantment in the midst of the wilderness". Viewed from a point near the Don, "the scene is agreeable and diversified; a blockhouse, situated upon a wooded bank, forms the nearest object; part of the town, points of land clothed with spreading oak trees, gradually receding from the eye one behind another, until terminated by the buildings of the garrison and the spot on which the governor's residence is placed, compose the objects on the right. The left side of the view comprehends the long

[20] Minutes, January 16, 1801. *Report*, p. 14.
[21] *Ibid.*, March 5, 1811. *Report*, p. 174.

peninsula which encloses this sheet of water, beautiful on account of its placidity, and rotundity of form; the distant lake, which appears bounded only by the sky, terminates the whole".[36] The following additional details are quoted from a book published in 1805:

"The society of the place is highly respectable, and its hospitality is experienced by every visitor. . . . The town is not large, but well furnished with every necessary convenience, and the market is well supplied. . . . There are several respectable private stores, but goods are rather high. . . . The River Don empties itself into the harbour a little above the town, running through a marsh which, when drained, will afford most beautiful and valuable meadows. This has already been effected in a small degree. . . . The long beach or peninsula affords a most delightful ride or walk, and is considered as so healthy by the Indians that they frequently resort to it when indisposed."[37]

Yet "Little York", as it was often called, was little better than the wilds at the opening of the nineteenth century, for there were occasional visits of bears and wolves. Bay Street is said to have once borne the name Bear Street because Mr. Justice Boulton's horses attacked a bear in their pasture in the vicinity. Joseph Willcocks' letters contain descriptions of similar events. On November 3, 1800, he wrote: "There was a great depredation committed the night before last by a flock of wolves that came into the Town. One man lost 17 sheep; several others lost in proportion".[38] He also describes how "two great bears . . . . took away two pigs. They carried the pigs in their arms and ran on their hind legs".[39] In 1809 Lieutenant Fawcett of the 100th Regiment killed a bear in George Street by cleaving its head with his sword!

At the close of 1803 the town plot of York measured

[36] Herbot, *op. cit.*, pp. 138-9.

[37] D'Arcy Boulton: *Sketch of His Majesty's Province of Upper Canada*. 1805. pp. 46-8. The last two sentences appear to have been copied from the notice of the town in D. W. Smith: *A Short Topographical Description of His Majesty's Province of Upper Canada*. . . . 1799.

[38] Joseph Willcocks to Richard Willcocks, November 3, 1800, quoted in W. R. Riddell: *Life of John Graves Simcoe*. 1927. Notes to Chapter XX, p. 293.

[39] *Ibid.*, August 31, 1800.

420 acres, and there were 456 inhabitants within its limits. The total value of the property was $14,871, and the taxes collected reached the staggering total of $62, a sum which would nowadays hardly pay a month's salary to a minor civic official; but it is a far cry in every respect from the York of the early years of the century to the Toronto of modern times. By 1805 the inhabitants had increased to 474, and the population slowly advanced in succeeding years; but such progress as the town had made prior to the War of 1812 was largely nullified by the two American occupations of 1813.[44] The population of the capital at that time was a mere 700, and but little preparation had been made by the British Government to place the town in a state of defence. On April 28th a large fleet of American warships appeared at the harbour entrance and landed some 2000 men to the west of the fortifications. Momentarily halted by a small Canadian force under Major Givins, the Americans were soon in possession of the town, but not before a large number of them had been killed or wounded when a British powder magazine was fired. General Sheaffe's regulars, meantime, were on the way to Kingston, leaving wounded in various farmhouses as they retreated along the Danforth Road.

The soldiery engaged in this raid were of a comparatively low calibre, and the plundering of the town was restricted only by continual exertions on the part of the Rev. John Strachan, who was also prominent during the capitulation negotiations. Whether the Government Buildings were burned by Americans or by disaffected Canadians is not certain, but it would appear probable that drunken American sailors set the fire without orders from their superiors. The Provincial Treasury suffered a loss of some $2000, and the town library and St. James' Church were entered. Numerous inhabitants, especially women, fled up Yonge Street for safety, some of them finding upon their return that their homes had been ransacked. Other ladies engaged in patriotic activities during the occupation. John Ross Robertson obtained reminiscences from Mrs. Charles Seymour, and wrote that in less than a year after the

[44]For a detailed account of the occupation of York see Gollet, *Early Life in Upper Canada*, Section V, Chapter 3.

Seymours' arrival at York "war was declared between the two countries, and Mrs. Seymour, although at the time not quite six years of age, has still a distinct remembrance of the taking of York by the American troops.

"Mrs. Grant Powell, her mother, had issued invitations for a party to be held on the 27th April. Mrs. Seymour says she well remembers the guests were slow in arriving. One or two ladies came, but not a gentleman, and all present were feeling excited and uncomfortable, dreading they knew not what. The suspense was at last ended by the hurried entrance of her father who informed them that the American fleet had been sighted. He told his wife to take the child and maid-servants and go at once to Mrs. McGill's cottage, which stood in the centre of the now Metropolitan Church square. This they did without loss of time. Dr. Powell also said that what was most required by the Canadians was food, they not having been prepared for the attack. Consequently the following morning, Mrs. Seymour says, [redacted] the ladies at Mrs. McGill's were hard at work preparing provisions for the troops, some making bread, while she and Bishop Strachan's son, James, were first sent out to pick up chips [redacted] keep the fire alight while the provisions were being cooked. The following morning Mrs. Powell went with her mother and nurse to their home, which they found a scene of desolation. The supper table, which had given her so much pleasure to admire the night before, had evidently been well appreciated by the invaders. The house had been ransacked by the Americans, who, she presumed, were looking for public papers, mistaking it for that of her grandfather, Chief Justice Powell".[13]

The Americans had all re-embarked by May 2nd, and the townspeople were left to repair the damage as best they might. A few weeks later, however, there was another raid on York, though in the attack of July 31st the Americans remained long enough merely to open the jail, seize flour and other provisions from warehouses, and parole the male inhabitants. Several public storehouses were ordered burned before the invaders withdrew. Many years elapsed

[13]John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*, 1894-1914. Vol. III, pp. 222-9.

before the town recovered from the misfortunes of 1813.

A few months after the American occupation Dr. William ("Tiger") Dunlop was despatched to York, as he relates, "to take charge of my own men, who were in general hospital in that garrison. Toronto, then a dirty straggling village, contained about sixty houses. The church—the only one—was converted into a general hospital".[44] Soon afterwards the Loyal and Patriotic Society of Upper Canada provided funds to the extent of $2,000 for the establishment of the York General Hospital, the construction of which was commenced in 1820 on land set aside for the purpose by the government; the site was the corner of King and John Streets, where the Arlington Hotel now stands, and to Archdeacon Strachan is due the credit for the hospital's erection.

Lieutenant Francis Hall visited York shortly after the close of the War of 1812, and was not favourably impressed. His opinion of the harbour appears particularly unjustified in the light of later developments:

"York, being the seat of government for the upper province, is a place of considerable importance in the eyes of its inhabitants; to a stranger, however, it presents little more than about 100 wooden houses, several of them conveniently—and even elegantly—built, and I think one, or perhaps two, of brick. The public buildings were destroyed by the Americans; but as no ruins of them are visible we must conclude either that the destruction exceeded the desolation of Jerusalem or that the loss to the arts is not quite irreparable. I believe they did not leave one stone upon another, for they did not find one. Before the city a long flat tongue of land runs into the lake, called Gibraltar Point, probably from being very unlike Gibraltar. York, wholly useless either as a port or a military post, would sink into a village, and the seat of government be transferred to Kingston, but for the influence of those whose property in the place would be depreciated by the change."[45]

Robert Gourlay, who walked from Montreal to York and continued by way of the Talbot Settlement to Niagara

[44] William Dunlop: *Recollections of the American War*, 1905, p. 89.
[45] Francis Hall: *Travels in Canada and the United States in 1816-17*, 1818, pp. 214-5.

during the early summer of 1817, wrote[40] that York's population was then about 1,200. An interesting picture of the town as it was two years later has been recorded by Bishop Bethune:

"We crossed the Don over a strong wooden bridge, and after half a mile's drive alighted at Mr. De Forest's Inn, the best in the place, though Jordan's, nearly opposite, notwithstanding its low shabby exterior, was the more popular one. There were a few scattered houses on King Street as far up as the residence of the Lieutenant-Governor, and on Front Street, at long intervals, they reached nearly to the old Garrison. There were also a few on Duke, Yonge and Queen Streets. There were but three brick edifices in the town, and exclusive of the military the population was about 1,200. Though inferior in size and condition to many of our present (1870) villages, York took a high rank as to social position, ... having not less than twenty families of the highest respectability—persons of refinement, and many of high intellectual culture. To these were added a small sprinkling of military. For the size of the place there was a large amount of hospitality exercised, and on a handsome and bountiful scale."[41]

Soon afterwards E. A. Talbot visited York, being impressed more by its swampy site than by such material improvements as its thirteen hundred citizens had contrived to make:

"It now contains 1,336 inhabitants, and about 250 houses, many of which exhibit a very neat appearance. The house in which the Lieutenant-Governor resides is built of wood; and, though by no means contemptible, is much inferior to some private houses in the town, particularly to that of the Honourable and Reverend Dr. Strachan. . . . The streets of York are regularly laid out, intersecting each

[40] Robert Gourlay's opinions upon the economic condition of the province may be found in his *Statistical Account of Upper Canada*, 3 volumes, 1822. Reference to this much-persecuted Reformer recalls an interesting study in impressions: Archdeacon Strachan considered Gourlay to be "a wicked and malignant person who has no regard for the truth"; while Gourlay was equally complimentary concerning his ultra-Tory critic, describing him as "a monstrous little fool of a person—rogue would have been nearer the truth".

[41] A. N. Bethune: *Memoirs of the Right Rev. John Strachan*, 1870, p. 81.

other at right angles. Only one of them, however, is yet completely built; and in wet weather the unfinished streets are, if possible, muddier and dirtier than those of Kingston. The situation of the town is very unhealthy; for it stands on a piece of low marshy land, which is better calculated for frog-pond or beaver-meadow than for the residence of human beings. The inhabitants are, on this account, much subject, particularly in Spring and Autumn, to agues and intermittent fevers; and probably five-sevenths of the people are annually afflicted with these complaints. He who first fixed upon this spot as the site of the capital of Upper Canada, whatever predilection he may have had for the roaring of frogs, or for the effluvia arising from stagnated waters and putrid vegetables, can certainly have had no very great regard for preserving the lives of his Majesty's subjects."[16]

The editor of the *Gazette* was early sensible of the unhealthful location of York, and we find that in 1808 he published directions which he hoped would maintain the physical condition of his subscribers:

"As the month is fast approaching which in this part of the country is understood to be the ague and fake fever season we publish the following select medical advice, wishing that if followed it may prove a useful preventive, viz.: Use great regularity and moderate abstemiousness in diet, avoiding fat substances, matters which encourage superfluous bile. Two gentle emetics and a mild proportion of cathartic medicine, previously taken, are sufficient."[17]

During the eighteen-twenties York did not make much progress in population, the number of citizens in 1827 being only 1,817. It was still a very small town in every respect,

[16] W. A. Talbot: *Five Years' Residence in the Canadas*. 1824. Vol. I. pp. 100-2. Though Edward Talbot was in general unappreciative of Upper Canada and its inhabitants, his opinion of York is similar to that of several other travellers. John Howison, for example, was impressed with "the natural unpleasantness of its situation", and noted that it was "nearly defenceless" and "not at all calculated for the seat of government". He found that York's trade was "very trifling", and was of the opinion that the town owed "its present population and magnitude entirely to its being the seat of government, for it is destitute of every natural advantage except that of a good harbour". (See John Howison: *Sketches of Upper Canada*, 1821. pp. 55-8.)

[17] *York Gazette*, August 13, 1808.

but a public well had been sunk at the market-place, a volunteer fire company organized, and itinerant theatricals and circus performances were not unusual. After 1825 the open space in front of the Jail and Court House was the "public place" of the town, and crowds gathered there to hear election harangues from William Lyon Mackenzie and other politicians of the day—their reception varying from popular enthusiasm to mob violence.

In July, 1827, Captain Basil Hall visited York, "formerly called Toronto,—a name which it was a sin to change"; but he was more interested in the cordial reception accorded him by certain of the inhabitants than in a survey of the material aspects of the town. As he points out, "There is a bright charm in the renewal of old friendships; but at the same time, on a long journey in a distant foreign land, there is a fine sparkling sort of freshness in the active hospitality of new acquaintances of whom all that we know is from what we see; and, as that is full of kindness to us and of anxiety to supply our wants, there is a fairy-tale kind of animation cast over incidents which, if enacted in the tranquil life of home, would probably possess little or no romantic character". Captain Hall experienced in York "one of the truest pleasures of travelling":

"Our dinner was laid under the fly of a tent, on the rich greensward of a dressed piece of ground, sloping gently towards the lake. We sat on the eastern side of the house, so that by five o'clock the shadow fell on us. The deep sea-blue surface of old Ontario was now quite smooth; for the morning breeze had fallen, except where a few straggling catspaws, as we call them, here and there breathed on the face of the calm mirror and straightway disappeared. . . . The air had become deliciously cool and more grateful than I can describe, after the sultry day to which we had been exposed. The wine was plunged into a large vessel filled with ice, close to the table; but the water cooled in a goblet, or unbaked earthen pitcher, brought from Bengal; the sight of which, with drops like dew oozing from its sides, carried my thoughts far back to times when, with friends now all gone or scattered never to meet more, I first learned the luxuries of a hot climate."[10]

[10] Basil Hall: *Travels in America in 1827 and 1828*. 1829. Vol. I, pp. 262-3.

John Ross Robertson Collection. Mrs. Cecil Gwynne Simcoe.

CASTLE FRANK IN 1796

This is one of Mrs. Simcoe's best sketches, and depicts a building dear to her heart.

Royal Ontario Museum. Paul Kane.

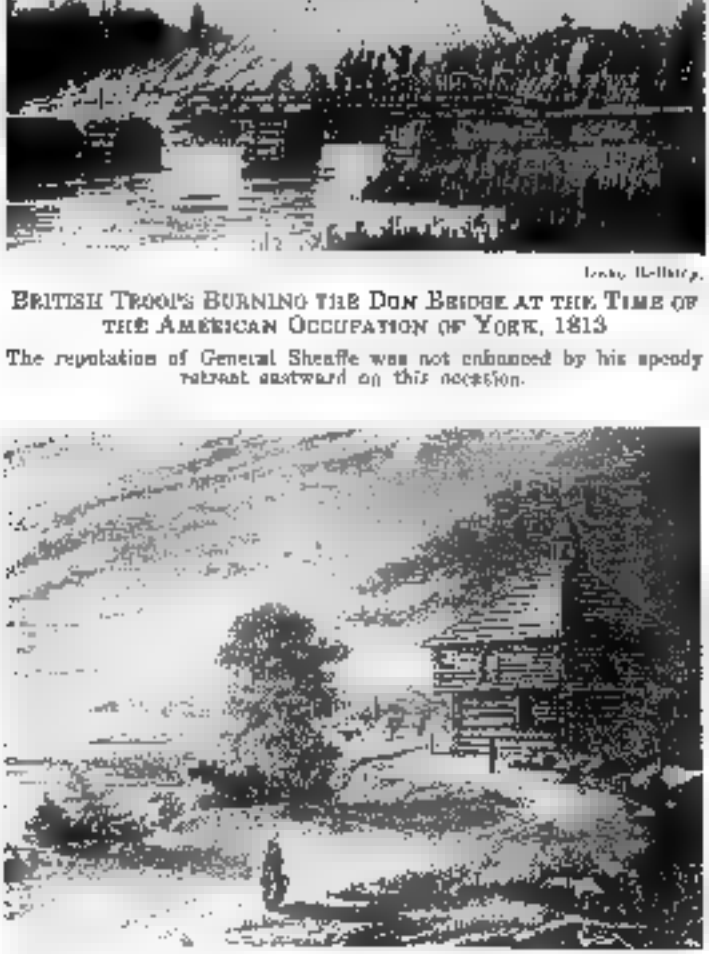
SPEARING SALMON BY TORCHLIGHT

"In my boyish days I have seen as many as 100 light-jacks gliding about the Bay of Toronto and have joined in the sport."—PAUL KANE.

Lossing Collection.

BRITISH TROOPS BURNING THE DON BRIDGE AT THE TIME OF THE AMERICAN OCCUPATION OF YORK, 1813

The reputation of General Sheaffe was not enhanced by his speedy retreat eastward on this occasion.



Spaulding's Records of York

YORK HARBOUR FROM THE DON BLOCKHOUSE, 1810

This interesting fortification did not survive the American occupation of the town.

There were several cemeteries in old York, but all trace of them has, of course, long since disappeared. The earliest was an ancient Indian burying-ground at the Sandhill, to the west of Yonge Street, in the vicinity of the present St. Michael's College. Dr. Scadding describes the locality as "a moderate rise, showing where, in the woods here, at the top of the rise, on the west side, was the 'Indian's Grave', made noticeable to the traveller by a little civilized railing surrounding it. The story connected therewith was this: When the United States forces were landing in 1813 near the Humber Bay, with the intention of attacking the Fort and taking York, one of Major Givins' Indians concealed himself in a tree, and from that position fired into the boats with fatal effect repeatedly. He was soon discovered, and speedily shot. The body was afterwards found and deposited with respect in a little grave here on the crest of the Sandhill, where an ancient Indian burying-ground had existed, though long abandoned. It would seem that by some means the scalp of this poor Indian was packed up with the trophies of the capture of York and conveyed by Lieutenant Dudley to Washington. From being found in company with the Speaker's Mace on that occasion, the foolish story arose of its having been discovered over the Speaker's chair in the Parliament Building that was destroyed".[1]

Farther northward, on the north side of Bloor Street, and extending from Yonge Street almost to Avenue Road, was the Potter's Field, the gates of which, and the keeper's lodge, were long a familiar sight. Those who declined the use of St. James' Churchyard and the other burial grounds found a place in this cemetery, officially called The York General or Strangers' Burying Ground. Walton's *Directory for 1837* contains the following concerning it:

"This Institution owes its origin to Mr. Cartrae, junior. It comprises six acres of ground, and has a neat sexton's house built close by the gate. The name of the sexton is John Wolstencroft, who keeps a register of every person buried therein. Persons of all creeds and persons of no creed are allowed burial in this cemetery: fees to the sexton, 5s. It was instituted in the fall of 1825, and in-

[1] Scadding, *Toronto of Old*, p. 399.

corporated by Act of Parliament, 30th January, 1826. It is managed by five trustees, who are chosen for life; and in case of the death of any of them a public meeting of the inhabitants is called, when they elect a successor or successors in their place. The present trustees (1833) are Thomas Carfrae, jun., Thomas D. Morrison, Peter Paterson, John Ewart, Thomas Helliwell."[53]

The five trustees named were, respectively, Collector of Customs, doctor, iron merchant, builder and brewer, all of them prominent citizens in early York. Concerning the later history of the cemetery Dr. Scadding says:

"A remote sequestered piece of ground in 1825, the Potter's Field in 1846 was more or less surrounded by buildings, and regarded as an impediment in the way of public improvement. Interments were accordingly prohibited. To some extent it has been cleared of human remains, and in due time will be built over. Its successor and representative is the Toronto Necropolis, the trustees of which are empowered, after the lapse of twenty-one years, to sell the old burying-ground."[54]

In another direction, west of Spadina Avenue, was the ancient military cemetery, "a clearing in the thick brushwood of the locality, of an oblong shape, its four picketed sides directed exactly towards the four cardinal points. The setting off of the neighbouring streets and lots at a different angle caused the boundary lines of this plot to run askew to every other straight line in the vicinity. Over how many a now forgotten and even obliterated grave have the customary farewell volleys here been fired!—those final honours to the soldier, always so touching; intended doubtless, in the old barbaric way, to be an incentive to endurance in the sound and well; and consolatory in anticipation to the sick and dying.

"In the mould of this old cemetery, what a mingling from distant quarters! Hearts finally at rest here, fluttered in their last beats far away, at times, to old familiar scenes 'beloved in vain' long ago; to villages, hedgerows, lanes, fields, in green England and Ireland, in rugged Scotland and Wales. Many a widow, standing at an open grave here,

[53]George Walton: *York Commercial Directory for 1834*. 1833. p. 131.
[54]Scadding, ibid., p. 409.

holding the hand of orphan boy or girl, has 'wept her soldier dead', not slain in the battlefield, indeed, but fallen, nevertheless, in the discharge of duty, before one or other of the subtle assailants that, even in times of peace, not unfrequently bring the career of the military man to a premature close. Among the remains in this ancient burial-plot are those of a child of the first Governor of Upper Canada, a fact commemorated on the exterior of the mortuary chapel over his own grave in Devonshire, by a tablet on which are the words: 'Katharine, born in Upper Canada, 16th Jan., 1793; died and was buried at York Town, in that Province, in 1794'."[34]

While upon the subject of landmarks in York and vicinity it will be appropriate to describe the eight blockhouses, one or two of which still remain—interesting survivals of other days. The first was located in the south section of the enclosure of the fortifications as erected by Governor Simcoe. The second was farther westward, about the centre of the parade-ground. A third was on Gibraltar Point (now Hanlan's): this blockhouse, which had one or two guns, was erected in 1794 and demolished in 1818. The point upon which it was located was later dredged out, and ferry docks erected near by; and in the early eighteen-nineties the remains of the blockhouse, as well as some small cannon balls, were uncovered during dredging operations.

To the north-west of the fortifications was located a fourth blockhouse, but it disappeared in the early eighteen-twenties. The remaining blockhouses were scattered about at a considerable distance from one another. One was located on the west side of the Don River, near the mouth, just south of the site of the first Parliament Buildings. It was destroyed during the American occupation of 1813. At the corner of Sherbourne and Bloor Streets, on the east side, stood a sixth blockhouse, and a seventh of similar construction occupied the north-east corner of Spadina and College Streets, where an office building recently replaced the church known as Broadway Tabernacle. The eighth blockhouse stood on the east side of Yonge, opposite the present Belmont Street. The structure was built of logs and covered an area of 100 square feet. It was erected by

[34] *Ibid.*, pp. 64-5.

the Provincial Government in 1838, presumably in anticipation of further advances upon Toronto similar to those which characterised the rising of the previous year. Before its demolition in 1865 several families had occupied it as a residence.

All the blockhouses were very similar in construction and adaptability for defence. The Bloor-Sherbourne and College-Spadina structures were almost exactly alike, being built of squared pine logs about a foot in diameter, and the interstices were filled with mortar. They were two storeys in height, about twenty-five feet square, and were entered by a flight of steps from the ground to the upper storey. Loopholes for muskets enabled defending troops to command every approach on all four sides. The buildings would accommodate about fifty men, twenty of whom could be stationed at the loopholes at one time.

A military memory of another nature is provided by the low log buildings which long stood on the Garrison Common. They were controlled by the Indian Department, and in one of them was a forge in charge of Mr. Higgins, armourer; here the Indians were able to have their fishing-spears, axes, knives and tomahawks sharpened. Another building in this group later provided a schoolroom for the children of the locality. Before returning to the progress of the town itself it will not be out of place to mention that an interesting reminiscence of the Davenport Road district relates to the earliest ice-houses in the vicinity of York, "rude buildings of slab, thickly thatched over with pine branches",[33] where spring-water ice obtained from near-by mill-ponds was first stored in large quantities about 1829-30 by one Richards, a negro.

In July, 1833, the population of the town proper was given as "4,001 males and 3,472 females". But added to this was "Macaulay Town, 558; from Osgoode Hall, where Macaulay Town ends, to Farr's Brewery, Lot Street, about 400; and Windmill, about 300";[34] making a grand total of 8,731 people. Just prior to its advance to city status York did not extend even into localities which have long been considered the centre of Toronto. A writer notes that

[33] *Ibid.*, p. 410.
[34] Walton's *Directory*, facing p. 125.

"Albert Street, now the most densely-built portion of Yonge Street, was in 1834 known as Macaulay Lane, and described by Walton as 'fronting the fields'. From this point a long stretch of fine forest-land extended to Yorkville; the fields which Macaulay Lane fronted were the improvements around Dr. Macaulay's abode. The white entrance gate to his house was near where now a street leads into Trinity Square. Dr. Macaulay's clearing on the north side of Macaulay Lane was, in relation to the first town-plot of York, long considered a locality particularly remote, a spot to be discovered by strangers not without difficulty. In attempting to reach it we have distinct accounts of persons bewildered and lost for long hours in the intervening marshes and woods. Mr. Justice Boulton, travelling from Prescott in his own vehicle and bound for Dr. Macaulay's domicile, was dissuaded, on reaching Mr. Small's house at the eastern extremity of York, from attempting to push on to his destination, although it was by no means late, on account of the inconveniences and perils to be encountered; and half the following day was taken up in accomplishing the residue of the journey. A quarter of a century sufficed to transform Dr. Macaulay's garden and grounds into a well-peopled city district."[27]

On one occasion at least there was some remarkable wild pigeon shooting in the town. An account contemporary with that pioneer sport says that "some two summers ago a stream of them took it into their heads to fly over York; and for three or four days the town resounded with one continued roll of firing, as if a skirmish were going on in the streets,—every gun, pistol, musket, blunderbuss, and fire-arm of whatever description was put in requisition. The constables and police magistrates were on the alert, and offenders without number were pulled up,—among whom were honourable members of the executive and legislative councils, crown lawyers, respectable staid citizens, and last of all the sheriff of the county; till at last it was found that pigeons, flying within easy shot, were a temptation too strong for human virtue to withstand; and so the contest

[27] J. Timperlake: *Illustrated Toronto, Past and Present*. 1877. pp. 102-3.

was given up, and a sporting jubilee proclaimed to all and sundry".*

A glimpse of the life of a class of citizens which does not figure largely in the pages of historical works is afforded by the following enthusiastic letter** of Sophia Hill, an immigrant of but a few months:

"Little York, Upper Canada.

Dear Father and Mother:—I have to inform you that John and I are living at his aunt Carpenter's, and we are very comfortably settled indeed. John has plenty of work, and we are doing very well indeed, for John is getting 7s. 6d. a day of our money; and his aunt is very kind to me, and I am just as comfortable as I was at home, indeed more so, for I never knew the want of victuals or drink since I entered my aunt's house, and while I am writing this we have a bottle of good old port wine on the table; and I was wishing that you could enjoy yourselves with the same. But if you were all here, to enjoy yourselves altogether, it would be more comfortable; and if you were here you would find it a great deal better than you do in England, for you do not hear any complaint or any begging here. I should like to fly over to Frome to see you all, but if you would give me all the birds' cages you have got I would not stop there, for I never saw a more beautiful, pleasant place in all my life than Little York is. I shall not persuade you to come, you can use your own mind; there are plenty of your tools used here for combing flax.

"Please to tell my brother Frank there is hatting business carried on here, and if he had a little money he might soon be a gentleman. Tell Frederick shoemaking is an excellent trade, and so is glazing. Please to tell my brother Richard that gardening is one of the best of trades here, for people are too independent to raise their own garden-stuff, and a cabbage is sold for 4d. in the market; a good gardener is wanted here very bad indeed. Please to tell

*Sussex *Emigrants for Canada*, 1833, pp. 68-7. The description, however, is evidently taken from Dr. William Dunlop's *Statistical Sketches of Upper Canada* (1832), so that the event chronicled probably occurred in 1830.

**Printed in the *Quarterly Review*, September, 1835, in the section devoted to "Emigration—Letters from Canada", pp. 426-7.

my dear sister Eliza if I had hearkened to her I never should have been in America; but I only wish she had my spirit to come here too,—she would not want to go back again. Ask her if she knew Nancy Poolman, in Wine-Street, who used to play with Edith Sheppard so much, and tell her I am living with her, and am as happy as the day is long; and I should have been ten times more so, had it not been for the loss of my poor child, who died soon after we came here—she had every attention paid her.

"We were five weeks coming from Bristol to Quebec, and eighteen days to Little York; we had a very pleasant passage on the ocean, but very rough up the rapids, and that is the reason Mrs. Carpenter wished me to come New York way. Give my kind love to Little Jane and tell her I wish she was out here, as she could get as much work as she could do, and good work too—it is 2s. 6d. for making a shirt, without any stitching, and I have as much in the house as I can do. Please to tell Mr. and Mrs. F— that I think they were foolish in going back again, for I am sure they might have done very well here; but that is the way of some people, they just come and look round and run back again before they know anything about it, and give it a bad name; but I speak as I find it: I have never known the want of anything since I landed in America; and wearing apparel is just as cheap as it is at home; I have bought a very handsome leghorn bonnet for 19s., a new hat for John, a pair of shoes each, two new gowns and aprons, a very handsome black silk shawl, and a pair of new trousers for John, and I have a pound to spare; and this is more than I should have had in Frome in a year, therefore I do not repent leaving it; but if I had you all here I should [illegible] happier. Do not delay writing, for I long to hear from you.

From your loving Son and Daughter,

John and Sophia Hill."

Another of the immigrants of the early thirties who so greatly increased the population of Upper Canada wrote from York in 1832 that he had not enough capital to take up farming, "so I thought I had better give up all thoughts of land and go on with shoemaking, which I think is the

most profitable trade here; the journeyman's wages are very high; if you put out the best top-boots to make, they are £1 6s. making: Wellington boots, 14s.; and common boots that people wear instead of high shoes are 7s. 6d. making; women's low shoes, 8s. I have got more work than I can do myself. I am happy to tell you I never had a better chance in my life to do well".[40]

The town in which these tradesmen's families were doing so much better than they could ever hope to in the Old Land was described by a contemporary traveller as standing "in a level and marshy country. The place is prosperous, and the price of building-ground struck me as very high. . . . The public buildings are just what they ought to be—plain and substantial. . . . The Government House is of wood—rather a singular circumstance, since brick is a common building material in town".[41] When the Rev. Isaac Fidler, for a time Anglican missionary at Thornhill, arrived at York in 1832 after a five-day passage across the lake by sailing-vessel, he immediately "went in quest of lodgings; but emigrants had begun to pour in by hundreds daily, and all places where boarders were admitted were already occupied. The Archdeacon's son, on learning my difficulty, accompanied me to two or three houses, at the last of which we obtained lodgings for eight dollars a week—about one-third what they had cost us in New York. . . . The number of brick and wood buildings in progress of erection was quite surprising. All over the town were building lots on which masons and carpenters were busy. The saw, the axe, the chisel, the hammer, and the trowel resounded on every side".

In addition to private buildings, the Rev. Mr. Fidler noticed that "a capacious market-house of brick" and the Houses of Parliament were being constructed. The corner-stone of the new St. James' Church was laid during his stay in York, and such a large crowd was attracted by the event that most of the ladies could not obtain admittance. Observing that the circumstances proved "how strongly the spirit of independence exists in Canada", he noted that "the Arch-

[40] Letter of Humphrey Cooper, October 26, 1832, quoted in *Sanner Emigrants for Canada*, pp. 47-8.

[41] Thomas Hamilton: *Men and Manners in America*, 1833. Vol. II, pp. 334-5.

deacon's lady and daughters, with some other ladies, ascended to the belfry (i.e.—of the old church), but the room was already so crowded with spectators that admission to the windows was impossible unless some of the others would resign their place. I interceded for the ladies, but those who were already on the vantage ground refused to resign it, and the ladies were consequently debarred".[46]

A formal description of York at this period of its history notes that "It is well situated on the north of an excellent harbour on Lake Ontario, and contains the House of Assembly, Government House, Provincial Bank, College, Court House, Hall for the Law Society, Gaol, Barracks, Churches and other places of worship, with several other public buildings; the streets are spacious and regular; many of the houses are built of brick and stone, but the majority are of timber. The population is considerable, and rapidly increasing. Being the residence of the Chief Officers of the Government, many of the luxuries of life are to be had. There are several newspapers published here. The lands in the neighbourhood are highly cultivated, and the market of the town is always well supplied".[47]

As a general rule this last statement was true, but a resident of Toronto in 1837 noted that there were times when it was difficult to procure any meat but salt pork; it may be assumed, however, that this condition was caused almost entirely by difficulties of transportation in the spring season, when the roads were breaking up and navigation had not commenced. Mrs. Jameson refers to a comparative scarcity of this kind in Toronto in April, 1837. She was living in the fashionable western suburbs of the city of that day—in the vicinity of Spadina and Palace (Front) Streets—and the remoteness of the Toronto market necessitated management and forethought to keep the larder full:

"Our table, however, is pretty well supplied. Beef is tolerable, but lean; mutton bad, scarce, and dearer than beef: pork excellent and delicate, being fattened principally on Indian corn. The fish is of many various kinds, and delicious. During the whole winter we had black bass and

[46] Isaac Fidler: *Observations on the Professions, Literature, Manners and Emigration in the United States and Canada*, 1833, pp. 257 *et seq.*

[47] Francis A. Evans: *The Emigrant's Director and Guide*, 1853, p. 143.

whitefish, caught in holes in the ice, and brought down by the Indians. Venison, game and wild fowl are always to be had; the quails, which are caught in immense numbers near Toronto, are most delicate eating; I lived on them when I could eat nothing else. What they call partridge here is a small species of pheasant, also very good; and now we are promised snipes and woodcocks in abundance. The wild goose is also excellent eating when well cooked. . . . The higher class of people are supplied with provisions from their own lands and farms, or by certain persons they know and employ. . . . Those who have farms near the city, or a country establishment of their own, raise poultry and vegetables for their own table. As yet I have seen no vegetables whatever but potatoes; even in the best seasons they are not readily to be procured in the market."[14]

There were, of course, fancy foods available in Toronto. Those who could afford imported delicacies were usually able to buy them, though some luxuries—oysters, for example,—had often to be purchased in large quantities. In the *Upper Canada Gazette* occurs the advertisement of James F. Smith, a merchant at the corner of Church and Palace (Front) Streets, and in his announcement dated March 25, 1830, he states that he "daily expects Oysters (in shell), Lobsters, Mackerel, North Shore Herring and Salmon pickled and smoked". He also advertises for sale a large variety of imported wines and liquors, "Sugar-Double, Single Refined, and moist; Tea of every description; Sauces, Pickles, East India preserves; Candied Lemons, Citron and Orange Peel; Anchovy Paste and Fresh Curry; Codfish of various kinds; Digby and Lockfine Herrings; English Cheese—Dolphin, King's Arms, Berkley, Pine Apple, Truckle and Double Gloucester; Tobacco, Snuff, Havana Cigars and Pipes."[15] In the early thirties even ice cream, then usually called ices, was sold in York. Thomas Hamilton states that in passing through the streets he was "rather surprised to observe an *affiche* intimating that ice creams were to be had within. The weather being hot I

[14] Anna Jameson: *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada*. 1837. Vol. I, pp. 267-9.

[15] *Upper Canada Gazette*, March 25, 1830.

Public Archives of Canada — Lieutenant Bangeman Burton

York Barracks, U.C., May 18, 1804

Among the interesting activities being carried on by the soldiers may be seen engaged in "stumping", and in sawing planks with a whip-saw, one man standing in a pit in this typical pioneer work.

Public Archives of Canada — Artist Unknown.

YORK, THE NEW CAPITAL OF UPPER CANADA, 1803

The town then fringed the shore between Jarvis and Parliament Streets.

entered, and found the master of the establishment to be an Italian. I never ate better ices at Grange's".[6]

On March 6, 1834, the town of York became the city of Toronto. The change to city status was not accomplished without a fight. The Family Compact and ultra-Tory party, who at that time claimed a monopoly of the spirit of loyalty, were determined in their opposition to the alteration of the good old British "York" into the "wild and terrific" Indian name "Toronto". It was opposed for another reason, too, and one for which there was better argument. It was quite apparent that the change meant the concession of responsible government to the inhabitants, for while they had formerly elected merely one town warden (whose chief duty seems to have been to preside at the town-meeting), they were, under city status, to have power to select the entire City Council which was to replace the Court of Quarter Sessions, the chief governing body previously. This quite evidently imposed upon the citizens the necessity of an appeal to the people, or—as one of the most violent critics of the scheme, Chief Justice William Dummer Powell, described it—"the curse of a popular election". But the power that could be brought to bear was not enough, and it is consequently quite appropriate that the first Mayor to be chosen from his fellow aldermen was that agitator and Reformer—the John Wilkes of his period—William Lyon Mackenzie.

The inauguration of the city of Toronto in March, 1834, was the signal for great developments in all directions. Numerous by-laws and regulations which were passed in quick succession are described elsewhere. Among other improvements the first wooden sidewalks were built to replace the footpaths and flagstones, and the main streets were graded and gravelled. The financial condition of the new city, we are informed, was "wretched":

"The value of all the property in the city was under five hundred thousand dollars, and there was a debt of forty-five thousand dollars, contracted on account of the Market Buildings. In anticipation of the taxes it was necessary to borrow five thousand dollars. The Bank of Upper Canada refused to advance the money, though this might perhaps be

[6]Hamilton, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 383.

accounted for by the fact that the Bank President, Dr. Widmer, was defeated by the Mayor in the election of councillors. Application was next made to the manager of the Farmers' Bank, and, on personal security of the Mayor and other members of the Council being given, the money was loaned. To meet the demands on the city treasury it was necessary to levy a rate of three pence on the pound sterling. This was regarded as a monstrous piece of fiscal oppression, almost sufficient to justify a small rebellion.[8] To such an extent was the public dissatisfaction carried at what was considered the exorbitant taxes that the Mayor found it necessary to call a public meeting to make an explanation.[9]

The meeting called by the Mayor took place on the 29th of July. After Mr. Mackenzie had explained at some length the necessity for the three-penny tax, Mr. Sheriff Jarvis interrupted by saying it was his intention to move a censure [illegible] the conduct of the Mayor. There were some two hundred persons present, and as the majority were the friends of the Mayor he met this menace by a resolution pledging the citizens not to support at the next Parliamentary election a candidate whose position as an office-holder made him dependent upon the Government. The meeting became very noisy and uproarious, and was in consequence adjourned till the next day. The meeting had commenced at six o'clock in the evening, and on the morning of the second day the opponents of the Mayor issued placards calling the adjourned meeting for three o'clock in the afternoon—an hour at which it would be very inconvenient for the mechanics and business men to attend. The Mayor regarded this as a breach of faith, forbade the city bellman to cry the meeting for that hour, and resolved not to attend it himself. The market, in which the meeting was held, was a parallelogram, and over the butchers' stalls was a balcony to accommodate spectators. While the Sheriff was addressing the meeting he said: 'I care no more for Mr. Mackenzie than'—here he looked up and saw a crow flying over—'that crow', he added. This was deemed a great oratorical stroke and it elicited a cheer. The crowd above, in stamping their feet, broke down the balcony, and in the descent some were impaled on the butchers' hooks, and

others were wounded by the falling debris or by the crush of persons upon them."[1]

Seven or eight people, including Sheriff Jarvis' son, died of the injuries they received, and others were crippled for life by this unfortunate accident.

The new city forged ahead a little too rapidly at the start, and there was a reaction. The *Toronto Albion* outlines the advance as it appeared about a year and a half later:

"In Mr. Gourlay's *Statistical Account of Upper Canada*, published in 1817, he writes of what was then Little York as follows:—'I suppose its population to be 1,200 souls; for five miles round the capital of Upper Canada scarcely one improved farm can be seen in contact with another. The only connected settlement is about five miles to the north of Yonge Street; in other directions, as far as the district goes, you might travel to its utmost limits and not find more than one farm house for every three miles.' Such was the state of things in Upper Canada in 1817. In 1835 we find the town of Little York metamorphosed into the City of Toronto and a population of from 12,000 to 14,000 souls. Supposing that on the average six persons lived in each house, there were then 200 houses; upon the same calculation, now there must be, taking the large amount of the estimated population, 2,333 houses, and supposing the average value of the houses in 1817 to [redacted] £200 each, the building property was then worth £40,000; and suppose their average value now to [redacted] £400 each (and considering the number of large and valuable houses being built it will be greatly too low) the building property of the city is worth £933,200, showing an outlay of £893,200 since 1817. This applies [redacted] dwelling houses alone, and, when the large stores and public improvements are taken into account, the least sum that can be supposed is a million. Look again at the difference in the three principal outlets; instead of the four miles Mr. Gourlay talks of, on which there was scarcely one improved farm, there is now scarcely a lot not improved. . . .

[1] Timperlake, *op. cit.*, pp. 94-5. The tax rate which almost provoked riots amounted to about fifteen mills on the dollar. For an excellent description of Toronto in 1834 see the account of "An English Visitor", reprinted in the Toronto Centenary Number of the *New Outlook*, March 14, 1934.

"It is not unusual to hear people croaking that there is a check to business and buildings in Toronto; every place is subject to such checks; a year or two ago Rochester was universally thought to be on the decline; it is now all activity. The truth was that the folks of Rochester had done as those of Toronto did last year—they went too fast, and a little time must be taken to recover it."[18]

In 1832 the first great cholera epidemic had visited York, and about 400 persons died of the disease. Archdeacon Strachan was as active in good works during this time of stress as he had been during the American occupation of 1813. He circulated a subscription list by which £1,269 was collected for the relief of widows and orphans bereaved by the epidemic, and 160 families benefitted from the fund. An inscribed piece of plate was presented to Dr. Strachan by a large number of citizens, who rightly considered that his self-sacrifice was worthy of public recognition.[19] Memories of the distressing conditions so vividly narrated in Defoe's *Journal of the Plague Year* are called to mind when one reads in the Court records of 1833 the resolution "that the cholera carts be sold forthwith". The Potters' Field had, by order of the Magistrates, received the bodies of most of those who had died in the York hospital.[20]

From time to time during the next quarter century the cholera or, as it was later called, "ship fever", recurred in Toronto as in other parts of Canada during the days of extensive immigration under improper supervision. In 1834, shortly after the unfortunate market accident, the pestilence broke out again. Concerning William Lyon Mac-

[18] *Toronto Albion*, 1836. (The exact date of issue is not available.)

[19] See J. E. Middleton: *The Municipality of Toronto, a History*. 1923. Vol. 1, pp. 168-9, for details concerning this presentation, and a list of the subscribers. A rare pamphlet descriptive of the presentation, the address and inscription, and Archdeacon Strachan's reply, is in the Toronto Public Library. It is entitled *Tribute of Respect and Gratitude to the Honourable and Venerable Archdeacon Strachan, by a number of the Inhabitants of the City of Toronto*. 1835. A sermon on the cholera epidemic, by Archdeacon Mountain, dedicated to Lord Aylmer and published at his request, was delivered in the Cathedral Church of Quebec on December 30, 1832. When printed in Quebec in 1833 it was entitled *A Retrospect of the Summer and Autumn of 1832*. A considerable part of it may be found in the *Canadian Literary Magazine*, April, 1833.

[20] Jones, op. cit., p. 147.

kenzie's unselfish activities during this epidemic his biographer says:

"During the term of Mr. Mackenzie's mayoralty the cholera revisited the city, and swept away every twentieth inhabitant. During the whole of the time that it raged, the Mayor was at the post of duty and of danger. He sought out the helpless victims of the disease and administered to their wants. He was constant in his attendance on the cholera hospital. In the height of the panic occasioned by this terrible disease, when nobody else could be induced to take the cholera patients to the hospital, he visited the abodes of the victims, and, placing them in the cholera cart with whatever assistance he could get from the families of the plague-stricken, drove them to the hospital. On some days he made several visits of this kind to the pest-house. Day and night he gave himself no rest. At length worn out by fatigue, the disease from which he had done so much to save others overtook himself. The attack was not of an aggravated nature; and he was fortunate in obtaining the timely assistance of Dr. Widmer; for medical men were difficult to be obtained, and many persons without medical education or experience practised on the unfortunate sufferers."[11]

In 1849 occurred the great ship fever epidemic, spread through the Canadas by incoming settlers. A writer describes that in Toronto "the worst ravages of the disease had been among immigrants worn by fatigue and misery, and among the lower class of the static population who were steady patrons of the small drinking-shops with which the city abounded".[12] Large numbers of immigrants died on Toronto wharves or in the hospital at the north-west corner of King and John Streets. January 9, 1850, was appointed a day of public thanksgiving for the end of the plague.

Again in 1854 there was a recurrence of the disease. As

[11]Charles Lindsay: *Life and Times of William Lyon Mackenzie*. 1862. Vol. 1, pp. 316-7.

[12]Middleton, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 244. There was also a plague of cholera in 1847. For a most vivid and poignant account of suffering and death in Toronto see Patrick Slater: *The Yellow Briar*. 1933, pp. 63-5. During the summer and autumn of that year 863 poor Irish citizens died in Toronto, and of 57,993 immigrants from Ireland during the spring and summer 4 total of 18,625 had died before winter set in.

in the visitations of 1832 and 1834 there was one man whose self-sacrifice merited the public thanks of his fellow-citizens; and anyone might well envy the appreciation which was accorded—not after his death but during his lifetime—to Joseph Rowell, Councillor and Chairman of the Board of Health. The City Council presented him with a resolution engrossed on parchment, "for his indefatigable zeal and perseverance during the late epidemic, [redacted] having spared neither time nor trouble in endeavouring to arrest the ravages of that dreadful disease; cleansing filthy habitations, visiting the sick, and even coffining the dead. He was a daily gratuitous visitor of the hospitals, providing for the comfort and medical attendance of the unhappy victims of that destroying disorder, there being no duty, however disagreeable or dangerous, that he did not cheerfully undertake, to the very great and material assistance of the Board of Health in the execution of their arduous and responsible duties".[73]

While upon the subject of medical conditions it will be of interest to refer to Mr. Gidney, who was possibly Toronto's first dentist. In any case he received "very liberal patronage" as early as 1825, and after some years "in the most opulent and enlightened capitals in Europe" was back in town again; all of which he explains in his well-worded announcement in the press of 1836:

"Mr. G. remembers with lively gratitude the very liberal patronage received during his residence in this place in the winter of 1825. He now thinks that his services will [redacted] more valuable from the ten years' additional practice, 6 or 7 years of which have been passed in some of the most opulent and enlightened Capitals in Europe."[74]

In later years, even in comparatively recent times, there were numerous quacks and "characters" about the Market who would sell you anything from cure-all salve to fly-paper, and whose repertoire comprehended any service from pulling teeth to writing love letters.

Meanwhile the city was extending westward. In 1834 King Street had 287 buildings, the greater part of them, of course, east of Yonge; and in the same year Yonge Street

[73]Quoted in Middleton, *ibid.*, p. 256.
[74]*Courier of Upper Canada*, January 16, 1836.

contained 104 buildings. But by 1838 the population of the city was almost equally divided by Yonge Street, 6,469 people residing east of it and 6,002 to the westward; while ten years later there were 23,508 persons, occupying 3,795 houses, and the city boasted 10 public halls, 21 churches, 4 colleges, 51 schools, 318 merchant' shops, and 142 inns and taverns.

Travellers' impressions are always of interest, though not infrequently biassed. Mrs. Anna Jameson described Toronto in the late thirties as " a little ill-built town on low land at the bottom of a frozen bay, with one very ugly church without tower or steeple, some government offices built of staring red brick in the most tasteless, vulgar style imaginable; three feet of snow all around, and the grey, sullen, wintry lake, and the dark gloom of the pine forest bounding the prospect: such seems Toronto to me now. I did not expect much, but for this I was not prepared".[16] But she was not quite so severe in her criticism of the city as it appeared in summer. At the time of her residence in Toronto the increasing population had led to some improvements in street transport. The first cabs were introduced about 1837, and there were two livery stables—Field's on Henrietta Street, and John Grantham's at the Old British Coffee House on Front Street—"where can be had Horses, Coaches, Gigs, Waggons, Sleighs, etc., upon reasonable terms".[17]

Social life was quite extensively developed in the Toronto of the late thirties, for we find[17] among organisations in active operation many of a fraternal nature—of which those of the firemen and the National Societies were pre-eminent—and others with religious, charitable or literary aims:

City of Toronto Auxiliary Bible Society.

City of Toronto Ladies' Bible Association.

Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

[16]Anna Jameson: *Sketches in Canada, and Rambles among the Red Men*, 1839. Edition of 1852, p. 1.

[17]George Walton: *City of Toronto and Home District Commercial Directory and Register, with Almanack and Calendar for 1837*, p. 42.

[17]The list of societies and organisations was compiled from Walton's *Directory for 1837*.

Upper Canada Religious Tract and Book Society. (Established 1832).

Society for Converting and Civilizing the Indians, and Propagating the Gospel among the Destitute Settlers in Upper Canada. (Established 1830).

City of Toronto Institution for the Relief of the Orphan, the Fatherless and Widow.

City of Toronto Temperance Society. (Established 1828).

City of Toronto Annual Bazaar.

Upper Canada College Cricket Club.

City of Toronto Literary Club. (Established 1836).

City of Toronto Ethical and Literary Society. (Established 1836).

Strangers' Burial Ground. (Established 1825).

City of Toronto Horticultural Society.

Commercial News Room, City of Toronto.

Toronto Mechanics' Institute. (Established 1831).

City of Toronto Board of Trade.

City of Toronto Mechanics' Association. (Established in 1836 "for the protection of Mechanical Labour").

St. George's Society. (Established 1835).

St. Patrick's Society. (Established 1836).

St. Andrew's Society. (Established 1836).

At the time of the Rebellion of 1837 Toronto was in the midst of an era of notable expansion, having developed during the previous few years from a small town to a thriving and enterprising city of some 12,000 inhabitants. Characteristically conservative, its people were not usually sympathetic towards Reformers—as rabid mobs had more than once demonstrated. There is no doubt, however, that reforms were long overdue, and, though the means to effect changes were not always the best, it may at least be said that the difficulties to be overcome appeared almost insuperable. William Lyon Mackenzie, at his best as an agitator, gained a greater following after the dumping of his type into the harbour by sympathisers of the Family Compact. In Toronto the Reformers were accustomed to meet at the Sun Tavern, at the north-west corner of Queen and Yonge Streets, and later in John Doel's home and brewery on the north-west corner of Bay and Adelaide.

Jail | Court House | St. James' Church | Site of King Edward Hotel

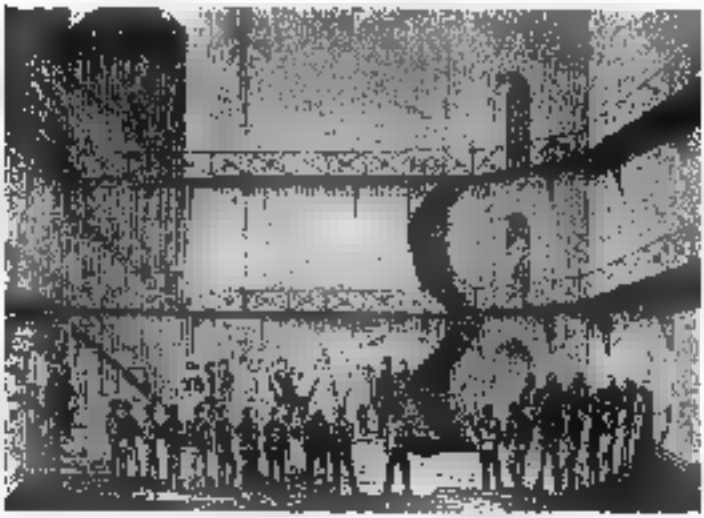
KING STREET, EAST OF TORONTO STREET, 1836

The artist represented the church as it was planned, but St. James' did not boast a steeple at that period.

Dent's Story of the Upper Canadian Rebellion. Wilson Engraving.

COLONEL MOODIE SHOT AT MONTGOMERY'S TAVERN, 1837

The Tavern stood on the west side of Yonge Street, a short distance north of Eglinton Avenue, and was the rendezvous of Mackenzie's "Patriots".



Canadian Illustrated News

FLOGGING A PRISONER AT TORONTO JAIL, JANUARY 6, 1871

In part the punishment was apparently for the edification of the other prisoners.

The details of their activities and the preparations for rebellion may be found elsewhere,[7] but some description of the resulting confusion in the city will be of interest here.

The gathering of "Patriots" at Montgomery's Tavern, North Yonge Street, in the early days of December, 1837, appears to have been taken seriously by everyone except the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Francis Bond Head. Such was his neglect of all precautions that nothing but disorganisation and indecision among the rebels prevented the capture of the capital. The shooting of Colonel Moodie on the Monday evening prior to the main engagement showed that the insurgents meant business, though their cowardice during Tuesday's raid down Yonge Street was a great disappointment to their leaders. The journal of William Hamilton Merritt provides some interesting details of the confusion in the city after the raid. Merritt, then a student at Upper Canada College, notes that the ringing of the alarm bells was considered "merely a lark of the porter"; but in the morning the reality and imminence of danger was quickly felt, though, since the boys obtained a holiday on that account, they were naturally not at first greatly concerned. Several of them, however, were captured by the rebels when their curiosity led them up Yonge Street:

"It was a curious sight to behold guards of civilians about Government House, the shops all closed, people hurrying silently in all directions, some with arms and some without; then, at the town hall, where was the chief assemblage, were cannon with torches ready to be lighted, arms were being distributed, and melancholy was exhibited in every countenance. Nothing was done that day except various movements to defend the town, barricading the streets and filling houses with men. All was exciting; it was indeed a change agreeable from our dull work at college. This was something like life; we had often read in history of rebellion and war, but had never experienced the feeling of the immediate presence of conflict, of a real state of things when human life is held at so cheap a rate.

"We boys almost in a body visited Government House

[7] An excellent short account is W. S. Wallace: *The Family Compact*, 1915. See Guillet, *Early Life in Upper Canada*, Section V, Chapters IV and V, for a description of the Battle of Montgomery's Farm and the subsequent escape of the "Patriots".

to offer our services to Sir Francis Bond Head to fight for our Queen and country. He received us kindly, gave us a piece of cake, and advised us to go home as soon as possible. My brother and I and James Ingersoll, also of St. Catharines, not quite satisfied with playing so tame a part, were determined that we would catch a sight of the rebels if possible.

"We ran north up what is now Queen Street Avenue and the park, then struck towards Yonge Street, seeing nothing out of the way till we neared the toll-gate, when we caught glimpses of rough men riding about, apparently much excited, one of whom galloped over to me and promptly took us prisoners, shutting us in the back room of the little toll-gate house. We could see a few men riding about with guns, and that seemed to be the extent of the invading force. We thought of the preparations being made down town—closed stores, cannon in front of the market buildings, armed men in the windows, cavalry galloping up and down King Street to keep the people out of the cannon's range, and the enemy, of presumed great strength, momentarily expected by way of Yonge Street. We were aching to get back and tell what we had seen. One rebel aimed his rifle to shoot a man who was making away, as we knew what to expect if we tried to escape.

"In a couple of hours, however, we became bold, worked at the window until at last it yielded, when we quickly dropped out of it and crept on all fours to the nearest brushwood. But the vigilant eye of one of the rebels had sighted us and several gave chase. The woods at that time were so thick in that vicinity that it was not difficult to evade the horsemen and reach what is now Avenue Road, down which we sped at a much quicker pace than we had come up. When it was safe to breathe again we told our tale, and soon there gathered a curious crowd around us who conducted us to headquarters, where they were much surprised and relieved at our discovery of the handful of men whose dreaded presence had caused so great an alarm; and we did not regret the rashness that had suddenly made us the heroes of the hour."[7]

[7]Journal of William Hamilton Merritt, quoted in the *College Times* (Upper Canada College), Easter, 1907.

The arrival on Wednesday of considerable bodies of men from points east and west put heart into Toronto's citizens, and there developed a feeling of security which had been lacking before. Judges and lawyers shouldered muskets alongside labourers and students, and the march northward on Thursday via Yonge Street and College (University) Avenue partook of the nature of a public holiday. Windows and housetops were crowded to view the cavalcade, flags waved and cheers rang out on this day of great public enthusiasm. The result was never in doubt, and the "Patriots" were soon fleeing in all directions. Two of them, Lount and Matthews, were brought back to be hanged at the old jail on Toronto Street in April, 1838.

William Lyon Mackenzie, however, escaped to the United States; and finally, offered amnesty by the proclamation of February 1, 1849, returned to Toronto on March 18th, being welcomed by a few relatives and friends. A few days later, when news of his return became generally known, a rabble of "unshaven, dirty-looking, half-drunken men and ragged boys", (or, if you prefer it, "a band of loyal citizens determined to save Toronto from shame"),* gathered at Queen and Yonge Streets to drive Mackenzie out of town. Images of Reformers were burned, and the mob milled about the streets for a time, finally bombarding the house where Mackenzie was supposed to be. Stones, bricks and rotten vegetables alternated for three hours with howls for his blood, but the supply of liquor gave out, and after smashing windows in George Brown's home the mob broke up. Mackenzie left town for some months, but was back again in June, 1850. Though he once more sat in the House he seemed out of place when there was no longer the same need for an agitator. He and the other Reformers who returned after the general amnesty found that the policies which they had long advocated and had fought for in 1837-38 were then in large measure a reality, for full responsible government had been achieved in their absence. An increasing number of Canadian citizens now consider that Mackenzie's "rebels" have every claim to the title "patriots" advanced by the Rt. Hon. W. L. M. King at the Centennial Banquet of March 6, 1934.

*The descriptions are from the *Examiner* and *Patriot*, respectively.

Captain Marryat, the novelist, visited Toronto shortly after the Rebellion, and as soon as he stepped off the boat he felt that he was "no longer in the United States: you are at once struck with the difference between the English and the American population, systems and ideas. On the other side of the lake you have much more apparent property, but much less real solidity and security. The houses and stores of Toronto are not to be compared with those of the American towns opposite. But the Englishman has built according to his means—the American, according to his expectations. The hotels and inns at Toronto are very bad; at Buffalo they are splendid; for the Englishman travels little; the American is ever on the move. The private houses of Toronto are built, according to the English taste and desire of exclusiveness, away from the road, and are embowered in trees; the American, let his house be ever so large, or his plot of ground however extensive, builds within a few feet of the road that he may see and know what is going on. You do not perceive the bustle, the energy and activity at Toronto that you do at Buffalo, nor the profusion of articles in stores. . . . If an American has money sufficient to build a two-storey house he will raise it up to four storeys on speculation, ... whilst at Toronto they proceed more cautiously".[31]

Descriptions of the city as it appeared in the early forties contain much of interest. One publication notes that "the streets are laid out at right-angles to each other, are broad and spacious, generally flagged on each side, and some of them macadamised. King Street, the great thoroughfare, is half a mile long and contains the principal buildings and public offices of the province".[32] James B. Brown ("A Four Years' Resident") writes as follows in 1844:

"The City of Toronto has much increased in population within these last four years, and with the recent introduction of gas and other improvements its appearance is much like some of our provincial towns in Britain; and in several respects, such as the amount of trade and general comfort of the inhabitants, the advantages, with the greater

[31] F. Marryat: *Diary in America*, 1839, p. 60.
[32] Samuel Butler: *The Emigrant's Hand-book of Facts*, 1843, p. 14.

number of these towns, are on the side of Toronto. The principal streets are comfortably paved, the buildings large and imposing, and the shops spacious and filled with every luxury to be had in the best cities at home.

"In 1841 there were as many as 90 four-wheeled open and close carriages and 130 gigs and pleasure waggons returned upon the assessment rolls of the city. The churches and chapels amount to thirteen, and there are numerous benevolent and other societies: eight or ten newspapers are regularly published, three of which are twice-a-week papers, the others weekly. A Temperance Society which commenced in 1839 numbered in 1841 about 1,300 members. The Home District Agricultural Society holds its meetings and public shows in Toronto. Fourteen or fifteen (if not more) spacious and elegantly fitted-up steamboats which ply upon Lake Ontario are some of them almost continually touching at the wharves close to the town. The building of King's College is at present in operation, situated within pleasantly laid-out grounds, and promises to be a fine structure of hewn stone, and to prove the chief ornament of the fast-growing and comparatively wealthy city of Toronto."[22]

Charles Dickens and his wife paid a short visit to Toronto in 1842, registering as guests at the old American House, at the north-east corner of Yonge and Front Streets. No public reception was accorded them, but the Chief Justice entertained the famous author at dinner, and a large number of prominent citizens were introduced to him during the evening. He afterwards wrote the following impressions of the city:

"The country around this town being very flat is bare of scenic interest, but the town itself is full of life and motion, bustle, business and improvement. The streets are well paved and lighted with gas; the houses are large and good; the shops excellent. Many of them have a display of goods in their windows such as may be seen in thriving country towns in England, and there are some which would do no discredit to the metropolis itself. There is a good stone prison here; and there are, besides, a handsome church, a court house, public offices, many commodious

[22] [James B. Brown]: *Views of Canada and the Colonists*. 1844. p. 190.

private residences, and a Government Observatory for noting and recording the magnetic variations. In the College of Upper Canada, which is one of the public establishments of the city, a sound education in every department of polite learning can be had at a very moderate expense, the annual charge for the instruction of each pupil not exceeding nine pounds sterling."[34]

Dickens was, however, more discreet about what [redacted] published concerning Toronto than appeared with reference to his experiences in the United States; but in one of his letters to John Forster he noted the prevalence of "wild and rabid Toryism" in Toronto, a condition which he considered "appalling".[35] In more modern times there have been many people who look upon this condition as the one outstanding characteristic of the city.

Dr. John Bigsby, who had known the York of the eighteen-twenties, found the Toronto of a quarter of a century later greatly increased in size. He noted that there were "91 streets, one of which, King, is two miles long, 21 churches and chapels, 10 newspapers, 20 medical men, 5 artists and portrait-painters, 107 taverns, [redacted] auctioneers, 27 butchers, 19 bakers and 6 booksellers. Toronto is a gay place, and in its wealthy shops, stately and crowded churches, paved and gas-lighted streets, public walks, societies—religious, scientific, literary and social—and charitable institutions, is much in advance of British towns of the same size".[36] The Rev. Henry Christmas, however, suggests that the city had frequently the characteristics of rural life:

"In Toronto even cows and pigs are occasionally seen running loose about the town, though contrary to law, frequently pursued by half the dogs in the parish, who seem to consider them fair game as they beat a hasty retreat by a variety of squealings, lowings and bellowings which form now and then in the back streets a whimsical and most unmusical concerto. By the way, talking of concerts, the lovers of ancient music will be pleased to be informed that

[34] Charles Dickens: *American Notes*. See Household Edition of his Works, 187[illegible], Vol. II, p. 98.

[35] See Forster's *Life of Charles Dickens*, in Works, Vol. XXII, p. 123.

[36] J. J. Bigsby: *The Shoe and Canoe, or Pictures of Travel in the Canadas*. 1850. Vol. II, p. 63.

a very promising society for the performance of the works of the great masters flourishes in Toronto under the auspices of the Rev. Dr. McCaul, the learned and deservedly popular president of King's College, who, I hope, will accept my apology for introducing him and his harmonious labours in such close juxtaposition with those of the bovine and other gentry above named."[47]

The "Great Fire of 1849" devastated the city to a greater extent than any other conflagration, and, like the fire of London in 1666, prepared the way for many new and better buildings—among others St. Lawrence Hall. The following account of the fire appeared in the *Globe*:

"About half-past one this morning a fire was discovered in some outbuildings in the rear of Graham's Tavern, King Street, and Post's Tavern, Nelson Street. The fire speedily extended to the main part of Nelson Street, on the east, consuming Post's Tavern, the *Patriot* office, and turning into King Street, on the east, burnt all Mr. Sprule's buildings, where it stopped. The fire extended from King Street to the south of Duke Street, where it consumed nearly all the back buildings and the office of the Savings Bank.

"It then crossed to the west side of Nelson Street to Rolf's Tavern, destroying the whole block, including the *Mirror* office, to Mr. Nasmith's bakery. Proceeding from Rolf's Tavern the flames laid hold of the corner building, occupied by Mr. O'Donohue, which was speedily consumed, and then they ran along the whole block to Mr. O'Neill's, consuming the valuable stores of Messrs. Hayes, Harris, Cherry, O'Neill and others. About three o'clock the spire of St. James' Cathedral took fire, and the building was entirely destroyed; about the same time the flames broke out in the old City Hall, consuming the greater part of the front building, including Mr. McFarlane's small store.

"The fire then extended from the Cathedral across to the south side of King Street, where a fire had lately occurred. The shops of Mr. Rogers and others were with difficulty saved. All that block was in great danger; some of them had most of their goods removed, and great injury to

[47]Henry Christmas; *Canada in 1849: Pictures of Canadian Life, or the Emigrant Chronicle*. 1850. Vol. I, pp. 71-2.

property was sustained. About five o'clock the flames were in a great measure subdued. The exertions of the firemen were for a long time retarded for want of water. The soldiers of the Rifle Brigade from the garrison were extremely active, and deserve the highest gratitude of the citizens. The loss by this fire is estimated at the lowest computation to £100,000 sterling.

"It is not easy to describe the gloom which this calamity has cast over the city, or the ruined appearance of the ground so lately occupied by many respectable and industrious individuals, who, by the work of four or five hours, were suddenly thrown out of business or seriously injured in their circumstances. In whatever light this serious event be regarded, it must be acknowledged as a heavy blow and sore discouragement to Toronto, the heaviest it has received.

"There cannot be a doubt, however, that the activity and enterprise of the inhabitants will soon surmount the loss. The season is favourable for rebuilding, and many improvements will doubtless be introduced in the formation of new streets. Meantime there is a first duty to be looked to: we mean the relief of those who are so reduced by the fire as to require public assistance. There are cases of the kind where a small amount of assistance promptly administered will revive the drooping spirits of those who may be ready to sink under their burdens. We hope the public will not lose sight of this, but will come forward with a liberal hand when it is required.

"Mr. Watson, publisher of the *Canadian and Upper Canada Gazette*, lost his life in trying to save some type from the *Patriot* office."[*]

Though unsanitary living conditions had no doubt much to do with outbreaks of disease in earlier times, the development of an extensive "slum" district in Toronto occurred some years after the fire of 1849, as the city steadily increased in population. One writer outlines in considerable detail the conditions as they applied in the sixties, and gives an illuminating account of the lack of sanitation which characterised no inconsiderable portion of Toronto—as, indeed, of almost all towns and cities prior to the development and general use of sanitary appliances and before

[*] *Globe*, April 7, 1849.

sewage and garbage disposal had advanced beyond the primitive means in use for centuries:

"The sanitary condition of the city at this time began to attract the attention of our city fathers; after the outbreak of the cholera in 1849 life and vigour had been infused into this department of the City Council's work. New sewers were constructed, new drains built, inspection was occasionally made, but in a few years the sanitary affairs of the city began to be neglected and no attention paid to its wants or requirements, until in 1866 the miserable drainage, bad air, bad water, filth, dirt and refuse of the worst kind appeared to invite disease. The state of one of the streets in the very centre of the city was thus described: 'You enter a house from the front door and find yourself in a room twelve by fourteen feet, in which are huddled together, as if they are frightened to look on their fellow-creatures, a man, five women, three boys, and a couple of young specimens of the *genus homo* in arms. The stove is almost reddened with heat, the room is fumigated with fumes of the mid-day meal which is in course of preparation, the walls are so black that one would think sable was their original colour, and, on the back door being opened to admit one to the yard, the stench from the pig-pen within three feet of the back door is so foul that you could cut it with a knife. In another yard we have a pig-pen four feet six inches square, with a floor a couple of feet thick with offal, filth, dung and manure, and no less than five pigs lying snorting and snoring within it. Going further down the same street the visitor sees in every yard and closet the same accumulations. Near Nelson Street, on the south side of Stanley Street, we have a house the rear room of which is occupied by a brigade of pigs. The next room, (with a doorway between the two), a few feet from this nest of filth, the residents of the house use as a cooking, eating and sleeping room. Just fancy the sickening odour of a pig-pen curling through the cracks of the door and winding around the kitchen stove and dinner table!'

"Near the corner of George and Duchess Streets we have a sink of death and disease in a place called Bethune's Lane or Fish Alley, where, in a former year, during the

heavy rage of cholera, every resident was affected, and the dead-cart a daily visitant. This lane contains nine apologies for houses, and is inhabited by about fifty souls. There are no back yards to these miserable hovels, and slops, filth and dirt are thrown out in front of the doors. At one end of the lane the necessary is in a fearful state, and it is credibly believed that a well, situated a short distance from it, received the sewage, and that it was to residents drinking this water in 1854 the severe attack of cholera in that quarter was attributed.

"Pine Street is another bad street in the city for cow-pens, and in these there is not the slightest attempt at cleanliness. Queen Street, east of Parliament, is another locale of pig-pens and cow-sheds, and on Queen Street, opposite Cooke's Church, can be seen a dwelling house the cellar of which is used as a stable for three cows and a horse, and the effluvia from which must find its way into the rooms above, occupied by human beings. Coming further west an examination of the premises within eyesight of the City Hall will show how dilatory those whose duty it is to inspect the city have been in their duties. In the rear of the buildings on Palace Street, where decent citizens are supposed to live, will be found overloaded necessaries, and filth of every kind, which ought to put decent men to shame. Take a glance at the western part of the city, and in the rear of buildings on the west side of York Street, between Richmond and Adelaide Streets, the same story will be found of filthy places. Walk as far as Dummer Street. Look in the rear of 'Deadbeat Lane' and 'Whiskey Alley', and go through a passage three feet wide, and have a look at 'Hole in the Wall'. In this latter, which is situate on the west side of Dummer Street, we find ourselves in a room eight by ten feet, the entrance being by a half door, and the light coming through an old-fashioned casement window which has not been cleaned since the building was erected fifteen years ago. In one corner is a dilapidated-looking stove, with a pot full of dirty water attempting to boil by the feeble aid of a few hardwood chips. On a chair minus a leg and back is seated a youth about ten years of age, half clad and holding two benumbed hands over the flickering embers of the half-lighted chips;

a little girl is nestling in a corner of the room on a quantity of dirty straw, half covered with a torn counterpane, and both are anxiously awaiting the return of their mother, who is out begging a morsel; their father is an inmate of the gaol, and when he is not working for the good of the city he is sawing wood for any citizen who will give him a job."

"If the east end of the city can claim the premium for dirt, filth, cow-sheds and pig-pens, the west certainly can follow close in its wake. Renfrew Street, around St. Patrick's Market, Maple Lane, near Phoebe Street school-house, where hundreds of children are daily congregated; Greg Lane, Centre Street, and some parts of Brock Street were also named as being in a disgraceful condition."[28]

From time to time new public buildings were erected to replace those which had outlived their usefulness. In 1853 a new Post Office at 10 Toronto Street (now the Receiver-General's Office) commenced to serve the city, and continued to do so until 1873, when the present building at the head of the street was erected. In announcing the opening of the 1853 office the *Globe* was in a reminiscent mood:

"The provision for the accommodation of the public, in beauty of design and practical convenience, far surpasses anything we have seen in North America, and does great credit to the architect, Mr. Cumberland. . . . Not many years have passed since the office was removed to the place it is now deserting, but how few of our present citizens remember the little old house at the foot of Yonge Street. At that time there were not 15,000 people in Toronto. Now there are probably 35,000. The Markets, the Banks, the St. Lawrence Hall, the Asylum, the two University piles, the Normal School, eight splendid churches and cathedrals, and whole streets of elegant buildings, have all sprung into existence since then, and yet but ten years have gone past. It seems like magic to look back upon it. We question if there is a town in the world which has advanced more rapidly than Toronto."[29]

To this Toronto, improved by seven years of further development, came the Prince of Wales on September 7,

[28] Timperlake, op. cit., pp. 140-3. Early in 1858 Lieut.-Governor Bruce instituted a movement to eliminate slums in modern Toronto.
[29] Globe, February 5, 1853.

1860. The press characterized his visit as "the brightest day in the annals of Upper Canada":

"Many a year hence it will be told that on that day the heir-apparent to the British throne made his public entry into the chief city of the Western Province, and received a welcome surpassing in magnificence and enthusiasm all the public ovations ever before witnessed in the New World. No pen could adequately describe the unbounded enthusiasm of the joyous multitude assembled to greet their future Sovereign on the banks of Lake Ontario. Nor will anyone who witnessed it ever recall without thrilling delight the magnificent spectacle presented when the Prince stepped from his vessel and took his seat upon the throne amidst the thundering cheers of the vast concourse piled up in the noble amphitheatre around him.

"The illumination of the city at night was a very grand sight, far surpassing, we believe, any similar demonstration ever witnessed on the continent. Particular buildings may have been illuminated elsewhere on a grander scale, but as a whole we doubt if the display was ever excelled in America in extent, variety, and brilliance of decoration. The Normal Schools, Osgoode Hall, and the Romain Buildings were magnificently decorated, and the *Globe* Buildings, St. Lawrence Hall, the Edinburgh Assurance Company, the St. Nicholas Restaurant and several other buildings were illuminated in splendid style. Many of the arches erected at prominent points of the city were noble designs, and executed with a degree of artistic taste which must have astonished the illustrious guests who passed under them. The arch erected at the crest of the noble amphitheatre at the landing will be a lasting monument to the fame of its designer, Mr. Storm. Fine as were the arches erected at Quebec, Montreal and Ottawa, the finest of them could not for a moment enter into competition with it."[61]

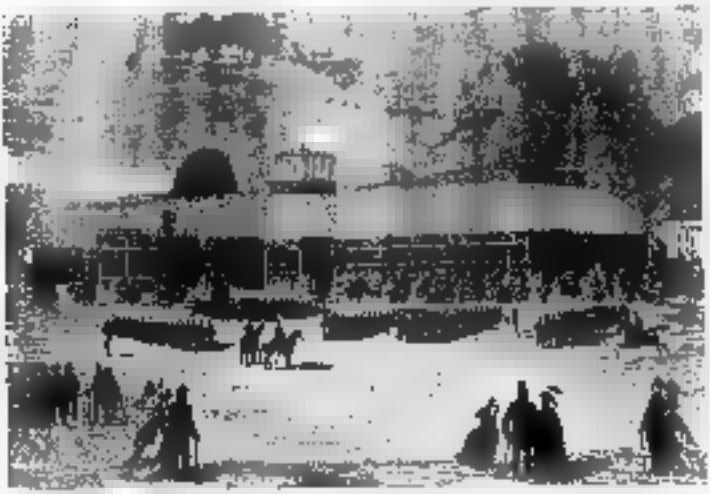
In 1866 the Fenian Raid scare was exciting the inhabitants in a much less pleasant manner. The frivolous attitude which the government adopted towards the activities of Fenians is paralleled only by Sir Francis Bond Head's manner of treating the Mackenzie Rebellion of 1837; and it was not unexpected, consequently, that on Sunday,

[61] *Ibid.*, September 8, 1860.

Canadian Illustrated News.

THE "OLD BLOCK FORT" NEAR YORKVILLE, C.W., IN 1863

This notable landmark stood on the east side of Yonge, opposite the present Belmont Street. Several similar blockhouses were erected in various parts of Toronto, but only those at the foot of Bathurst Street now remain.



Dominion Pictorial.

VOLUNTEERS TRAINING AT THE CRYSTAL PALACE, 1870

Originally called the Palace of Industry, the first permanent Exhibition building was located to the south of the Provincial Lunatic Asylum. The troops were quartered in the building before leaving for the West to quell the first Riel Rebellion.

Hannay's War of 1812.

THE WESTERN ENTRANCE TO THE HARBOUR, 1832

The original high banks were very different from the flat bay shore of today.

June 3, 1866, it was rumoured in Toronto "that the Queen's Own Volunteers, then near Ridgeway, would shortly be in want of provisions. A few citizens became aware of the fact during the forenoon. A meeting was promptly called, citizens were detailed to canvass among merchants and others for supplies, and at two o'clock the steamer *City of Toronto* sailed with the following free offerings of the merchants, contributed in two or three hours' time, viz.: 2 barrels of sugar, 2 barrels of pork, 1 barrel of tobacco, 8 boxes of tobacco, 2 boxes of sundries, 9 boxes of cigars, 19½ boxes of biscuits, 16 barrels of biscuits, 41 barrels of bread, 9 boxes of cheese, 5 sides of bacon, 6 tons of hams, 2 chests of tea, 1 case of matches, 3 cases of brandy, 3 cases of gin, 6 hogsheads of ale, 1 case of glasses, 4 rolls of spiced bacon, 9 rolls of dried beef, 1 box of butter, 4 cases of coffee, a very large quantity of fresh meat (about five tons), bacon, medicine, splints and surgical instruments. The whole was given in charge of Messrs. C. W. Bunting, John Boyd and John Leys, members of the Committee, and for hours after the steamer had left the wharf citizens poured down Yonge Street, bringing with them their contributions in quantities sufficient to have supplied a small army."[14]

In such a generous manner did the inhabitants of that day forecast the patriotism that was to be so characteristic of the much greater city of the days of the Great War.

The Toronto of the seventies and eighties is sufficiently remote to be unfamiliar to most of the citizens of today, and yet close enough that many people still living can recall it. It was the time when people were tremendously excited over Edison's little tin-foil phonograph, and when roller-skating and the first awkward-looking bicycles were arousing as much curiosity as the earliest "motor carriages" did nearly a quarter of a century later. The period forms a fitting point to close this chapter, for Toronto was then a great city, although the horse-car had not yet been superseded by the trolley, wooden sidewalks and cedar-block streets were still in general use, and the boundaries of that day did not comprehend a very large section of the present city. In 1877 Yonge Street had over 600 buildings, about six times the number in the first year of the city; while the

[14] Timperlake, op. cit., p. 141.

main street, King, had 848, many of them old and dilapidated, the number in 1834 being 287. Apart altogether from the city's structural development and extent there still remained among its topographical features many evidences which were to disappear as they came to be considered in the path of progress. Hills were to be cut down, ravines filled in, and the water of creeks carried away in underground sewers; but old inhabitants can still recall when there were several streams within the city limits, the course of one of which passed through its very centre, and is still easy to trace in part. An interesting description of this creek recently appeared in the press:

"There was a stream or creek which crossed Bloor Street, where the McMaster University building stands, and flowed south through the university grounds, forming the dog pond (now the site of Hart House). It went on past the site of the Medical building on College Street, crossing it into the lovely estate of Sir John Beverley Robinson ('Sleepy Hollow'), then past the Caer Howell Hotel and its bowling green on what is now Murray Street, to about where the Military Institute stands; then it turned eastward through the present parade ground of the Armories to Holy Trinity Church, which stood on its banks. Crossing Yonge Street it found its way to Moss Park and so to the Don.

"A branch of this stream turned east at the present site of Sir Joseph Flavelle's home, and wound past where Victoria University now is on to Yonge Street. The northern side was known as 'Clover Hill' as far as Yonge. Crossing Yonge it entered the grounds of Donald MacKay, extending to Church Street, where it was well wooded and full of fish. After crossing Church Street to the present old Granite Rink, the water was turned into the sewer and the creek ended. Before that the stream had made its way to the Normal School grounds. There was a stone culvert across Church Street; one can still see where the original bank was, in the yard at the southeast corner of Gould and Church.

"I can remember three collapses of walls of buildings along the course of this stream—the east end of the original Granite Rink, a house on Wellesley Street, and at the corner

of Broadalbane and Yonge; even to-day you can see where the sidewalk at this point has sunk, and I well recall when the sewer collapsed and a good piece of Yonge Street there disappeared."[*]

In the early eighties the old but not venerable City Hall was still in use—and so continued until 1899; but Toronto was by no means deficient either in natural advantages or structural beauty, as the following quotations from G. Mercer Adam's essay will show:

"The reign of solitude on the Great Lakes has nowhere been more pleasantly broken by the life and movement which indicate the approaches to a great city than in the case of Toronto. . . . To the traveller whose brain has been stunned by the sights and sounds of Niagara, and to whom the restful passage of the lake has brought relief, the view of the 'Queen City of the West', with its array of dome and turret, arch and spire, and the varied movements of its water-frontage, is one that cannot fail to evoke pleasure and create surprise. . . . Coaches and cabs are flying to and from the hotels. The street cars glide past, diverging, a short way on, towards various points. . . . Massive warehouses and piles of buildings block in the traffic, though the vista of crowded streets opens everywhere to view. The city, which covers an area of eight or ten square miles, is built on a low-lying plain with a rising inclination to the upper or northern end, where a ridge bounds it, which was probably the ancient margin of the lake. Within this area are close upon 120 miles of streets, laid out after a rigid, chessboard pattern, though monotony is avoided by the prevalence of boulevards and ornamental shade trees in the streets and avenues not given up to commerce.

"What the city lacks in picturesqueness of situation is atoned for in its beautiful harbour, in the development of an aesthetic taste among the people. . . . We have now less flimsy sheet-iron ornament, and more decorative work in stone. . . . On the whole there is a creditable display of architectural taste and skill. . . . The Custom House, with its adjoining Examining Warehouse, is perhaps one of the

[*]Reminiscences of Harry P. Nesmith, quoted in Fred Williams: *In Toronto Fifty Years Ago.* (Toronto *Mail and Empire*, January 17, 1924.)

most striking instances of the new architectural *régime*. . . . . The American Hotel . . . . the Queen's . . . . the Bank of British North America . . . . the Ontario, Imperial, Toronto, Standard and Federal Banks . . . . the head office of the Bank of Commerce . . . . Toronto Street, the upper end of which is terminated by the Post Office, an imposing building in the Italian style of architecture. . . . The County Court Buildings and the headquarters of the Police Department and the Fire Brigade."[14]

All of these were important and even notable buildings in the city of that day, though most of them—if still standing—are now hidden by more colossal, if not more imposing structures. There were, of course, many other buildings of architectural merit. The Insane Asylum, Knox College, Osgoode Hall, Trinity University, the Normal School, St. Lawrence Hall, the University of Toronto (now University College), McMaster Hall and the Metropolitan Methodist Church were among the sights of the city. The limits of this Toronto of some 30,000 inhabitants are apparent from further selections from the work[15] just quoted:

"From Bloor Street, or what used to be known as the Sydenham Road, the adjoining suburb of Yorkville extends north and east. . . . To the north is Deer Park, another pretty off-shoot of the town. . . . To the west lies Seaton Village, and all about are the suburban residences of wealthy merchants. . . . West and north of the Asylum a new Toronto is rapidly rising in the suburban villages of Brockton and Parkdale. . . . A short drive beyond the Don, through Leslieville, the pleasant site of extensive market gardens, brings us to Norway, Ben Lamond, and the com-

[14] This is quoted from the chapter on Toronto in G. M. Grant (Ed.): *Picturesque Canada*, 1870, Vol. I, p. 398 et seq.

[15] *Ibid.* In addition to the villages named in this description, others in the vicinity of Toronto were Deverourt at Bloor and Davenport Streets; Brasendale near Bathurst and Davenport; Todmorden, Doncaster and Chester near the Danforth Road; and Davisville and Eglinton north of Yorkville. From 1834 to 1883 the city was 6,771 acres in extent, but in 1883 a development, partly speculative, commenced, and the village of Yorkville threw in her lot with Toronto, to be followed soon after by other villages. By 1889 the area of the city had increased to 15,889 acres, and sewers, cedar block pavements and plank sidewalks were rapidly pushed into what was largely farm land. Taxes rose, real estate agents flourished, the Belt Line Railway was built—but the deflation and depression of the early nineties was the inevitable end of over-development and speculation.

manding elevation of Scarboro Heights. . . . Regaining the Don, we direct our steps northward, and, passing by Riverside, another outflow of the city, and by the fine buildings and adjoining farm of the New Jail, we continue our ramble through the woods in the direction of Yorkville."

All of these suburbs which then encircled Toronto have long since been swallowed up by the extension of the boundaries of the city—now rapidly approaching the million mark in population; but the mere recital of them recalls a day not yet remote, when disciples of Izaak Walton might, without wandering far afield, enjoy "the contemplative man's recreation"; . . . . "a wholesome walk to the Brookside, pleasant shade by the sweet silver Streams; . . . . good air, and sweet smells of fine fresh meadow Flowers; . . . . the melodious harmony of Birds."

CHAPTER II

The Harbour

The sandy spit extending some six miles from the mouth of the Don River enclosed a natural harbour known to the French as *La Baie de Toronto*. The bay is represented on a number of maps made prior to the founding of the town of Toronto in 1793, that ascribed to Louis Joliet and thought to have been made about 1673 being the earliest. Captain Gother Mann made late in 1789 a "Plan of Taronto Harbour with the proposed Town and Settlement"; and in 1791-2 Augustus Jones, government surveyor, laid out eleven townships in the district. The most westerly, York, was originally named Dublin, for the Toronto harbour section was entitled "Plan of the Front Line of Dublin, with the Harbour and Soundings".

Joseph Bouchette visited the site of Toronto in 1792, before the founding of the town, and afterwards wrote with reference to his survey of the harbour: "I distinctly recollect the untamed aspect which the country exhibited when first I entered the beautiful basin, which thus became the scene of my early hydrographical operations. Dense and trackless forests lined the margin of the lake and reflected their inverted images in its glassy surface. The wandering savage had constructed his ephemeral habitation beneath their luxuriant foliage—the group then consisting of two families of Mississaugas—and the bay and neighbouring marshes were the hitherto uninvaded haunts of immense coveys of wild-fowl."[1]

Bouchette's minute delineation of the peninsula enables one to see the course of its formation, as well as that of the inevitable marshes at the mouth of the Don. The eastern part of the bay—the marshy section—has long been known as Ashbridge's Bay; while the harbour proper is a circular basin to the westward, nearly two miles in diameter. The excellent protection which the peninsula afforded led to Lord Dorchester's choice of the location as the site of "the King's

[1] J. Bouchette: *The British Dominions in North America*, 1831, Vol. 1, p. 89 fn.

arsenal on Lake Ontario," and it was later to become the capital of the province. Lieut.-Governor John Graves Simcoe first visited Toronto on May 2, 1793, and selected the site of the town, but it was the latter part of July before his plans for its development were well under way.[1]

The town proper was not commenced until 1794, but work on the fortifications to the westward was actively pushed in 1793, and on August 26th the Governor changed the name from Toronto to York in honour of the Duke of York, who had won a notable victory over the French. At noon the following day the first royal salute was fired from the garrison of the town and responded to by the gunboats in the harbour in commemoration of the change in name.

As is evident from the plan of York harbour made by Alexander Aitkin in 1793, the stress was laid upon the town's military expansion, and the first development of the harbour was in the vicinity of the Garrison. Buoys were placed at the entrance to prevent the repetition of the stranding of vessels on the sandy shallows. At the mouth of Garrison Creek the first wharves were built, and to facilitate the landing of stores a canal and several sluice gates were constructed, which enabled control of the water level.

At the town, meanwhile, the development of landing facilities was, and long continued to be hampered by a dense growth of weeds and rushes. Temporary landing-places were used in the early years of the town, but something better was essential at the commencement of the new century. In 1801 York was made a customs port, and a report of duties received mentions a storehouse. This was located at the foot of Frederick Street, and in November, 1809, the first important wharf was constructed there by W. Allan, who, among other offices, held the position of Collector of Duties. This was for some time the only wharf at which the larger ships could land, and after being known for some years as Allan's Wharf it came to be called the Merchants' Wharf.

As time passed, other wooden jetties were pushed out into the Bay. The King's or Navy Wharf, between John and Peter Streets, the Commissariat Wharf, at the foot of Peter Street, and the Farmers' Wharf, were among those con-

[1] Diary of Mrs. John Graves Simcoe, July 30, 1793.

structed in the next few years. Cooper's Wharf, later called Feighan's and then Maitland's, was built at the foot of Church Street previous to 1818, for it is marked, along with the other wharves and large storehouses, on Lieutenant George Phillpott's Plan for York, dated May 24th of that year. This wharf was the place at which the first steamship on Lake Ontario, the *Frontenac*, landed in 1817. A storehouse, with a covered way in the middle, and a shipbuilding yard of considerable size, were located near the wharf.

In the shoal water between the various wharves great quantities of rushes grew. Numerous attempts to eradicate them were made from year to year at considerable expense to the town or county authorities. Perhaps the most successful efforts in this direction were those of Captain Macaulay. After Mr. Coles' account of £13 6s. 8d. "for his assistants' labour in destroying rushes in front of the Market Square" in July, 1821, had been paid, the minutes of the County Court for August record that "Capt. Macaulay, Royal Engineers, offered to cut down the rushes in front of the town between the Merchants' Wharf and Cooper's Wharf, for a sum not to exceed ninety dollars, which would merely be the expense of the men and materials in executing the undertaking: his own time he would give to the public on this occasion, as encouragement to others to endeavour to destroy the rushes when they became a nuisance". It was accordingly ordered "that ninety dollars be paid to Capt. Macaulay or his order, for the purpose of cutting down the rushes, according to his verbal undertaking to cut down the same, to be paid out of the Police or District funds in the hands of the treasurer of the District".[3] Commenting upon these activities Dr. Scadding gives an interesting account of the method employed:

"We have understood that Capt. Macaulay's measures for the extinction of the rank vegetation in the shallow waters of the harbour proved to be very efficient. The instrument used was a kind of screw grapnel, which, let down from the side of a large scow, laid hold of the rushes at their root and forcibly wrenched them out of the bed of mud below. The entire plant was thus lifted up, and

[3]See Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old*. 1873, p. 50.

drawn by a windlass into the scow. When a full load of the aquatic weed was collected it was taken out into the open water of the Lake and there disposed of."[8]

Previous to the creation of the City of Toronto in 1834 three more wharves were built. The next in point of time was Ewart's, near the foot of Church Street. In 1831 Tinning's Wharf was constructed a short distance east of York Street; and in 1833-4 the New Wharf (extended in 1837, the year of Victoria's accession, and renamed the Queen's) was built farther westward, near the foot of Bathurst Street, and remained until 1917 when it was buried by the reclamation work of the Harbour Commission. This wharf, the first work of any magnitude to be undertaken in Toronto Harbour, resulted from Acts in 1833 and 1837 granting a total of £4,500 to facilitate navigation and provide more adequate wharf accommodation for large steamers. A system of tolls and wharfage charges was instituted at the same time, all previous dues, excepting a toll for the upkeep of the Island lighthouse, being regulated entirely by the private companies which owned the docks.

The fortifications, which were early established at the Garrison as a defence for the harbour, cannot be described in detail here. The barracks and blockhouses erected under Simcoe's direction, 1793-6, were supplemented in 1798 and subsequent years, but it is unlikely that any of the buildings survived the American occupation of 1813. Three years later, during 1816, fortifications of considerable magnitude were planned, and the scheme put into execution during the next few years. The group of buildings east of the Exhibition Grounds include several which, with some later variations, date from this period. Among the eight blockhouses which at one time or another were erected in the vicinity of the town was one on Gibraltar (Hanlan's) Point which was among the first military works constructed for the defence of the harbour and town. This blockhouse was erected in 1794 and demolished in 1818, and was once armed with one or two guns. The point upon which it was located was later dredged out, and the remains of the blockhouse, as well as some small cannon balls, were uncovered during the operations.

[8]Ibid.

It was early realised by Governor Simcoe that some type of light to guide vessels into York harbour was essential, but, apart from a few buoys in the western channel, nothing was done about it until 1808, when the *Gazette* refers to the commencement of a lighthouse on Gibraltar Point:

"It is a pleasure to inform the public that the danger to vessels navigating Lake Ontario will in a great measure be avoided by the erection of a lighthouse on Gibraltar Point which is to be completed in compliance with an address of the House of Assembly to the Lieutenant-Governor."[5]

The address referred to was dated March 9, 1808, and on April 6th the Lieutenant-Governor personally visited Gibraltar Point and chose the spot for the lighthouse. Work commenced immediately, and the lighthouse was completed in 1809. Funds were provided by the House to defray the cost; and it was stipulated that the collections made under the terms of the Act of 1808 (a levy of 3d. per ton on all vessels entering the harbour) should be used to repay the amount advanced. The ship *Mohawk* was employed to haul limestone from Queenston, and John Thompson was one of the masons engaged in work upon the structure. The lighthouse was 54 feet in height to the floor of the lamp room, and a wooden cage encircled by a balcony was used by the keeper to signal the approach of a vessel. The continual change in form of the peninsula owing to the forces of nature is well shown by the comment of Captain Thomas Smith in 1854: "I have lived in Toronto for over forty years, and been connected with sailing the greater part of the time. . . . . When the lighthouse was built by my grandfather and uncle the materials for building it were landed within 25 feet of where it stands; but the land extends now over a quarter of a mile to the south and three-quarters of a mile to the west of the lighthouse."[6]

In 1833 the height of the lighthouse was increased to 66 feet, and an improved light installed. The unsatisfactory flag signalling method was replaced by the use of canvas balls or spheres coloured red, white and blue, and as this means proved inconvenient it in turn gave way to signalling

[5] *Upper Canada Gazette*, 1808. (The exact date of the issue is not available.)

[6] Cited in J. E. Middleton: *The Municipality of Toronto, a History*, 1923. Vol. I, p. 456.

from a new flagpole a short distance to the north-west. In 1878 the old stationary light was replaced by a flashlight, one of the largest in Canada, which revolved every thirty seconds and could be seen for fourteen miles. It is of interest to know that the light still shines during the period of navigation, though petitions by the City Council were necessary to prevent the government from discontinuing it in 1907, and again in 1911.

Another important lighthouse in the harbour was on the Queen's Wharf, and was constructed in 1861 of wood, with a metal lamp housing. It was on the north side of the old Western Channel and remained in effective use until 1911, when the new channel was opened about 1,100 feet to the south. The original lighthouse has been preserved a short distance from its former site, though the harbour reclamation work has left it several hundred yards from the present waterfront. A lighthouse on the piers at the Eastern Gap, together with fog-horns at both entrances, completes this part of the equipment of the harbour.

Before outlining the first improvement of Toronto harbour by the Esplanade development, some account of the means of approach to the wharves in the days of sailing-ships will be of value. Special signals were used in York when the King's Ships of the Provincial Marine were ordered to sail. They were to be flown from the masthead of the vessels, and repeated at the blockhouse near the Don, as the following announcement issued from the Lieutenant-Governor's office shows:

"Notice is hereby given that when the King's Vessels have received their orders to proceed from hence to Niagara the following signal will be hoisted at the Foretop Gallant Mast Head, and repeated from the Blockhouse in town, viz.: To Niagara, a White Flag; to Kingston, a Blue Flag."[7]

The usual method of announcing to intending travellers that a vessel was about to leave port was to blow repeated blasts on a long tin horn, which was sounded at intervals previous to their casting loose and at the moment of departure.

The earliest Lake Ontario steamship was the *Frontenac*, which first entered the harbour of York in 1817. For some

[7] *Upper Canada Gazette*, June 5, 1802.

years steamships were operated under considerable difficulties, as but few harbours had been constructed. It was usual for a ship to anchor at some distance from shore while passengers and goods were transferred by bateau or Durham boat. The wharves at York were approached by early steamships only with great difficulty, the vessel being brought to a standstill some way out in the harbour, and boats lowered from the fore and aft gangways; these craft carried hawsers, and when they had reached shore the ship was solemnly hauled to the wharf, the onlookers evincing surprise that the feat could be successfully accomplished.

Maitland's Wharf (formerly Cooper's) long continued to be the landing-place of most steamships, though in the early forties it was becoming rather the worse for wear. In 1841 Sir Richard Bonnycastle travelled up the lake on the *Great Britain*, one of the most popular steamships of the time, and landed at Toronto on this wharf, which he calls "a narrow decaying pier". He writes that he was "jostled almost into the water by rude carters plying for hire on its narrow bounds, and pestered by crowds of equally rude pilers for hotel preferences". The aristocratic Sir Richard found other ports similar to Toronto in these respects, however; and he also noticed the inconvenience caused by the fact that all the boats, "for some unaccountable reason", preferred to start upon their voyages at night.[1]

Some interesting memories of waterfront activities, honest and otherwise, are built up by John Ross Robertson around one Michael Masterson, whose official occupation in 1846 was razor-grinder, but who was versatile enough to include in his repertoire anything from smuggling to renting boats, from sailing his own schooner to praising publicly someone else's steamship line:

"In the *Directory* of 1846 we find 'Masterson, Michael, razor-grinder, Bay Shore, near York Street'. His house was at the foot of Bay Street, about a hundred feet from the south line of Front Street, for in those days, in fact till the time the Esplanade was built, the shore ran up to the edge of the bank, the line of which would be a little south of the front doors of the warehouse in the Iron Block. The

[1]Sir Richard Bonnycastle: *The Canadas in 1841*. 1842. Vol. I, pp. 146-7.

John [illegible] Collection. William [illegible].

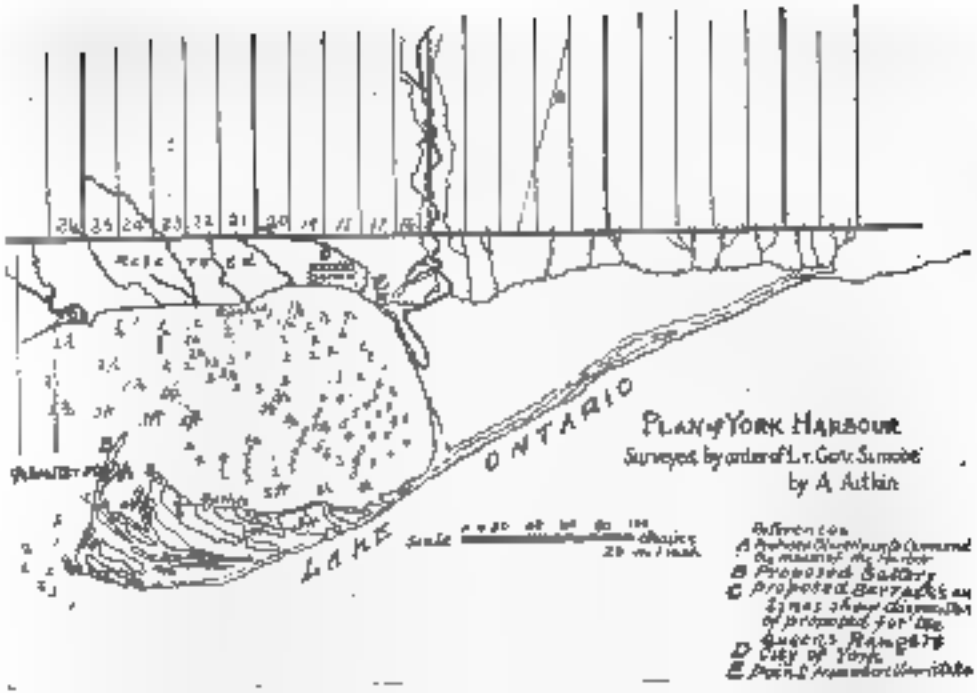
THE LIGHTHOUSE ON THE PENINSULA, 1851

This landmark was completed in 1849, and was 52 feet high. In 1852 twelve feet was added to its height, but the structure has not otherwise been materially altered since its erection.

John [illegible] Collection.

MICHAEL MASTERSON'S COTTAGE ON THE BAY SHORE

Sailor, smuggler, rentor of boats, "Fisty" Masterson was later a razor-grinder. His home was situated near the foot of Bay Street, and he and his wife took a kindly interest in the schoolboys who were often to be found around their boats.



John Ross Robertson Collection.

ALEXANDER AITKIN'S PLAN OF YORK HARBOUR, 1793

York was originally intended to be an Arsenal, but was later chosen as the capital of Upper

writer has bathed within a few feet of the back of the old Custom House on Front and Yonge which was burned down in 1870.

"Masterson was a city character. In the early days, from about 1825, he was a sailor. Through a mishap his left arm was shot off when quite a young man. A wooden arm with an iron hook did good service in lieu of the genuine article. His wife was a most estimable and motherly woman, and in later years when Masterson kept boats for hire at the foot of Bay Street, Mrs. Masterson always had a kindly eye for the welfare of the school and U.C. College boys who were her patrons. Long before this era, Michael, or, as he was popularly named, 'Fisty', had a small schooner which he ran across the lake, and it is said that he did quite a lot of smuggling. His vessel was two-masted and about forty feet long. He called his craft the *Christina* after his wife, who, by the way, was a Scotchwoman and a zealous Presbyterian.

"When Carfrae was Collector of Customs he attempted to seize the vessel on account of a lot of tea that had been smuggled for a King Street grocer, now a wealthy man in Toronto. 'Fisty' did not believe, as he said, in having 'the broad arrow' on his deck, so he, one-armed and all as he was, grasped Carfrae about the neck, and jumping overboard attempted to drown him, but fortunately both were rescued, and Masterson was heavily fined. On another occasion a couple of hogsheads of wine were captured by the Customs. It was removed uptown to Moasley's auction rooms on King Street, near the market. The sale was fixed for a certain date. The crowd assembled and the auctioneer directed that the wine be tested, when, to the amazement of the audience, it was found that the wine had turned to water by some mysterious process.

"In those days there was a great deal of smuggling carried on. The farmers on the lake shore used to connive at many a cargo of stuff being run in from the States, and large amounts of money were made. An old carter named Handy used to secrete tea in his stables and keep it there for weeks till a prominent King Street establishment was ready to receive it. Masterson, however, gave up his bad tricks, and with a grinding machine went about town earn-

ing a good stipend. He also kept boats for hire from about 1847, at the foot of Bay Street. At a later period Mr. Darby Finch and Mr. Millard, two popular boatmen, kept boats for hire at Rees' Wharf, foot of Simcoe Street. Mrs. Masterson ran the boat department and her house was kept as bright as a new pin. Her charge for boats was seven pence half penny an hour, and the patronage was very liberal.

"The Mastersons had one son, a clever fellow, who was educated at Upper Canada College. His name was Charles Michael, and he was a phenomenal musician. He could play the violin with much ability. Mrs. Masterson was, in after years, an employee of the Boys' or Girls' Home. Her son went out west. Michael, the father, was a man of about 6 feet 9 inches in height, stout and burly, sharp and keen. In the summer months he was a runner for the steamer which ran from Toronto and Hamilton to Rochester. It was amusing to hear him shout out the advantages of this particular steamer and route he was working for as he stood at the corner of Yonge and Front Streets, while his rivals in the business would be doing as well on another corner."*

The hubbub of carriages other memories, too. At the middle of the century, and earlier, the curlers of the city were to be found playing "the roarin' game" on rinks kept free of snow between the wharves. There was a skating rink at the foot of Yonge Street, and the best figure-skater of the day was Principal F. W. Barron of Upper Canada College. The officers of the Garrison and the young bloods of the city outdid one another in bearing about in their gay carrioles and cutters, and the Bay in winter wore a picturesque and typically Canadian aspect. In summer the swimming that is now centred in the Island and eastern and western beaches took place in the more central portions of the Bay. The days of salmon-spearing by jack-light from birch canoes had passed, but pike, bass, perch, sunfish and an occasional maskinonge could still be caught off the wharves, though lunge were, of course, more plentiful in the Don and Ashbridge's Bay. Many a citizen, too, enjoyed an hour's sail on the horse-boat which long conducted the ferry service to the Peninsula; while those who could afford sail-

*John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*, 1894-1914, Vol. I, pp. 334-5.

ing yachts of their own competed in the regattas which were prominent sporting events on its waters.

The incorporation of York into the city of Toronto in 1834 had no effect on the condition of the harbour, for the city had no jurisdiction in the matter. The harbour front at that time followed the "Windmill Line", extending from Old Fort Point to Gooderham and Worts' Mill on Trinity Street. In 1837 the first preparations looking towards the construction of the Esplanade were taken when the city commenced to secure all land along the waterfront not already in private possession. The patent of such lots from Berkeley to Graves (Simcoe) Street was granted in 1840, and in 1853 a license of occupation was secured for those westward from Graves Street to the Queen's Wharf. A map in the Surveyor-General's office shows the projected Esplanade to be 100 feet in width and from 150 to 330 feet from the existing waterfront.

During the thirties and forties wharves additional to those already named were built from time to time. In 1836 John Cull made use of a large scow, which operated under the name of "The Royal Floating Bath". The *Toronto Directory* of 1837 gives an interesting description of the establishment:

"These baths have been erected by Mr. Cull of this City; they are 110 feet in length and 21 feet in width, and contain two warm and ten cold baths, with vapour and shower baths. One end is exclusively appropriated to ladies, with a private entrance from the gallery outside and leading to an elegant drawing-room adjoining a promenade deck 80 feet long with a dome roof, and trellis work guards all round. It is capable of accommodating 200 persons, and so constructed that the additional weight of 300 will not depress the bath one inch. There are reading and refreshment rooms for both ladies and gentlemen, fitted up in the best possible style. These baths are highly creditable to the city from point of appearance, and not less so as to their utility."[10]

Some eight or ten years later the baths were not being

[10]George Walton's *City of Toronto and Home District Commercial Directory and Register, with Almanack and Calendar for 1837*, p. 6.

used except as dressing-rooms for the Baptists, who were usually immersed in the Bay at the foot of Bay Street. By 1847 there was a total of eighteen wharves in the harbour, though some were showing signs of extreme old age.

Among the early regulations of the Port of Toronto are a number which recall the days of sailing-ships, and still others which existed because of the bad condition of the waterfront. It was ordered that all obstructions to navigation, such as sunken wharves, should be removed, and that no vessel should add to the refuse in the harbour by discharging ballast.[13] It appears, however, to have been expected, that this regulation might be "more honour'd in the breach than the observance", and that the sunken wharves might not all be removed, for it was provided that they should be marked with beacon lights, and, if not so marked, the owners of the wharves would be liable for any damage to vessels. A regulation notable for its seamanly language stipulated that "all schooners, square-rigged vessels or steamers lying at wharves shall top up their lower yards, or brace them fore and aft; also rig in their movable bumpkins and davits, lower or house all boats hanging over the stem or quarter or any way outside the vessel". On foggy days precautions were to be taken by all vessels to warn others by ringing their bells, blowing off steam, sounding horns, or in some other way attracting attention to their location in the harbour.[14]

In 1860 schooners still predominated in lake trade. J. E. Middleton[15] gives a list of twenty-nine Toronto schooners engaged in that year in the carriage of grain, and remarks that "the combined burden of all these little sailing craft would about fill one hatchway of the modern Upper Lakes steamer". The largest of these schooners, the *Omar Pasha*, could carry 14,000 bushels, the smallest, the *Echo*, only 2,000. In the autumn of 1933 "the last sailing-ship on the Great Lakes" was to be burned off Sunnyside to provide a novel spectacle for Toronto's thrill-seekers, but was tempor-

[13] Seventeen regulations may be found in the small printed pamphlet, *Rules, By-Laws and Regulations of the Port of Toronto, passed by the Commissioners of the Harbour of Toronto the 24th day of December, 1850.* For many valuable suggestions concerning the history of the harbour the writer is indebted to V. M. Roberts, Esq., Librarian of the Harbour Commission.

[14] Middleton, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 272.

arily saved from this ignominious end by public disapproval of such a wanton act. Nearly half a century earlier the steamship had won the competition for lake traffic, and had, in turn, suffered greatly from its land rival, the railway.

Meanwhile merchants and shippers were dissatisfied with the manner in which the government was operating the harbour, and a campaign instituted by the Board of Trade succeeded in effecting, in 1850, the passage of "An Act to Provide for the Future Management of Toronto Harbour". A Commission of five men was placed in charge of the Queen's Wharf and of navigation in general, but had no jurisdiction over privately-owned wharves, and the development of the harbour under such divided control was hardly to be expected. Railways were in the air, however, and in 1853 the public quay or Esplanade was commenced, C. S. Gzowski & Co., contractors for the Grand Trunk Railway, being awarded the contract, which carried an agreement to sell the Railway a right of way forty feet wide along the entire Esplanade for $10,000. Tenders, contracts, disagreements and delays characterised the next ten years, but in 1863 the work was finished at a cost of about $750,000. During the course of the improvements several wharves were filled in, and the others were connected by a macadamised roadway of which the Torontonians of that day were quite proud.

As the years passed, other improvements increased the wharfage facilities of Toronto harbour. In 1863 Shedden's Wharf and elevator had been built at the foot of Peter Street, but in the next year it was destroyed by fire. In 1870 the Northern Railway Company's wharf at the foot of Brock Street (now Spadina Avenue) was a notable addition, and it remained until fire destroyed it in 1908. In the eighties and nineties the old Windmill Line was twice extended southward, the total distance being 644 feet and the last extension being known as the New Windmill Line; many of the wharves were consequently pushed farther into the Bay. Towards the close of the century the city constructed several additional wharves between Yonge Street and York Street; and by 1908 there were no less than forty between Bathurst Street and Parliament Street. At that time, however, the condition of the waterfront was deplorable, only

a few of the docks being in good repair, and the slips between them so full of silt and sewage that vessels drawing as little as twelve feet of water frequently grounded. The harbour was sadly in need of a comprehensive scheme of development as commensurate with the modern city as the old Esplanade had been in the Toronto of the fifties and sixties.

In January, 1852, the lake had made a breach in the peninsula at the narrows, and again in February, 1853, a storm formed a channel at that point three feet deep. Storms and low water in the spring of 1854 closed the beginnings of the Eastern Gap, however, and a protecting breakwater was erected at a cost of £1,389. On April 13, 1858, a storm battered the locality with such force that the breakwater and Quinn's Hotel were completely carried away and a permanent eastern entrance some 600 yards in width created. On May 31st the schooners *Elina* and *Highland Chief* left the harbour by way of the new channel, and by 1860 steamers and other craft were using the Eastern Gap. Nothing was done to prevent further erosion, and by 1862 a channel three-quarters of a mile in width and from five to eight feet deep had been formed. Buoys were placed to guide traffic, but some twenty years passed before anything further was done.

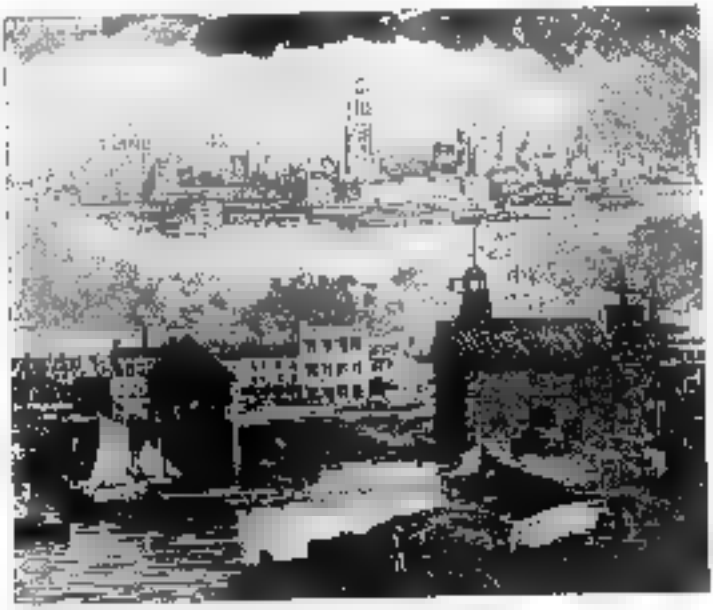
Bars outside the eastern channel continually interfered with its use, and the western entrance retained its supremacy, though it was difficult to navigate during seasons of low water. The City Council and the Harbour Commission petitioned the Dominion Government to take some action which would preserve the harbour from destruction by storms, and in 1879 an expert, J. B. Eads, reported in favour of closing both eastern and western channels, as well as all connection with Ashbridge's Bay, and, in place of the existing entrances, the opening of a channel across the north end of the island. In 1883 harbour improvements totalling $250,000, of which the city paid $100,000, were commenced, but the recommendations of Mr. Eads were not acted upon; on the contrary, both channels were improved, and a dyke was constructed separating Ashbridge's Bay from the harbour, but leaving an opening to the Don River.

The germ of modern developments along the waterfront

John Ross Robertson Collection — W. Wyly Grier, after an early sketch.

FRONT STREET BETWEEN PETER AND JOHN, 1810

Home of the First George Crookshank — Home of John Ferguson — Commissariat Storehouse — The Halfway House



Reproduced by Courtesy of the Canadian Bank of Commerce

TORONTO WATERFRONT, 1834 AND 1934

The lower illustration is based upon Bartlett's sketch of 1840. In the foreground is Maitland's Wharf; and the white building in the rear centre is the Ontario House, later the Wellington Hotel, on Palace (Front) Street.

Reproduced by Courtesy of the Toronto Harbour Commissioners.

EASTERN HARBOUR TERMINALS, 1914

"Where swamps and flocks of wild fowl were characteristic sights."

Reproduced by Courtesy of the Toronto Harbour Commissioners.

EASTERN HARBOUR TERMINALS, 1933

The remarkable developments of a few years are apparent when one compares the two photographs. The plans were approved in 1913-18, but the outbreak of the Great War delayed the work. A clean and attractive waterfront now forms a pleasant approach to the Queen City.

is in one respect afforded by an idea which Dr. Beaty had when Mayor in 1880. Referring to the low land at the mouth of the Don he planned "to fill up the marsh with dry earth" (we can appreciate his use of the word *dry*!) "from the hills north and east of the city. I examined this question when in Council 15 years ago, and I then had a plan to make alternate canals and streets in the marsh, and fill up the intervals or let the lots to manufacturers at a nominal rental, under conditions that they [illegible] up a certain acreage each year. The time had not come then to demand it, and I abandoned it for the time being".[1] When many years later the land was reclaimed as part of the harbour development the filling material was not carted from the hills but was excavated by hydraulic dredge and pumped 6,000 feet from the bed of the lake and from parts of the harbour.

In 1902 the eastern channel was deepened, and concrete piers were placed on either side of the entrance. In 1909 a new western channel south of the original one was built, but time had proved the utter impossibility of ever establishing any permanent policy of waterfront development as long as the magnificent resources remained under divided control. The Board of Trade inaugurated a campaign to induce the City Council and the Dominion Government to place all the city's waterfront properties and waterlots in Toronto Bay and Lake Ontario, including the whole of Ashbridge's Bay, into the hands of a permanent Commission for development. In December, 1910, the ratepayers expressed their approval by an overwhelming majority, and as a result "The Toronto Harbour Commissioners' Act" was passed on May 19, 1911, ushering in a new era in the development of the city.

In the autumn of 1912 the final plans of waterfront improvement were approved by the City Council, and in June, 1913, by the Dominion Government. The scheme included the reclamation of Ashbridge's Bay for industrial purposes, and the construction of a harbour head line 1,100 feet south of the New Windmill Line, the region north [illegible] it being filled [illegible] as the development proceeded. The harbour was to be deepened to 30 feet, and some 900 acres of park lands to the east and west of the harbour and on the Island were to [illegible]

[1] James Beaty: *Civic Relief*, 1896, p. 44.

reclaimed. The estimated cost of the entire scheme was $25,000,000.

The Great War interfered with the progress of the improvements, but in later years the work was pushed forward, and almost all of the plans have now been carried to completion. Toronto boasts one of the best harbours on the Great Lakes, and adequate provision has been made for her industrial and commercial expansion. At the same time the Toronto Grade Separation, which elevated the railway tracks, and the construction of the Queen's Quay, Fleet Street and similar roadways, have provided for the development of rail and motor transportation; while storage warehouses and manufacturing plants exist where swamps and flocks of wild fowl were, until recently, characteristic sights.

A unique feature in connection with the improvements has been the combination of recreational with industrial development. The breakwater forms adequate protection for canoes and other small boats, while the amusement resorts at Sunnyside and the Island provide countless thousands of people with summer pleasures unsurpassed anywhere. Life-saving has consequently developed greatly since the first official lifeboat was purchased in 1857 to aid mariners shipwrecked in or near the harbour. Until 1912 there was no permanent life-saving and police patrol service, and in earlier years it had long been necessary, when a wreck occurred, for the one boat, which was kept in Tinning's boathouse, to be manned by volunteers. As time passed, arrangements more satisfactory were gradually effected, but the modern waterfront development has necessitated a greatly enlarged service to provide adequate protection—not so much for mariners, as in days of old, but for bathers and boaters along the numerous beaches. "Toronto Harbour" implies much more than it did formerly, and the modern appearance of ten miles of clean and attractive waterfront affords a remarkable sight to all who can recall the conditions of but a few years ago.

CHAPTER III

The Island and the Ferry Service

Toronto Island, even in Indian days a favourite place for the holding of native councils, was from the earliest years of the town of York a pleasure resort enjoyed and appreciated as a centre of recreation. A peninsula until 1858, it was approached on foot, on horseback or by canoe in early times. In commenting on the necessity of a bridge across the mouth of the Don in order to facilitate approach to the Peninsula, the *Gazette* noted that there might be found land which would "answer every purpose of an extensive common to the owners of cattle; to those who might use it for purposes of recreation it furnishes a most delightful walk or ride; as a race ground or place for field exercise we know not its equal; the sportsman will find a constant and easy access to the best shooting ground; and the convalescent might find health in an occasional excursion to the opposite beach".[1]

While John Ross Robertson dates the establishment of a hotel on the Island, and of horse-boat transport to it, from the conversion of Lord Sydenham's residence into a hotel in 1843-4 by the Privat brothers, yet there was both a hotel and a horse-boat in operation as early as 1833. Michael O'Connor was proprietor of the hotel and owner of the horse-boat named in the following announcement in Mackenzie's *Almanac* for 1834:

"Horse-boat to the Island. A boat propelled by four horses runs every day from the Steamboat Wharves to the Starch Factory on the peninsula or island across the Bay—her trips regulated to suit public convenience. Fare to and from the island, 7½d. A hotel has been opened on the island to accommodate sportsmen, parties of pleasure, etc."[2]

[1] *Upper Canada Gazette*, April 1, 1808. Fourteen years later the Magistrates petitioned the Lieutenant-Governor to grant "a lease or otherwise in trust for the use of the inhabitants of the town as a common for the pasturage of cattle on the Peninsula in front of said town".

[2] [W. L. Mackenzie's] *New Almanack for the Canadian Year Book*. 1834. p. 16. The fare given is evidently one way only.

From another source[1] we are able to state that the inn was known in 1833 by the appropriate name of The Retreat on the Peninsula; and furthermore that 1s. 9d. was the fare charged to convey a passenger to and from the resort on the *Sir John of the Peninsula*, for this was the grandiloquent name of the first horse-boat. The ferry made three trips daily from the foot of Church Street to the eastern end of what is now called Ward's Island, leaving York at 10, 2 and 4 o'clock and returning at 11, 3 and 6. On Sundays a trip was made at 8 a.m., and the return at 9; and commencing at 10 o'clock there was a continuous service with 15-minute stops at each side of the Bay. G. Roe was the enterprising operator of the TEAM BOAT, as it was often called. In naming the boat and hotel, Michael O'Connor, evidently an old soldier, was thinking of the Spanish Peninsular War; and particularly was Sir John Moore in his mind—that famous leader of the disastrous retreat to Corunna, who died in the moment of victory and was buried with melancholy solemnity just before the embarkation of his troops.

Steamships were becoming common on Lake Ontario in the early thirties, and on April 1, 1835, George Heathcote submitted a proposal to the City Council suggesting that he would build a steamboat to ply to the Peninsula. In May of the same year the first steam ferry—the newly-built *Toronto*—was operating regularly on the Bay, and the *Courier* of July the 9th states that the construction of a new road and bridges on the eastern end of the island enabled those who crossed the Bay to take a pleasant drive.

John Ross Robertson wrote that the Peninsula Hotel was originally erected in 1839 by Mr. Poulett Thompson (later Lord Sydenham) as a residence during a visitation of cholera; but there is every reason to believe that it was the same building opened as an hotel by Michael O'Connor in 1833, and later operated by Joseph Palin. It was 50 feet by 40, and was built upon a layer of 4-inch planks sunk two feet in the sand, since it was difficult to lay a brick foundation. The lower storey was built of brick, and the second

[1] *George Walton's York Commercial Directory for 1834*, 1833, p. 187. A detailed announcement of the opening of the hotel appears in the *Courier of Upper Canada*, October 3, 1833, and may be found in Chapter XVII, page 318.

and third of wood. In 1843 Louis (Peter) Privat (pronounced Prevo at the time) purchased the house, and, with his brother Louis Joseph, commenced therein the operation of the Peninsula Hotel. While Peter undertook to run the hostelry, Louis Joseph endeavoured to attract customers by running a horse-boat across the bay. The *Peninsula Packet*—called merely "the horse-boat" by the inhabitants of Toronto—had formerly operated as a steamship below Queenston, and was sixty feet in length by twenty-three in width. A waterwheel on either side was set in motion by two horses who trod on a circular table set flush with the deck in its centre. As the table revolved it worked upon rollers which, being connected with the shaft, set the paddles in motion. The horses were, of course, in position practically stationary, the table on which they trod being fitted with ridges of wood radiating like spikes from the centre. In 1845 the vessel was lengthened and the front pointed, enabling a better rate of speed; five horses were employed instead of two, and they walked round and round the deck, propelling the boat in a manner similar to the working of an old-fashioned threshing machine or French-Canadian grist-mill.

Some account of the people early connected with the peninsula will be of interest. The first inhabitants of the *Presqu'Isle de Toronto* were fishermen. At least as early as the eighteen-forties William Strowger erected the first house on the eastern sandbar, now called Fisherman's Island. This primitive cabin was constructed of logs and other loose timber which had been washed up on the beach. Mary Anne Strowger, widow of William, recalled in 1908 that her eldest son was probably the first child born on the island. In those days Ashbridge's Bay and the Lake abounded in fish, and the Strowgers, Wards, Laffertys and Durnans, the only residents on the island, were all fishermen. At various times, also, fishermen established themselves on what is now called Hanlan's Point, the Hanlans being the first to locate there.

In later years William Geddes bought out the five or six fishermen at Hanlan's, and William Strowger removed thither to become his foreman. His family lived on the shore of Centre Island, and Mrs. Strowger recalled that

fourteen men were employed in netting whitefish, while trout were frequently caught by hook and line. For a time the Strowgers occupied the former summer home of Lord Sydenham, which they operated as a hotel previous to its use for the same purpose by Peter and Louis Joseph Privat. Other buildings in the vicinity of the Peninsula Hotel are described as follows:

"To the east of it was another small dwelling, occupied by the keeper of the lighthouse, James Durning, while about one hundred yards to the west was a third house, known afterwards as Parkinson's Hotel. These, the huts we have before mentioned, and the lighthouse, were, until 1853, the only dwellings upon the Island. Between where now is Island Park, and the Eastern gap, were a great many trees, chiefly pines and Balm of Gilead. Exactly opposite the present Albert House is one of each of these trees, and this spot was a favourite rendezvous for picnic parties. To the east are several other scattered pines, much the same now as then, and from them one of the adjacent villas takes the very appropriate name of 'The Pines'."[4]

The first careful survey of the peninsula was probably that of J. G. Howard, who wrote that in 1846 he "made a survey of the Toronto peninsula, and laid out 283 acres in fifty-seven two-acre lots on Trafalgar Marine Parade, or Fitzroy Street, going north from the lighthouse, Vernon Street at right-angles to it; also Rodney and Duncan Streets."[5]

The Privats developed a small pleasure resort around their hotel, swings and a merry-go-round, etc., providing entertainment for children, and bowling alleys, pigeon-shooting and similar diversions attracting the men. John Ross Robertson's description of Privat's amusement park shows that the sports of earlier generations were frequently characterised by cruelty to animals which is now prevented by law:

"The Island afforded its visitors many other attractions besides the journey there, which, by the way, generally occupied thirty and sometimes forty minutes. Opposite the

[4]See John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*, 1894-1914. Vol. II, pp. 764-7, for reminiscences of early days on the island. "Durning" is obviously an error for "Duncan".

[5]J. G. Howard: *Incidents in the Life of J. G. Howard*, . . . 1885. p. 22.

John Ross Robertson Collection. C. H. J. Snider.

A Team Boat

John Ross Robertson Collection C. H. J. Snider.

The Five-Horse Boat Peninsula Packet

Horse-boats conducted a ferry service on the Bay from 1833 to 1861. The *Peninsula Packet* was 60 feet long and 23 feet beam, and ran to Private's Hotel.

Original Illustrated News W. Armstrong

CUTTING ICE ON TORONTO BAY OPPOSITE THE UNION DEPOT, 1871

John Ross Robertson Collection

PRIVAT'S HOTEL AND AMUSEMENT PARK ON THE PENINSULA

Swings, a merry-go-round and a small zoo may be distinguished. At the rear right is the Ten-Pin Alley. Visitors were transported to the park on the horse-boat *Peninsula Packet*.

hotel was a merry-go-round and two large swings, the one to the east, the other to the west of the merry-go-round. The first was eighty feet high, the second but thirty, and all three were largely patronized by the younger portion of the Island's visitors. For the elders there was a bowling alley, known as 'Ten Pin Alley', while to ensure instruction as well as amusement there was a small zoological collection consisting of a bear, a wolf, a white deer, several racoons and two or three eagles. There was also a good deal of amusement of a somewhat miscellaneous nature. Every Queen's Birthday many of the sportsmen of Toronto journeyed to the Island for blackheart shooting. These were birds of passage of the plover tribe, who invariably were making their annual migration at this period of the year. Another, though somewhat cruel pastime consisted of trap pigeon shooting, wild pigeons being netted by bird-catchers and sold to Privat for the purpose.

"Besides these contests to test the prowess of marksmen, there was turkey shooting. This, it must be confessed, was very sorry sport. A turkey was tied and placed on an elevation about fifty yards from where the sportsmen (?) stood. Everyone who chose to enter and pay a York shilling for each shot was allowed to fire at the poor bird; the first who hit it became possessor of the turkey. This amiable pastime continued until the supply of turkeys was exhausted. There was yet one other occasional diversion, equally reprehensible but perhaps not quite so cruel as the one just mentioned: this was shooting a bear with a candle. A bear was purchased, and forty years ago these were not difficult to obtain, and a man resident in Toronto used to give an exhibition of shooting this animal with a rifle ostensibly loaded only with an ordinary tallow candle. To see this performance a small sum was charged, and those who witnessed it went away believing the bear had met his quietus solely through the force of the candle striking him. They were not told, and probably would not have believed it had they been so, that when the candle was put in the rifle a bullet had preceded it; nevertheless such was the case. This 'sport' always took place in the winter, and there was from time to time an occasional fox hunt also, a fox being let loose the night before to furnish the

sport, and a very exhilarating amusement was the result."[6]

In 1850 the *Peninsula Packet* was still being advertised in the press. Under the head "Cheap Pleasure" L. J. Privat announces the horse-boat service in connection with his hotel, and the reference in this advertisement to pasturage for horses and cattle shows how close to rural life Toronto was at that period:

"That Safe and Convenient Horse-Boat, the *Peninsula Packet*, will leave Mr. Maitland's Wharf, foot of Church Street, every day at ten o'clock a.m., 12, 2, 4, and 6 p.m., for the Peninsula Hotel. Returning at 11 a.m., 1, 3, 5, and 7 p.m. precisely. Fare to and from, 7½d. Family Season Tickets $4 each. Swings and Merry-go-round, etc., for the amusement of Children. Dinners, Lunches, Teas, etc., to be had at the shortest notice. Good pasture for Horses and other cattle, which can be conveyed over by the first boat—not later."[7]

But horse-boats, long effectively used for short distance ferry services, were gradually being displaced by steam ferries, and the Toronto horse-boat was taken off the route in 1851. In the early fifties the chief steam ferry was the *Victoria*, built by James Good, Toronto ship-builder, and purchased by L. J. Privat. This boat of 25 horse-power ran throughout the season every hour between 10 a.m. and 7 p.m., and it was announced that she had "no connection with any other boat, or racing",[8]—which suggests that a race-track was in operation at the time, and was, perhaps, attracting unfavourable comment in some quarters. At the close of the 1853 season Privat sold the *Victoria* to George Tate, Superintendent of the Grand Trunk Railway, and continued to operate the boat for the Company until the autumn of 1855, when Privat and his family removed from Toronto to Bentinck, Grey County. During their residence on the Island the Privats rescued at least five men from drowning. Other steam ferries operating in the fifties included the *Bob Morris* and the *Lady Head*.

[6]Ibid.

[7]Quoted in Robertson, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 884. A similar announcement in the *British Colonist* of May 13, 1849, contains the information that "children sent without guardians will be taken every care of".

[8]Any quotations in this chapter not otherwise credited are from Robertson, Vol. II, pp. 884-937.

John Quinn, who succeeded the Privat brothers in the hotel business on the Island, also operated a ferry while the *Victoria* was still running. In 1863 a newspaper item announces that "among the new projects for the season is John Quinn's new steamer, the *Citizen*, built to run between Toronto and the Island". Shortly afterwards the news appears that she "made her first trips to and from Toronto and the Island on Thursday, May 19th. The return fare was only 8 cents". The *Citizen* was a vessel of 350 tons and operated on the Bay for some years.

Before leaving the resort operated by the Privats and Quinn it is worth noting that the site of their summer hotel was, after 1858, under water. In the vicinity of the Eastern Gap which replaced the narrow neck of land where the hotel was located might also be found in the sixties the hulks of two steamships—the *Monarch*, wrecked in 1856, and the *Southern Belle*, a few years later. It may be mentioned, too, that the locality was not always the quiet resort of today, for in the eighteen-fifties the hundreds of Toronto grog-shops and taverns supplied no end of hard liquor, and among other "sinks of iniquity" where gambling, drinking and fighting were rampant was the Island. Conditions were usually at their worst on Sundays and holidays.

In addition to the hotel occupied by the Privats and Quinn, there was Parkinson's, which was incidentally mentioned previously. Some details concerning the history of this hostelry will be of interest. About 1850 Reuben Parkinson, a carriage-builder, erected the hotel at Maskelonge Point (Mugg's Landing), moving it a few years later to the west side of the Privat Hotel grounds. It was washed away at the time the Eastern Gap was created, and the following year (1859) Mrs. Parkinson built a hostelry in what is now called Island Park. Robert Mead took over the property in 1873, and his widow continued the business after his death. In 1887 the city purchased from Mrs. Mead the twelve acres of land surrounding the hotel, and the property became part of the park.

In April, 1858, what had long been called the Island became so in fact, for a heavy storm broke through the sandbar and created the Eastern Gap in that year. It was on this occasion that Quinn's Hotel was carried away and

the site covered with water. Evidently a deep channel was made, for on April 19, 1859, the steamship *Bowmanville* passed through the gap, and it soon became commonly used by vessels.

In 1859 occurs the first announcement of moonlight excursions on the bay. In addition to her regular trips [illegible] and from the Island, the *Fire Fly* advertises moonlight voyages on Tuesdays and Fridays, and "for the accommodation of the dancers there will be music on board. Fare only one York shilling". In 1861 Captain Robert Moodie announces the recommencement of the service, and makes the rather unhygienic suggestion that citizens of Toronto "can get a mouthful of fresh air" by patronising the *Fire Fly* on one of her hourly trips.

During the sixties several other ferries were employed on Toronto Bay. The *Watertown*, a vessel of 175 tons built in 1864 in Kingston, entered the service immediately afterwards, and in 1865 it is announced that "the miniature little steamer, the *Hippie*, with her jaunty rig and obliging boy captain, runs half-hourly between the city and the Island, and is well patronised by our citizens and young folks desirous of enjoying a sail".[1] On August 22nd of the same year the *Princess of Wales*, John Walsh, captain, is advertised to leave Tinning's Wharf "every day at noon, and every half hour afterwards throughout the day until 7 p.m". Tinning's Wharf was built in 1831, and was located on a small part of the site now occupied by the Union Station.

[illegible] 1866 a new steamer, the *Bouquet*, was advertised to run to the Island, and season tickets were for sale at "W. & J. Strachan, Front Street; Saulter's wood-yard; Church Street Wharf; R. W. Parkinson, Esq., corner of King and Yonge Streets; and from the captain on board". James Saulter was the master of the *Bouquet*. Two years later Captain William Parkinson was in charge of this ferry, and advertised that "the steamer has been furnished [illegible] a tasteful style and in such a manner as to ensure comfort combined with safety to persons wishing to visit this favourite place of resort. The most liberal arrangements will [illegible] made with excursions and picnic parties".

In 1867 the *Princess of Wales* commenced a service in

[1] *The Globe*, July 27, 1865.

opposition to the *Bouquet*. It appears that there was a move in that year to award the exclusive right to conduct the ferry service to friends of certain aldermen, and the *Globe* adopted a characteristic and praiseworthy attitude:

"We understand that a project is on foot in the Council to lease the privilege of carrying passengers to the Island. The city has full power in this direction, and it is felt that they might justly exercise it, while the result will be a better control over those to whom the privilege is given. Some talk exists of giving the exclusive privilege to some intimate friends of certain members of the Council, without tender. We trust such favouritism will not be attempted. Undoubtedly the only just plan will be to let it out by tender."[10]

Among other ferries in operation in the late sixties were the *Ada Alice* and the *Prince Arthur*, both of which went on the route in 1868. In 1870 the *Perry*, under Captain Thomas Lundy, operated under the same management as the *Bouquet*, and the two boats provided a quarter-hour service. On May 24th, the opening of the season, 5,000 people, a large crowd for that period, journeyed to the Island.

The development of Hanlan's Point and the other portions of the Island was particularly noticeable in the seventies. A contemporary publication suggests that "what 'the mountain' is to the Montrealer, 'the island' is to the people of Toronto. Until recently it was regarded simply as a fine natural breakwater, and the occasional resort of a few sportsmen. Now, it has become—to borrow a phrase from the sea-coast watering-places—'a great marine resort' of the townspeople, thousands of whom, all summer long, throng the ferries to its shores to enjoy the cool breezes of the lake. The once flat and featureless marsh is to-day a waterside suburb of rapidly increasing interest. From Hanlan Point—the island-home of Toronto's noted oarsman—a beautiful view of the city may be had. The features of the island itself, moreover,—the stretches of water-meadow, the hotels, promenades, and quaint summer residences on its shores—present a picture of varied and pleasing outline. Lakeward, stretching out

[10]*Globe*, May 5, 1867.

beyond Gibraltar Point,—the site of an old French block-house—is the great basin from which the city derives its water supply. The water is pumped up through sunken mains, laid across the bay and island, by powerful engines situated on the Esplanade. To the east is the fine, airy building of the Royal Canadian Yacht Club, a flourishing organisation designed to encourage amateur yachting and to supply the means of luxuriating in the adjacent lake. Still farther east, on a modest section of the peninsula now encircled by the lapping waves of the lake, the Winnan Baths may be seen, their outline sharply mirrored in the sunny expanse of gleaming water in the bay."[11]

The same writer envisions some of the modern development of Toronto's waterfront, noting that "the purposes to which the Island and water-surroundings of Toronto may be put, in affording the means of rest and enjoyment to its jaded citizens, are yet almost undreamt of. The whole of the lake-front of the island, and much of the Esplanade, might be converted into a continuous promenade or drive, with floating pontoons and occasional jetties thrown out lakeward, and the necessary adjunct of commodious hotels, at modest charges, for individual and family resort. The preservation of the island, meantime, is a pressing duty, and the municipal authorities of the city will be criminally responsible if they continue to neglect it. The existence of the bay and harbour is imperilled by indifference. No time should be lost in protecting the island from the encroachment of the lake."[12]

As time passed, other ferries appeared on the bay. During 1876 the *Princess of Wales*, *Bouquet* and *Watertown* were the chief vessels providing a ferry service. The *Watertown* also ran from time to time to the Humber. Two years later the *Princess of Wales* and *Bouquet* and four new ferries—the *Transit*, *Golden City*, *St. Jean Baptiste* and *Juliette*—were operating on the Bay. In 1883 the *Princess of Wales* sank near Queen's Wharf, but was raised, taken to Oakville, and rebuilt under the name *General*

[11] G. M. Grant (Ed.): *Picturesque Canada*. 1870. Vol. I, p. 407. The suggestion of a French blockhouse on Gibraltar (Hanlan's) Point is evidently an error, though there was a British block-house on that site in the early years of the town.

[12] *Ibid.*

Wolsey; soon afterwards she was burned at Fire Island. There appears to have been no objection to the operation of horse-boats or steam ferries on Sunday in earlier times, but there were attempts to prevent the use of commercial "pleasure boats" in the late eighteen-seventies. In the *Globe* is reported the case of three men who had been arrested for running steamers on the Sabbath, but the Magistrate dismissed the case on the ground that the boats should be construed as ferries rather than pleasure boats.[11]

During the eighties several new ships entered the service. Old inhabitants of Toronto will recall the *Canadian*, launched in 1882, the *Luella*, the *St. Jean Baptiste* (later *Sadie*), and *Prescotte Roper*, all under Turner's management, and the *Mascotte*, *Arlington*, *Jessie McEdwards*, *Kathleen*, *Gertrude* and *Island Queen*, the last five of which were operated by A. J. Tymon. Almost all of them became the property of the Toronto Ferry Company when it was formed in 1890. Most of these boats were small screw steamers, but the *Canadian* and *Sadie* were two-decked paddle-wheelers, and carried 340 and 370 passengers, respectively. In 1890 were constructed the *Mayflower* and the *Primrose*, which incorporated the latest conveniences and improvements, including electric lights—then rather a novelty. They are steel-built, two-decked, double-bowed paddle steamers, and are the only boats in use in 1890 and still remaining in the ferry service. In the nineties these vessels left the Yonge Street Wharf for Hanlan's Point and Island Park, and the wharves at Dufferin and George Streets were also used to a lesser extent. The service extended from April to October, and from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. daily except Sunday, when it was more limited.

When the Toronto Ferry Company commenced operations in 1890 it purchased the steamers hitherto operated by the Doty Ferry Company, and two years later those belonging to the Island Park Ferry Company. In the late nineties the new company was operating twelve ferries. The *Luella* was long most popular with Island residents, and her captain was once presented with a set of colours by the City Council in recognition of her services in saving a number of people from drowning. A commendable custom

[11]The *Globe*, October 20, 1879.

In connection with the Toronto Ferry Company's service in the nineties was the frequent free excursions provided for many hundreds of inmates of the various charitable institutions of the city.

From time to time new boats replaced old ones. The *Island Queen* and *Kathleen* were destroyed by a fire at Hanlan's Point on February 12, 1918. In August of the same year the rate of passage for adults was raised from 10c. to 15c., and many were the complaints of citizens. In 1923 the Bay Street Docks were becoming unsafe, and removal to the new slips at the foot of York Street was suggested. But L. J. Solman, owner of the Toronto Ferry Company, objected to doing so unless car tracks were laid to the new docks. At that time the greater part of the patrons of the ferries were those who attended ball games at Solman's stadium on Hanlan's Point, and, as the Harbour Commission stated that the York Street Bridge could not carry street cars, Solman threatened to discontinue his ferry service and to build a new stadium within reach of the cars. The latter part of this policy he proceeded to carry into effect, but the ferries were operated with a steadily decreasing patronage until April, 1926, when the city decided to buy the ferry service for $337,500, eight boats comprising the fleet at that time.

In February, 1927, the service, which for a year had been conducted by the Ferry Company for the city, was transferred to the management of the Toronto Transportation Commission. Hanlan's Point, for generations the "Sunnyside" of Toronto citizens, had almost faded from the picture under the competition of Scarboro Beach and, latterly, of Sunnyside, but it secured a new lease of life under the enterprising management of the Commission. Street car tickets are used for the ferry passage, and the number of visitors to Centre Island, Hanlan's Point and Ward's Island is greater than ever before.

The present equipment of the ferry service includes six ferries, four of which—the *Mayflower*, *Primrose*, *Bluebell* and *Trillium*—are large paddle-wheelers, and two—the *T. J. Clark* and *Lucille*—are small screw steamers. The old *Jasmine* (formerly *Ottawa*) was in service until 1927, and ended her days in flames off Sunnyside on August 2,

Reproduced by Courtesy of the T.T.C. Bobby Murphy.

THE LUELLA, 1880-1917

This ferry was long among the most popular on the Bay.

Reproduced by Courtesy of the Toronto Transportation Commission.

FERRIES AND FERRY DOCKS, 1927

The construction of several notable buildings has greatly altered the appearance of the waterfront since the T.T.C. assumed control of the ferry service in 1927.

John Ross Robertson Collection. J. W. Howard.

WINTER ACTIVITIES ON THE BAY, 1835

The Parliament Buildings may be seen in the right background.

From the Toronto Curling Association Annual, 1877

THE TORONTO RED JACKETS ON TORONTO BAY, 1878

T. McGaw is at the "hack", having just delivered his stone. J. Gray and D. Walker are the sweepers, the former with his broom in the air. Captain Perry is the skip with one knee on the ice. It is a good "end", for all the stones are "in the house". In later Annuals the whiskey bottles at the lower right-hand corner were covered by a black cloth—presumably in deference to temperance sentiment!

1929. The *Clark Bros.* and *John Hanlan* were similarly burned to provide a spectacle for amusement seekers. Two sightseeing gasoline launches, the *Miss Simcoe* and *Miss York*, and two freight boats, the *Aylmer* and *Buttercup*, comprise the rest of the equipment. All boats now run from the New Queen's Quay instead of using several wharves as formerly. In 1931 passengers to the number of 2,172,658 were carried on the ferries, over 101,000 making the trip on the record day, July 1st of that year. Even during the winter anyone who wishes to cross may do so on the tug *Ned Hanlan*, which sails from the foot of John Street to the Island filtration plant.

Just previous to the arrangements under which the city took over the ferry service from the Toronto Ferry Company there was considerable discussion relative to bridging the Eastern and Western Gaps so that motor and trolley cars might proceed to the Island. Fortunately these plans, which would have ended the ferry service and destroyed much of the charm of the pleasure resort, were terminated by the agreement conveying the property to the City of Toronto, and it is to be hoped that future generations may long be able to approach the restful Island on ferries larger but not greatly dissimilar to the old horse-boats.

CHAPTER IV

The Don and Its Early Bridges

In the pioneer period it was usual to carry on transportation by water whenever possible, for such roads as had been blazed were mere trails through the forest. The canoe and the bateau were long familiar on Canadian waterways, and the Don River, first mapped by the Frenchman, Raffeix, in 1688, was part of a trade route which was early of great importance. Soon after Yonge Street was opened in 1796 by Augustus Jones, the North-West Company, which had formerly sent brigades of canoes to the west via the Ottawa River, diverted much of the traffic to the Yonge Street route. Bateaux travelled in fleets up the St. Lawrence and the Bay of Quinté, and by a portage at the Carrying Place entered Lake Ontario, along the shore of which they proceeded to York. Crossing the Peninsula at the point where the Eastern Gap now is, they made their way by oars and poles up the Don, and by one of its forks to Yonge Street. The flat-bottomed boats were then loaded on trucks or wagons and hauled to the Holland River, down which they proceeded to Lake Simcoe and thence to the North-West. Some years later the boats frequently used Yonge Street all the way from the shores of the Bay, the more difficult hills being ascended by the aid of a windlass or capstan.

Transport by dug-out canoe was developed by a picturesque resident on the Don—Joseph Tyler, hermit-squatter from New Jersey, who lived on the west side of the river, just north of the site where was later erected the Don Street bridge. He is described as having fine, sharp, shrewd features, set off by an abundance of white hair and beard; in fact, in every way "the counterpart of an Italian artist's stock model". Almost all that is known of him and his more than locally famous canoe is recorded by Dr. Scadding:

"The mystery attendant on his choice of a life of complete solitude, his careful reserve, his perfect self-reliance in regard to domestic matters, and, at the same time, the evi-

dent wisdom of his contrivances and ways, and the propriety and sagacity of his few words, all helped to render him a good specimen in actual life of a secular anchorite. He had been, in fact, a soldier in the United States army in the War of Independence, and was in the receipt of a pension from the other side of the lakes. He was familiar, he alleged, with the personal appearance of Washington.

"His abode on the Don was an excavation in the side of the steep hill, a little way above the level of the river-bank. The flue of his winter fireplace was a tubular channel, bored up through the clay of the hill-side. His sleeping-place or berth was exactly like one of the receptacles for human remains in the Roman catacombs—an oblong recess, likewise carved in the dry material of the hill. To the south of his cave he cultivated a large garden, and raised, among other things, the white sweet edible Indian corn, a novelty here at the time, and very excellent tobacco. He, moreover, manufactured pitch and tar in a little kiln or pit dug for the purpose close by his house.

"He built for himself a magnificent canoe, locally famous. It consisted of two large pine logs, each about forty feet long, well shaped and deftly hollowed out, fastened together by cross dove-tail pieces let in at regular distances along the interior of its bottom. While in process of construction in the pine woods through which the 'Mill Road' passes, on the high bank eastward of the river, it was a wonderment to all the inquisitive youth of the neighbourhood, and was accordingly often visited and inspected by them.

"In this craft he used to pole himself down the windings of the stream, all the way round into the bay, and on to the landing-place at the foot of Caroline Street, bringing with him the produce of his garden, and neat stacks of pine knots, ready split for the fishermen's lightjacks. He would also on occasion undertake the office of ferryman. On being hailed for the purpose, he would put across the river persons anxious to make a short cut into the town from the eastward. Just opposite his den there was for a time a rude causeway over the marsh.

"At the season of the year when the roads through the woods were impracticable Tyler's famous canoe was employed by the Messrs. Helliwell for conveying into town,

from a point high up the stream, the beer manufactured at their Brewerties on the Don. We are informed by Mr. William Helliwell of the Highland Creek that twenty-two barrels at a time could be placed in it, in two rows of eleven each laid lengthwise side by side, still leaving room for Tyler and an assistant to navigate the boat."[1]

Most of the early transportation problems of York centred at the mouth of the Don River. The swampy shores of the stream long remained a great place for muskrats, and in the upper reaches the wary trout lured the disciples of Izaak Walton; while in York's earliest years sea salmon used to run up the Don. But these sporting activities neither aided nor hindered the development of transport. Apart from the fallen butternut tree which provided a precarious foot-bridge in 1794, the first structure supplying more than a temporary crossing appears to have been constructed by Asa Danforth's road-builders when they opened the first road from Kingston to York in 1799-1800. The original Danforth Road entered York along the present Kingston Road, and additional bridges were built over the Don from time to time to replace log structures which were continually rotting away or being partially washed out. In 1803 the minutes of the Court of Quarter Sessions carried the item that "John Vanzante and Thomas Humberstone, Overseers of the Highways in the Town of York, represented the impossibility of passing the Don Bridge in its present state". It was thereupon ordered "that a copy of the Assessment Roll be furnished to each of them, and that they unite their strength to make a causeway uniting the road to the Bridge".[2]

For some time men forded the river on horseback, or crossed by means of a scow which was worked back and forth by the help of a rope. This service was maintained by a schedule of tolls, and it may be presumed that they were similar to those in force at the Humber and the Credit, of which we have some particulars of interest. On April 14, 1802, the Court of Quarter Sessions[3] authorised Richard

[1]Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old*. 1873. pp. 228-9.
[2]Minutes of April 18, 1803, *Report of the Archives of Ontario*, 1931. p. 45.
[3]Minutes of April 14, 1802, *ibid.*, p. 30.

Wilson to collect the following amounts from persons who used his ferry at the mouth of the Humber:

For every Waggon, Cart or Sleigh	1s.	3d.
Every Person		7½d.
Every Horse		7½d.
Every Horned Cattle		7½d.
Every Sheep		3d.
Every Hog		3d.

The same rates were laid down in April, 1806, for Thomas Ingersoll's ferry at the River Credit, inaugurated at that time.[4] On July 15, 1807, the Court considered these rates too high, and instituted a new schedule with charges of from one-third to one-half of the former rates. An interesting item lays down a "return fare", stating that "every Foot Passenger and every single Horse with Rider returning the same day before sunset shall be ferried over without charge".[5] Again, in 1810, it was believed that, "from the increased population of the Country, and also of travellers on the said road, the rates established on the 15th July, 1807, are at present too high, and that less rates would support a ferry very well"; accordingly a new tariff was drawn up for the Humber ferry, then in charge of James Cranford, though the reductions were not great.[6]

For many years the marshes and deltas at the mouth of the Don prevented easy access to the town from the Bay. A channel was early made, but it appears to have been of little use. "A Country Subscriber" writes in the *Gazette* in 1807 as follows:

"To the Printers of the *York Gazette*: It cannot have escaped the observation of any person acquainted with the River Don that at times, and in all high winds, it is impossible to get to or from the town with craft of any description through the present channel. Whereas, if nature's hint was improved—I mean the break which took place three years ago—the navigation would be made safe and practicable at all times, and, without any of the inconveniences attending the old, the new channel would shorten the distance from York to the Don Mills upwards of a mile. It would also, by being properly opened, do more towards

[4]Minutes of April 8, 1806, *ibid.*, p. 38.
[5]Minutes of July 15, 1807, *ibid.*, p. 109.
[6]Minutes of April 13, 1810, *ibid.*, p. 157.

draining the marsh than a large sum of money laid out in any other possible way. If permission could be obtained from the Governor and Council for the purpose, the few feet to [redacted] cut for opening the new channel would be done by subscription. Added to its other general advantages, it would be a great object to the owners of cattle and others who do not possess pasture ground in the neighbourhood."[7]

The *Gazette* was heartily in accord with this, and commented favourably on much-needed improvements in transportation facilities:

"The editors agree perfectly in opinion with this correspondent, and if permission could be obtained, which they think ought to be applied for by petition, they will gladly contribute towards accomplishing an object of such obvious utility. Seeing all the advantages which would result from the execution of the proposed plan, they will cheerfully second with their best endeavours everything tending to local improvement or public advantage. They would be happy to see some public-spirited person set on foot a subscription for the purpose of erecting a bridge over Frank's Creek, and the repair of the causeway leading to Yonge Street."[8]

Another difficulty which long existed was the lack of a bridge across the mouth of the Don which separated the town and the peninsula. As early as 1806 a bridge or float had been built to enable the inhabitants of York to take a pleasant ride or walk on the Peninsula, but the *Gazette* of June 18th of that year suggests that people should not draw sand or haul loaded waggons over it. In 1808 Parshall Terry attempted to ford the river on horseback, and though the horse reached shore its rider was drowned. The obituary notice gives some details of the condition which caused the unfortunate event:

"Departed this life on the 20th, Mr. Parshall Terry. His death was occasioned by his getting into the River Don on horseback. By this misfortune an exemplary wife and large, helpless family are left to the care of the all-disposing Providence, and a resistless appeal is made to the benevolence and sympathetic generosity of a virtuous public. The particular situation of the road near the Don Bridge calls

[7]*York Gazette*, July 4, 1807. [8]*Ibid.*

imperiously upon the commissioners appointed by his Excellency for the particular care of the roads and employing the voted money for immediate repairs, as many lives are seriously threatened with danger by its present state, in consequence of the causeway being removed by an excessive flood. The place, when seen, suggests the nature of the required improvement, and as a part of duty we earnestly recommend to public attention."[9]

In an earlier issue the *Gazette*, in announcing a meeting to consider ways and means of constructing a bridge, stated that several lives had been lost because of the lack of a causeway. The development of recreational and sporting activities on the peninsula is also mentioned:

"The editors having been called upon by a number of gentlemen to request a meeting of such persons as might wish to subscribe towards erecting a bridge across that part of the River Don which separates the town and the peninsula, give notice that it is desired such meeting should take place to-morrow at Campbell & Deary's Tavern at 3 o'clock in the afternoon. They should be wanting in themselves and in their duty to the public were they not to give every encouragement and assistance in their power to so desirable an object. Humanity is interested in the laudable undertaking, and it may promote a more general subscription to state that for want of a bridge several lives (within their knowledge) have been lost. When completed the peninsula will answer every purpose of an extensive common to the owners of the cattle; to those who may use it for purposes of recreation it furnishes a most delightful walk or ride; as a race-ground or place for field exercise we know not its equal; the sportsman will find a constant and easy access to the best shooting ground; and the convalescent might find health in an occasional excursion to the opposite beach—and travellers or persons coming to market from below would at all seasons find the town accessible, which to them at present frequently is not, but at the imminent hazard of life."[10]

The project appears to have been well received, for on April 15, 1806, the *Gazette* contains the following item:

[9] *Ibid.*, July 23, 1808.
[10] *Ibid.*, April 1, 1808.

"We have been favoured with a list of the sums subscribed for the purpose of erecting a bridge across the Don, and have the pleasure of informing those who wish to patronise the undertaking that the subscription already exceeds one hundred pounds. From the liberal sum given by Mrs. Gore an example is offered to other ladies, and we may infer that His Excellency permits that part of the demesne (the peninsula) to be rendered useful to the community, whilst unappropriated to the particular purposes for which it was reserved. When the requisite sum is made up we will publish the names of the donors with pleasure."[11]

Whatever bridge was constructed at this time, it may be presumed to have been, like all others at that period, merely a crude corduroy causeway, built with little or no engineering advice. In 1813 the bridge was burned by the British Regulars to prevent pursuit as they retreated eastward. In later years the renewed bridge was frequently in a bad state of repair. From time to time efforts were made to construct satisfactory bridges across both outlets of the Don, but the subscriptions were never great enough to complete them. Finally in 1834-35 the works were finished, but only after Lieut.-Governor Sir John Colborne provided a subsidy from the military chest. On August 22, 1835, the bridges were ready to be presented by the military authorities to the City of Toronto. Dr. Scadding well describes the old-world formalities which characterized the occasion:

"The civic authorities approached the new structure in procession; a barricade at the first bridge arrested their progress. A guard stationed there also forbade further advance. The officer in command, Capt. Bonnycastle, appears, and the Mayor and Corporation are informed that the two bridges before them are, by the command of the Lieutenant-Governor, presented to them as a free gift for the benefit of the inhabitants, that they may in all time to come be enabled to enjoy the salubrious air of the peninsula; the only stipulation being that the bridges should be free of toll forever to the troops, stores, and ordnance of the sovereign.

"The mayor, who, as eye-witnesses report, was arrayed

[11] *Ibid.*, April 15, 1808.

in an official robe of purple velvet lined with scarlet, read the following reply:

'Sir—On the part of His Majesty's faithful and loyal city of Toronto, I receive at your hands the investiture of these bridges, erected by command of His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, and now delivered to the Corporation for the benefit and accommodation of the citizens. In the name of the Common Council and the citizens of Toronto I beg you to convey to His Excellency the grateful feelings with which this new instance of the bounty of our most gracious sovereign is received; and I take this occasion on behalf of the city to renew our assurance of loyalty and attachment to His Majesty's person and government, and to pray, through His Excellency, a continuance of royal favour towards this city. I have, on the part of the corporation and citizens, to request you to assure His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor that His Excellency's desire and generous exertions for the health and welfare of the inhabitants of this city are duly and gratefully appreciated; and I beg you to convey to His Excellency the best wishes of myself and my fellow-citizens for the health and happiness of His Excellency and family. Permit me, Sir, for myself and brethren, to thank you for the very handsome and complimentary manner in which you have carried His Excellency's commands into execution.'

"'Immediately,' the narrative of the ceremonial continues, 'the band, who were stationed on the bridge, struck up the heart-stirring air, *God Save the King*, during the performance of which the gentlemen of the Corporation, followed by a large number of the inhabitants, passed uncovered over the bridge. Three cheers were then given, respectively, for the King, for His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, for the Mayor and Council of the City of Toronto, and for Capt. Bonnycastle. The gentlemanly and dignified manner in which both the addresses were read did credit to the gentlemen on whom these duties devolved; and the good order and good humour that prevailed among the spectators present were exceedingly gratifying.'[14]

Many years later ferrymen were necessary at the Don owing to the destruction of the bridge by floods, of which

[14]Scadding, *op. cit.*, pp. 96-7.

one of the most disastrous occurred in 1850. The circumstance recalls a peculiar boat of the late forties and its use as a bridge:

"A very peculiar vessel plied at this time on the bay between Toronto and the Island opposite, known as the 'Cigar Boat' from the peculiar nature of its construction. The hull consisted of three hollow cylinders, bolted well together and pointed at each end like a cigar. She was a steam side-wheel vessel, the property of Mr. R. Tinning, the wharfinger. She was anything but a success and in the spring of 1850, owing to the floods that had occurred both at the east and west of the city, whereby the Don and Humber bridges were swept away, Mr. Tinning leased the vessel, her machinery having been removed, to the Toronto City Council, for use as a pontoon bridge over the Don until the bridge was repaired. Of course all the upper portion of the vessel had been taken away as well as her machinery. The very first night she was moored at the Don the ferrymen who, when she arrived, found, like Othello, 'their occupation gone', sank her, and she had, of course, to be raised. Nevertheless, she was again placed in position, and guarded each night by special watchmen to prevent further outrage. When the bridge was repaired, the old 'Cigar', or what was left of her, was not used for any other purpose, but laid by, and was eventually broken up."[14]

[14] John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*, 1894-1914. Vol. II, p. 884.

CHAPTER V

Toll Roads

Though toll roads have but little application within the confines of old York, yet the main highways entering the town and passing through the villages which are now within the city limits were characterised by numerous toll-gates. In common with those of many other parts of the province most of the important roads of York County passed, at various times after the first quarter of the nineteenth century, from the control of the pathmasters appointed at the township meeting or by magistrates into that of road companies, which agreed to maintain the highways in return for the right to collect toll from those who used them. The reason for the change lay in the difficulty of enforcing statute labour on the roads, as a result of which the condition of many was impassable; the amount of money available for road development in many municipalities was at the same time very small, and the central government supplied but little to supplement what could be raised by local taxation. In the eighteen-forties and fifties numerous roads were planked, usually by road companies; while before and after that time efforts were made to macadamise some of them, though the macadamising was frequently more imaginary than real. Twelve miles of Yonge Street, for example, underwent the process in the early thirties, but the road was in such a bad condition in 1837 that pursuit of the rebels after the battle of Montgomery's Farm was almost impossible—even on horseback.

Throughout the province many fair roads were provided by road companies, though they were frequently no better than those upon which no toll was paid. This system of highway management, thoroughly disliked by everyone, lasted nearly a century in some districts, a number of survivals resisting the trend of the times until long after the introduction of the motor-car rendered their continuance a nuisance. What was commonly called "the first" toll-gate

on Yonge Street was that at Yorkville, said to have been in operation as early as 1820. There were at least two others farther south, however,—one at the corner of King and Yonge, and the other near the intersection of College and Yonge. The former was the earlier of the two, and was the first toll-gate in the town. It was at one time kept by William Heighton, who, in the eighteen-fifties, was transferred northward to the Yorkville gate.

Whether or not there were toll-gates on Yonge Street prior to that date, on January 14, 1830, a petition was laid before the Legislative Assembly of Upper Canada praying that the signatories might be incorporated as a turnpike company, with power to raise money by loan upon the security of their tolls. Seneca Ketchum, James Hogg, and seventy-two other inhabitants of Yonge Street signed the document, and they hoped that His Majesty's government would provide the initial loan. Messrs. Jesse Ketchum, Cawthra and Mackenzie were appointed a committee to consider the matter, and the evidence of witnesses called before them was preponderantly in favour of the scheme, since there appeared to be no other effective means of keeping the road in condition. Recognising the value of the highway leading to York, the committee reported that "it might be worth while at some period not far distant, as an experiment, to allow a sum sufficient to macadamise four miles of that road to be expended, and afterwards to place a toll-bar with moderate rates of toll for two years, within a mile of York, the tolls to be let by auction and the proceeds applied to keep the road in repair under the direction of the freeholders on or near the line of road. If found not advantageous it might be done away with at the expiration of the Act."[1]

The Yorkville toll-gate originally occupied the north-east corner of Bloor and Yonge Streets. A small three-room house of characteristic type reached the edge of the road, and a gate stretched across the roadway. There were also a couple of wooden turnstiles through which travellers on foot passed. Between 1840 and 1850 one Monkman

[1] A full account of the Yonge Street gate-keepers, and related data, may be found in John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*. 1894-1914. Vol. V, pp. 245-6.

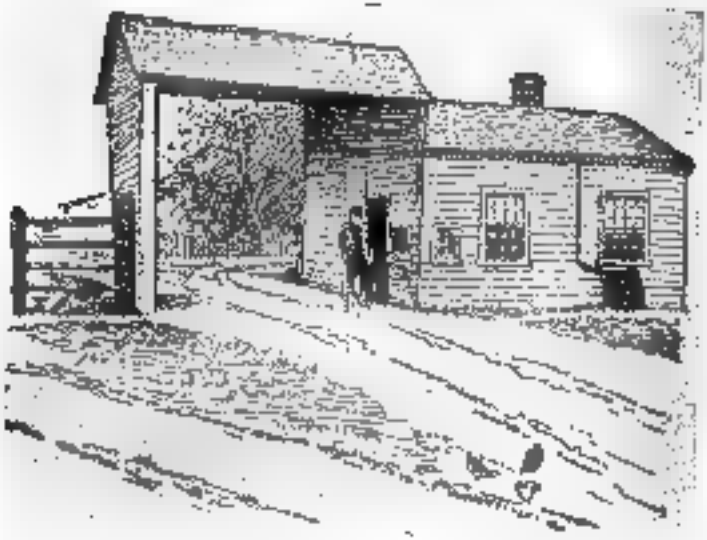
Cornelius Krieghoff.

RUNNING THE TOLL-GATE

A trick which many enjoyed during the heyday of toll roads.

THE CHECK TOLL-GATE, DUNDAS AND ST. CLAIR, 1867

The Lambton Check Gate was one of four on Dundas Street within ten miles of Toronto, but travellers paid toll at only two of them.



John Ross Robertson Collection.

THE YORKVILLE TOLL-GATE IN THE EIGHTEEN-FIFTIES

Originally at Bloor and Yonge, it was later moved northward.

John Ross Robertson Collection. J. W. Collins.

THE BROCKTON TOLL-BAR, DUNDAS STREET, 1862

The old Brockton Town Hall still stands on the south-west corner of Dundas Street and Sheridan Avenue.

was custodian of the gate, and in the latter year the toll-house was moved northward to the north-west corner of Davenport Road and Yonge Street. A few months later it was moved across the road and two rooms were added, and the covered way shown in the accompanying illustration was erected. William Heighton was gate-keeper between 1860 and 1864. In 1865 the gate was again moved northward, this time to the north-west corner of Wychham (now Cottingham) and Yonge Streets. E. Y. Crown succeeded Heighton as keeper, and for some years had a small store at the corner, where also there was an entrance to Deer Park. An old resident of the district recalls that "one of our amusements as children was to see equestrians gallop up to the gate and, before the keeper was able to get out to collect the toll, jump the gate and dash up the road; but the keeper never worried: he always got them when they came back!"[1]

About 1870 gate-keeper Crown was followed by one Mowat (or Moat), the toll-house being removed northward in the same year to the top of Gallows Hill, just below the present St. Clair Avenue. The name of the hill appears to have originated from the falling across the roadway at that point of a huge tree which stood in early times on the west side of the street. The tree did not break, and did not block the road, but for several years remained in a peculiar position, resembling the beam of a gallows; and of course it was nobody's business to remove it!

In 1865 the "York Roads" within the united counties of York and Peel—consisting of Yonge, Dundas, the Kingston and Lake Shore roads—were purchased by the counties from the Canadian Government. Arbitrators fixed the price at $72,500. The annual revenue at that time was about $32,000, but it must be remembered that road companies spent (or were supposed to spend) a good deal of money to maintain the roadways in passable condition; though the general impression appears to have been, with reference to toll roads throughout the province, that road companies were groups of capitalists who built toll-gates

[1]Reminiscences of an anonymous correspondent, quoted in Fred Williams: *Do You Know?*, Toronto *Mail and Empire*, January 22, 1933.

every few miles and exacted toll from all users of the road no matter how bad it was.

The toll-gates on Yonge Street within York County at the time of the purchase were six in number. No. 1 was at Yorkville village; No. 2 at the head of the southern hill at York Mills; No. 3 at Cooke's Corners, a mile and a quarter north of Thornhill; No. 4 a mile and a quarter north of Elgin Mills; No. 5 was the Aurora gate, near the cemetery; and No. 6 was at Cady's Corners, a mile and a quarter north of the township line between East Gwillimbury and Whitchurch.

The Hogg's Hollow toll-gate was known to travellers on Yonge Street as "the second". The roof of the structure crossed the entire roadway, and the house of the keeper was on the east side, while at the west was a small lean-to used as a storehouse. The first keeper of whom we have any record was one Penock, who collected toll there in the eighteen-thirties; and Charles Snider and George Lee were among the keepers in later years. The public attitude towards toll-gates—"relics of barbarism"—was never characterised by fond memories, but it is of interest that the keepers of this gate appear frequently to have been chicken fanciers. There was a saying current in the district that "If you want the freshest of fresh eggs just go to the keeper of 'the second'. He's got 'em"; and consequently many city people were numbered among his patrons.[4]

During the heyday of toll roads there were four gates on Dundas Street within ten miles of Toronto. There was No. 1 at Brockton, on the north side of the street, about half way between Sheridan and Brock Avenues; No. 2, always called "the blind toll-gate", on the north-east corner of Bloor and Dundas Streets; No. 3, the Lambton check gate, at the intersection of Dundas Street and St. Clair Avenue; and No. 4, the Mimico gate, a short distance west of St. George's Church, Islington. Concerning the collection of toll at these gates John Ross Robertson writes:

"Teams proceeding to Toronto from beyond the fourth gate paid toll at the fourth and the first, being free of the two intermediate ones; but those who came from places between the fourth and the third paid at the latter and also

[4]See Robertson, *ibid.*

again [redacted] the first. The 'blind' toll-gate never exacted a toll from teams proceeding direct along Dundas Street, but was built for the purpose of catching those people who, coming from Toronto, drove along Dufferin Street north to the concession, thence proceeding west to Dundas Street, thus avoiding the Brockton gate. It often happened that a teamster going [redacted] the city would turn out of the way and proceed east along the concession, so as to escape—or in the hope of escaping—Brockton toll. The keeper of the 'blind' gate rarely missed noting the occurrence, and looked out for the return of this man. [redacted] he came by himself he was all but certain to find the bar down and passage impossible. Then would follow a war of words, and 'langwidge' flowed that would be extremely forcible even from a London cabby's point of view. Sometimes even blows were struck, which occasionally resulted in a meeting before the magistrates, with sometimes a conviction for assault. As a pretty general rule, though, the toll-taker settled his own quarrels. Neither he nor his employers had much liking for Police Court proceedings. They knew that to a great extent they were Ishmaelites: every man's hand was against them. Precisely such scenes as have been described as happening [redacted] the 'blind' gate took place over and over again at No. 3 gate, with delinquents who tried to dodge the toll by going along St. Clair Avenue."*

The "blind" gate at the Bloor Street intersection was a peculiar two-storey structure, with a covered way extending across Dundas Street. The check toll-gate stood for forty years, but disappeared in 1897. The Brockton toll-bar, kept for many years by James Kerr, was located about one hundred yards west of the "Appii Forum" or "The Three Taverns"—Collard's, Church's Brown Bear and the Queen Street Hotel. Numerous rails fixed between the fence and the bar prevented vehicles from passing when the gate was closed, and pedestrians had either to wait or climb over. Near by, Mrs. Larkin, postmistress of Brockton, kept a small general store. Both the Brockton toll-bar and the "blind" gate were removed considerably earlier than the check toll-gate, for they were much closer to the city, and of necessity

*Ibid., Vol. III, pp. 274-6.

came to an end when the boundaries were extended in their direction.

On Queen Street, near its junction with Ossington Avenue (then part of Dundas Street), was a toll-gate which led to the naming of Rebecca Street, originally a lane running from the eastern side of Dufferin Street to open fields, by which Queen Street might be approached. John Ross Robertson says:

"The reason it obtained this name was that the land it crosses was purchased by a contractor who supplied wood to the Garrison. He disputed the right of the road trustees to exact toll from his teams at the gate. This dispute caused a great deal of ill-feeling between the contractor's men and the keepers of the gate, and constant quarrels ensued, and sometimes blows were interchanged. Owing to these quarrels the lane got locally known as Rebecca Street, after the Rebeccaites, who in South Wales in 1843 systematically destroyed toll-gates and bars. The reason they took the name of Rebeccaites was in allusion to the reference contained in Genesis xxiv, [illegible]."[8]

Dundas and Yonge Streets were by no means the only toll roads leading into Toronto. Queen Street, and the Lake Shore Road which extended westward from it, had their share. A correspondent of the *Mail and Empire* recalls that in the late seventies "there was a toll-gate [illegible] Queen Street and Brockton Road (now Brock Avenue), and a check toll-gate at the junction of King and Queen Streets. This latter was opened when King Street was extended west [illegible] Dowling Avenue through Beaty's Bush to meet Queen Street. The Brockton Road toll-gate was shortly afterwards moved to the site of the check toll-gate and tolls were collected by Mr. Eveleigh, who had a farm on the west side of Roncesvalles Avenue, about a quarter of a mile north of Queen Street."[9]

Concerning the Sunnyside gate, and a check gate farther west, S. H. Howard writes to the same paper:

"Surely you have not forgotten the toll-gate at Sunnyside that stood just west of Roncesvalles, on the south side

[8] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, pp. 746-6.
[9] "W. J. C." quoted in Williams, *op. cit.*, *Mail and Empire*, January 21, 1933.

just by the big oak tree? Every horse-drawn vehicle of the early days, the days of my boyhood in the 80's and 90's, coming into town from the Lake Shore Road or leaving town from the west *via* that old thoroughfare, was required to pay toll, and the gate was there to stop traffic till he did, though I cannot remember that this gate was ever actually closed. The toll-keeper's cottage was close beside the gate. Cottage, oak tree, field, road, railway track, the very ground of the site, are gone now, being replaced by the Sunnyside bridge over the railway track and the new railway grade, now one of the busiest highway intersections in Canada.

"A catch gate was also maintained further out on the Lake Shore, opposite the second entrance gate to High Park, the Howard Park stop for street cars to-day. This gate and a shelter hut for the gate-keeper stood under the shade of the gnarled old Balm of Gilead trees, the trees that, doubtless, Etienne Brûlé saw when he, first of white men, paddled down the Humber and out into Humber Bay, and which the City of Toronto, in its incorporated wisdom (?), permitted to be cut down when the boulevard was planned. They are replaced now with a spindley row of Lombardy poplars!

"This catch gate was to catch those who sought to evade the toll at Sunnyside by driving around through High Park and coming down to the Lake Shore Road beyond the Sunnyside toll-gate. The toll was taken in those days by a family named Atkinson, any one of whom, male or female, was likely to step out into the road with hand outstretched. I went to school with Curly Atkinson, the eldest son of the family, who was frequently stationed at the Howard Park catch gate, and learned, as I remember, from passing teamsters to chew tobacco at an early age. Where is he now?"[1]

North-east and east of Toronto the main arteries had each its quota of toll-gates. There was one on the Kingston Road between the city and Norway, and another on the Danforth Road between Little York and the city. There was once a gate at the corner of Avenue Road and Davenport Road, and a check gate where Davenport crosses Bathurst Street; while old inhabitants remember two toll

[1] S. H. Howard quoted *ibid.*

lodges just west of Osgoode Hall, and one to the east of the intersection of College and St. George Streets.

During the thirty years that the toll-gates were under the control of the county they were leased to the highest bidder at public auction, at first annually, and later for three years at a time. The rates of toll charged in 1876 for various types of vehicles and animals may be taken as typical:

Loaded vehicle drawn by one horse or other beast	7c.
Loaded vehicle drawn by two horses or other beasts	10c.
Unloaded vehicle drawn by one horse or other beast	5c.
Unloaded vehicle drawn by two horses or other beasts	7c.
For each additional beast	4c.
For each saddle horse or other beast with rider	4c.
For every horse, ox, cow, etc., unattached	2c.
For every sheep, pig or goat	1c.

The toll-gates continued to be operated by the county until 1896, though several of them had disappeared prior to that time. W. J. Hill of York Township moved in the County Council in that year that tolls be abolished, and the motion carried. The by-law putting an end to toll-gates went into effect on December 31, 1896, a strong compensating factor being the abolition at the same time of the fees previously charged to farmers participating in the Toronto market. Twenty years later there were still a number of toll roads in Ontario, notably around the town of Cobourg. But they were becoming a great nuisance as motor traffic increased, and the construction of the King's Highways put an end to any remaining on the main routes of travel. Toll roads had served their purpose in only a semi-satisfactory manner, and it may safely be said that each and every one departed this life "unwept, unhonour'd and unsung".

CHAPTER VI

Streets and Sidewalks

York, in common with other municipalities, was originally governed by officials appointed by the citizens at the town-meeting, together with some regulation, particularly in the licensing of taverns, etc., and in the enforcement of laws, by the Court of Quarter Sessions. The most important offices to be filled were those of clerk, collector and assessor, but there were also pathmasters or overseers of the roads, fence-viewers, pound-keepers and a town warden. One of the early pathmasters of York, John McDougall, was publicly complimented in the *Gazette* for his "great assiduity and care in getting the streets cleared of the many and dangerous (especially at night) obstructions therein".[1] Three weeks later, on July 20, 1799, Mr. Clark, pathmaster for the west end of the town, was similarly congratulated.[2]

The mud and the numerous stumps in the streets added greatly to difficulties of transport. One man wrote to the Niagara *Canada Constellation* in 1799 that "if any gentleman will come forward and pledge his honour (he being perfectly sober at the time) that he will introduce a bill in the House of Assembly for the purpose of a Stump Act for the city of York [illegible] shall have my vote at the ensuing general election".[3] This type of law appears to have been effective in Vergennes, Vermont, where each drunk was forced to remove one stump from the streets. In the following year a "Stump Act" was in force in York, and many a root was removed by topers, who might [illegible] sentenced [illegible] eradicate one or more stumps from the highways of the town. Since, however, such knowledge as we have of this innovation emanates from Niagara, York's rival, we may assume that its importance was considerably exaggerated.

Yonge Street, the first great highway in the province, was blazed in 1793-96 by the Queen's Rangers under

[1] *Upper Canada Gazette*, June 20, 1798.
[2] *Ibid.*, July 30, 1799.
[3] *Niagara Canada Constellation*, December 14, 1799.

Augustus Jones, and led from York northward to Lake Simcoe. Almost immediately after the original survey, however, that portion from Toronto Bay to a point some distance above the first concession line (Bloor Street) fell into disuse, traffic from the north approaching the town by way of a trail along Parliament Street. The inconvenience resulting from this detour led to the reopening of that part of Yonge from Lot (Queen) Street to the three-mile post. The York *Gazette* of December 29, 1800, gives an account of a meeting held to consider the matter:

"A number of the principal inhabitants of the town met together in one of the Government Buildings to consider the means of opening the road to Yonge Street, and enabling the farmers there to bring their provisions to market with more ease than is practicable at present. . . . The Hon. the Chief Justice (Elmsley) was called to the chair. . . .

"A paper was then produced and read, containing a proposal from Elphalet Hale to open and make the road, or so much of it as might be required, at the rate of twelve dollars per acre for clearing it where no causeway was wanted, four rods wide, and cutting the stumps in the two middle rods close to the ground, and 7s. 6d. Provincial currency per rod for making a causeway 18 feet wide where a causeway might be wanted. Mr. Hale's proposal was accepted; . . . . and a petition of the Legislature lies for signature at Mr. McDougall's Tavern, and subscriptions will be received by Messrs. Allan and Wood."[4]

This work was completed in June, 1802, and was for some years known as "the road to Yonge Street". Traffic from the north then proceeded east on Lot Street to the Market and the business section of the town.

Elphalet Hale appears to have considered himself the loser by the opening of this stretch of roadway, for in the spring of 1803 he "presented a memorial to the Court of General Quarter Sessions stating the injury he had received by the continuation of Yonge Street through his Town Lot, and praying the land to the east and north of his House, formerly part of Toronto Street, in lieu of what has been taken from him to the west of his House".[5] On May

[4] *Upper Canada Gazette*, December 20, 1800.
[5] Minutes of April 18, 1803. See *Report of the Archives of Ontario, 1934*, p. 45.

and he was permitted "to fence in and occupy for this Summer and the ensuing Fall only, that part of the Old Road . . . . which lies to the eastward and to the northward of his House".[6] From Lot Street to the bay Yonge Street remained unopened for some years longer.

The Court of Quarter Sessions was in charge of the enforcement of statute labour on the roads, and from the proceedings of this body we learn many details of early highway development in York and vicinity. In April, 1810, Jordan Post, Pathmaster for the eastern portion of York, reported "that he had money in his hands unexpended, being the fines levied upon such persons as had not performed their Statute labour for the last year, and he desired the Court to point out to him the road whereon he shall lay it out. The Court then ordered that he should expend the said money on the road leading past Jesse Ketchum's towards Yonge Street".[7] Ketchum lived north of the corner of Yonge and Adelaide Streets, so that the road named was the lower part of Yonge Street, or, as it was called at that time, "the road to Yonge Street". The low and marshy nature of parts of the land over which it passed made it necessary that a bridge or causeway be constructed, and we find two years earlier that "D'Arcy Boulton, Esq., the Elder, be permitted to do his Settlement duty by erecting a new Bridge at the Entrance of the road leading from the Town of York to Yonge Street". At the same meeting Samuel Ridout was allowed to perform his statute labour on that part of the same road "between the poplar plain and the Blue Hill Creek".[8]

The difficulty of enforcing statute labour was always present. In July, 1810, the pathmasters of Scarboro' reported that ten men had refused or neglected to do their work; whereupon the Magistrates "ordered them either to work their Statute duty on Danforth's Road in Scarboro' as soon as the said Pathmasters shall again warn them, or else pay the sum of five shillings for every day they are rated at, with all expenses".[9] It was worth while for the pathmaster to get all statute labour done, for the Court might charge

[6]Minutes of May 2, 1803, ibid., p. 46.
[7]Minutes of April 18, 1810, ibid., p. 180.
[8]Minutes of June 30, 1808, ibid., p. 122.
[9]Minutes of July 11, 1810, ibid., p. 165.

him with all work which had not been completed. For example, D'Arcy Boulton, Pathmaster of York, appeared before the Court in 1810 "to shew cause why the remainder of the Statute duty of his division due for the last year should not be charged to him by reason of his neglecting the duties of said Office".[10] He was, however, given another chance to get the work done.

In addition to the rather general evasion of statute labour the Magistrates were not infrequently bothered by interference with the course of drains or by encroachment upon road allowances. In 1811 letters were sent to eleven persons ordering them to remove buildings or fences from the highway, or to widen the roadway to the statutory 66 feet. Five years later a regulation was adopted for the improvement of King Street, the resolution stating that, "in order to render the most commercial street (King's Street) passable, the Pathmaster shall open water-courses on each side which have been arrested in their natural course either by negligence, inattention or indifference, not to say worse". In the same year (1816) it was stipulated that the footpaths on either side of the street should be eleven feet wide, and that "no person shall presume, in front of their premises, to raise the footpath so as to occasion a step unless the Magistrates in session approve. The carriage way shall be formed by a gentle descent to the bottom of the water-course adjoining the footpath, so as to have the appearance of a segment of a circle or what is known by a barrelled or turnpike road".[11]

The Lake Shore Road west of York was originally opened by British Regulars and militia. Dr. Scadding's account of its construction contains some details of interest:

"The early line of communication with the Head of the Lake was by the Lake Shore Road. The cross thoroughfare between the park lots of Mr. Bouchette or Col. Givins and Mr. David Burns was opened up by Col. G. T. Denison, senior, with the assistance of some of the embodied militia. The work of opening the road here, as well as further on through the forest, was at first undertaken by a detach-

[10] Minutes of May 12, 1810, *ibid.*, p. 182.

[11] J. Edmund Jones: *Pioneer Crimes and Punishments in Toronto and the Home District*, 1924, p. 130.

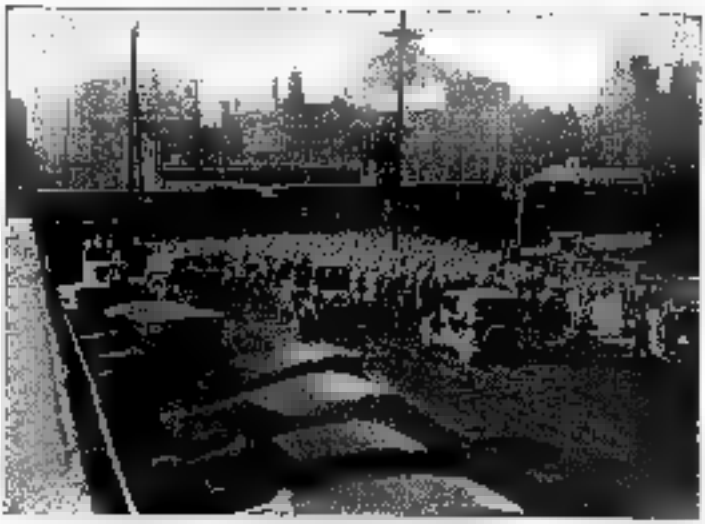
John Ross Robertson Collection — William Armstrong.

THE FIRST UNION STATION, 1858

This station stood at the foot of York Street and until 1871 was used by the Grand Trunk, Great Western and Northern Railways.

THE UNION STATION, 1934

This magnificent station, which affords such a striking contrast with the first, arose out of the ruins of the great fire of 1904.



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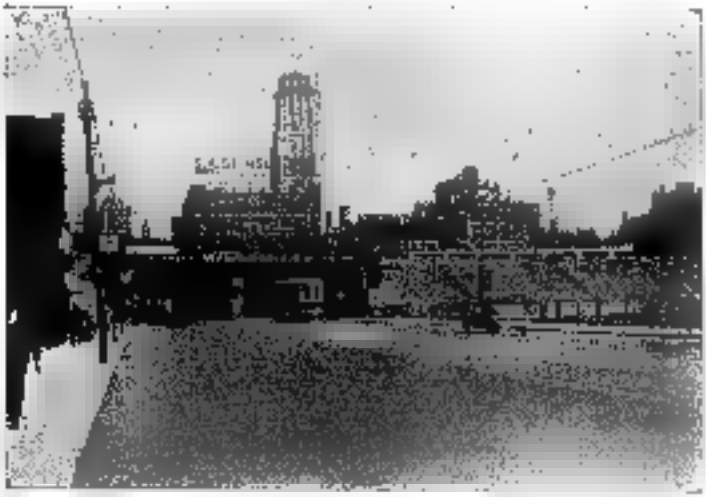
THE SOUTHERLY EXTENSION OF BAY STREET, 1924

This traffic condition was usual when crowds were returning from ball games at the Island Stadium.



Reproduced by Courtesy of the Toronto Harbour Commissioners.

LOWER BAY STREET, 1933

The changes made by the Grade Separation are apparent when one compares the two photographs.

ment of the regulars under the direction of an officer of the Royal Engineers. The plan adopted, we are told, was first to fell each tree by very laboriously severing it from its base close to the ground, and then to smooth off the upper surface of the root or stump with an adze. As this process was necessarily slow, and after all not likely to result in a permanently good road, the proposal of Colonel (then Lieutenant) Denison to set his militia-men to eradicate the trees bodily was accepted—an operation with which they were all more or less familiar on their farms and in their new clearings. A fine broad open track, ready, when the day for such further improvements should arrive, for the reception of plank or macadam, was soon constructed."[12]

It appears that subterranean springs and quicksand greatly interfered with effective road construction on Yonge Street between Lot Street and the village of Yorkville. Not until about 1830 was any attempt made to macadamise the roadbed, but some years previously a wooden tramway or narrow plank road over a short distance of the worst part was an interesting experiment. Sheriff Jarvis was the chief promoter of this temporary expedient, but it was first suggested by Rowland Burr. In later years plank roads became very popular in Upper Canada.

King Street, the most important thoroughfare in the town, was usually in somewhat better condition than the others. Previous to the War of 1812 an effort was made to pave, though rather crudely, some few yards of the footpath around Jordan's York Hotel, and here and there elsewhere. The paving material consisted of flat flagstones from the lake beach, but as they were of irregular shape and small size the resulting pavement was very coarse and uneven.

On April 26, 1823, however, the magistrates of York, assembled at Quarter Sessions, ordered that "$100 from the Town and Police Fund, together with one-fourth of the Statute Labour within the Town, be appropriated to flagging the sidewalks of King Street, commencing from the corner of Church Street and proceeding east to the limits of the Town, and that both sides of the street do proceed at the same time".[13]

[12] Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old*, 1873, pp. 371-2.
[13] Minutes of the Court of General Quarter Sessions, April 26, 1823.

We have no knowledge of the extent of sidewalk provided through this grant of £100, but it is improbable that the entire business section of even this one street was improved by stone paving. In fact three years later the *U. E. Loyalist*, in commenting upon the marked improvement in the streets, suggests that the sidewalks are in need of repair:

"The great improvement which has been made within a few years in the streets of the town reflects the highest credit on the York police. The whole extent of King Street is well gravelled and affords a good carriage road. Many others are undergoing the same process, and several are prepared for it by being first turnpiked and allowed time to settle. Some regulation with respect to the improvement of the sidewalks may be considered as necessary."[14]

An old inhabitant recalled that when he came to York in 1828 "the roads on all thoroughfares of the town were like most village roads in dry weather, fairly good. No material, however, was used to improve them, in consequence of which in the fall and in rainy weather they were almost impassable for vehicles. The winters set in generally early, and the frost made the roads better; and as sleighing could be looked for almost to a certainty through the winter months up to the end of March, there was not much to complain of. So far as locomotion was concerned, the sidewalks, except in dry weather, were in no better state than the streets. This state of affairs, however, did not last long, as shortly after 1830 improvements on the street and sidewalks commenced, and on the latter some flagging and plank walks were laid down. Quite a number of our wealthiest men, merchants, professional men and government officers, kept their carriages. The most in use by the merchants was a kind of four-wheeled light waggon or waggonette, made for one or two seats, and strongly made for rough roads".[15]

It is interesting to know, however, that even in the days of mud streets and oxen there was a speed law. In the Police Regulations of 1817, as amended in 1823, it is

[14] The *U. E. Loyalist*, June 24, 1826.

[15] "A York Pioneer" quoted in John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*. 1804-1914. Vol. I, p. 28.

stipulated that no person shall "gallop, or ride or drive a horse or horses at an unreasonable rate" (delightfully indefinite!) "in the Streets of the Town or on the Bank or Beach in front of the Same; . . . . nor to ride on the Footpaths". To prevent encroachment upon the footpaths it was usual to place posts at short intervals.

There were even anti-parking laws and restrictions as early as 1817, for it was laid down that "no Waggon, Cart, or Carriage of any description" was to be left standing in the street for longer than 24 hours. Similarly, it was against the law to leave on the street for a period exceeding 24 hours "any Firewood, Timber or other incumbrance, ... except in cases of building, when one-half of the Street in front of the Lot to be built on will be allowed to be occupied for a reasonable time by the materials required in building, leaving a clear passage on the footway".[16]

For many years streets went unlabelled and houses unnumbered, but in 1830 the Magistrates ordered the Clerk of the Peace "to take steps to get the names of the streets painted and put up wherever there is a corner house". Two years later an appropriation not to exceed 60s. was made for the numbering of houses, the plan being that "those running east and west commence to be numbered from the east end, and those running north and south to commence from the south end".[17]

Among the many improvements effected in the newly-created city in 1834 by borrowing money and increasing the tax rate was the construction of 2,618 rods of two-plank sidewalks at a cost of about 7s. per rod. There were not previously any wooden sidewalks in the town, and these were laid on only one side of the street, where pedestrian traffic was greatest. J. G. Howard was city surveyor at the time, and the first walks—consisting of two eleven-foot planks laid lengthwise—were put down on King Street under his direction. At the same period Jesse Ketchum, tanner, whose benefactions to the citizens of York reached large proportions, kept the footpaths in the vicinity of his home and tannery on Yonge Street clean and comfortable by a thick coating of tanbark. Ketchum's home stood

[16] *Regulations for the Police of the Town of York*, 1823.
[17] Jones, op. cit., pp. 148-9.

where the Holt, Renfrew clothing store is now located, and high stacks of hemlock bark faced Yonge Street in front of his tannery, which was situated on the south-west corner of Yonge and Adelaide Streets. The streets, too, were being improved at that time, for a contemporary description of the city notes that they "are wide and well laid out, and owing to the indefatigable exertions of George Gurnett, Esq., are now well drained, alike enhancing the health and comfort of the inhabitants".[16]

Perhaps a short digression will be pardoned to enable reference to a man who not only laid the first plank sidewalks but whose good works in many fields of activity provide mute yet eloquent evidence that he loved Toronto. The city's first mayor, William Lyon Mackenzie, appointed John G. Howard city surveyor, and a more versatile engineer could hardly have been found. He should always be remembered for his notable gift of High Park to the city, but his contribution to Toronto's development in other respects was outstanding. A writer well summarised his life work in the *Globe* of February 19, 1934:

"He was, as it were, this youthful city's Universal Provider of Amenities. He provided amenities in line, wash and India ink, in plank, clapboard, brick (both red and white), and plaster; in cast iron, cut stone, macadam, and at last in more enduring stuff of beauty. Sewer, college, church or jail; barn, bank, patent bridge or cemetery; racquet court, coach house, wharf or villa residence; turnpike road, ballroom, market or tavern, court house, lunatic asylum, Masonic hall or hay scales, store, monument or warehouse; printing office or picture gallery; whatever the city's need, John Howard had a design ready to serve it. If he hadn't he could make one. And did."[17]

In 1835 a motion before the Council suggested "that the crossings of this city be done with stone, four feet wide". In general, however, not much money was expended upon the roadways, the cost of clearing and repairing them being only £750 ($3,000) as late as 1848. The usual condition of

[16]Thomas Rolph: *A Brief Account . . . . of the West Indies and the United States: . . . . together with a Statistical Account of Upper Canada*. 1836. p. 172.

[17]The *Globe*, February 19, 1934. Howard's journal may be found in his *Incidents in the Life of J. G. Howard . . . .* 1885.

streets and sidewalks in the early forties is described by one who lived in the city at the time:

"The streets were wretchedly paved, or not at all, and were generally in a very bad condition. All the sidewalks were of wood, and in the principal streets were from eight to ten feet in width, the planks being laid crosswise, and on many of the private streets not more than four planks (four feet) in width, laid lengthwise. The nails frequently became loose, causing the ends to tilt, making it somewhat risky for pedestrians. These sidewalks had to be frequently renewed."[20]

The characteristics of city travel are further described by another writer:

"Few who now stroll down the well-boarded sidewalks of King Street reflect upon the inconvenience attending this recreation to their sires and grandsires and granddames, who were compelled to tuck up their garments and pick their way from tuft to tuft and from stone to stone. It was no unusual sight to behold the heavy lumber waggon sticking fast in the mud up to the axle in the middle of King Street, opposite to what is now McConkey's refectory. The party-going portion of the citizens were content either to trudge it, or to be shaken in a cart drawn by two sturdy oxen. The fashionable cry then was 'Mrs. McTavish's cart is here', and the 'Gee up' resounded as clearly among the pines and elms as the glib 'all right' of the modern footman along the gas-lit street."[21]

Apropos of conditions of travel C. C. Taylor tells the following story, which went the rounds in the days of bad streets:

"A gentleman, walking on the loose planks forming a sidewalk on King Street, espied a good-looking hat in the middle of the street. Curious to see and pick up the hat, he managed to reach it, and, on removing it, discovered to his surprise the head of a living man underneath. This individual at once appealed for help and deliverance, urging as a special plea, that, if prompt assistance was not rendered, his horse, which was underneath, would certainly

[20] W. H. Pearson: *Recollections and Records of Toronto of Old*, 1914, pp. 122-3.

[21] C. C. Taylor: *Toronto Called Back*, 1886, pp. 59-60.

perish. The usual mode of extrication by the use of shovels and oxen was soon applied, and man and horse excavated. This being the climax of exaggeration on this muddy question, it must now be dismissed."[32]

The so-called macadamising of Toronto streets was ineffective in providing a good roadway—excepting the main street, King, which was usually kept in satisfactory condition. A better macadam roadbed was laid in 1861 on Yonge, on King Street between Yonge and St. Lawrence Hall, and on Queen west of Yonge, when the horse railway was inaugurated on these streets. The agreement made with Alexander Easton, builder of the railway, included a provision that he was to maintain the roadway between his tracks and for eighteen inches on either side, the city being responsible for the rest. On other streets the macadamising consisted largely of piles of rocks in the centre of mud streets, most vehicles religiously avoiding the centre of the road on that account; while such horses and waggons as travelled there kicked rocks to the side of the road, where they provided excellent ammunition during Orange parades, elections, or other activities of a partisan nature.

In the late sixties cedar-block paving was introduced by the Street Railway Company, the blocks, six inches deep and cut from poles, being placed on sand between the ties on which the rails were placed. Apart from the railway roadbed this type of paving appears to have been first applied to the streets of the city when King Street, between Yonge and Bay, was so paved in 1869 or 1870. Yonge Street from Bloor to King was paved with cedar blocks in 1881, and so remained until 1904 when it was asphalted, the sidewalks being similarly paved the same year. The first brick paving in Toronto was also on the street railway track allowance, the sections which introduced the use of bricks in 1893 being Dundas and College from Lansdowne Avenue to Dufferin Street, on Bathurst from College to Queen, and on College from Bathurst to Dufferin.[33] As in the case of the cedar blocks, the city soon extended the use of brick pavements to many other streets, and numerous examples of

[32] *Ibid.*, pp. 60-1.

[33] For several items of information concerning early paving the writer is indebted to R. C. Harris, Esq., Commissioner of Works, City Hall.

both types are still to be found in the older portions of Toronto.

The appearance of streets just before the era of asphalt paving is worthy of mention. Those who have memories extending back to the eighties can recall the main streets of Toronto with high board sidewalks, deep gutters on either side, and bridge-like crossings over them. Hitching-posts were prominent at store entrances in the days when cabs and carriages unloaded customers. And one need only observe the mud in unpaved portions of North Toronto to be able to visualise the condition of such streets as were not dignified by cedar-block paving—which was itself not of the smoothest.

Though Portland cement was first manufactured in 1824, it was the late eighties before anything in the nature of concrete paving was attempted in Toronto. The first sidewalks of this type were known as "granolithic", and were six inches thick, the wearing surface consisting of Portland cement and granite chips. At first, in 1886, merely a few short strips were paved, their location being on either side of the Rossin House at the south-east corner of King and York Streets, and at the corner of Yonge and Front Streets, opposite the Bank of Montreal. At that time the sidewalks of even important streets like King were of wood, and their development from footpath to flagstones to planks and then to cement has been more or less contemporary with similar improvements in the surface of streets, in which the first use of asphalt occurred in 1888 on Bay Street from King to Front. In 1889 the use of concrete under the ties was inaugurated by the Toronto Street Railway, and in later years the employment of such materials for sidewalks and streets became more common. In 1895 it was announced with evident pride that "many of Toronto's main streets and private thoroughfares are asphalted";* and so, with its trolley street car service, improved water supply, and more effective police and fire departments, Toronto had definitely assumed many of its modern characteristics, though skyscrapers, incandescent street lights and motor-cars had not yet made their *début*. By March, 1934, the mileage of paved streets in the city was 542.5 out of a total of 574.7;

*Official Programme for Canada's Great Industrial Fair, 1895.

while there were 900.4 miles of concrete sidewalks. Of the street paving most is, of course, of asphalt, but a considerable mileage of the older types still remains; and in the city may be found about ten miles of old wooden sidewalks to remind one of the first of that variety which were laid when Toronto was inaugurated exactly a century ago.

CHAPTER VII

Cart, Pleasure Waggon, Cab and Omnibus

In the early years of the town the inhabitants of York either walked, or rode in their own carriages or waggons. There were, of course, plenty of carters, but until after the creation of the city, in 1834, the area was not large and there was but little demand for vehicles of passenger transport. There were, however, two livery stables in the town in the early thirties, an announcement appearing in Walton's *1834 Directory* that "Hackneys, Coaches, Gigs, Pleasure Waggons, Sleighs, etc., can be had upon reasonable terms at Barnard's Livery Stables, Market Street, near the Ontario House Hotel, and at Black's Livery Stables, Neptune Inn, New Street"[1] By 1835 the use of hired vehicles was great enough to suggest that their drivers should be licensed and the business regulated, and an Act was passed for the purpose by the City Council on May 30th of that year; but the "Cartmen's Act" of that date makes no mention of passenger vehicles, its terms being confined exclusively to the regulation of "any Sled, Cart, Truck, Dray or other Carriage for the transportation of any Goods, Wares, Merchandise, Firewood or any other Thing whatsoever", including such good old-time items as "hogsheads of sugar, puncheons of rum, and pipes (i.e., 105-gallon casks) of wine".[2]

Supplementing the pleasure waggons and gigs that one might hire in the city at that period were the stage lines, which operated in all directions and were of special value for longer trips. The first stages entering York appear to have commenced about 1816-17 on the Kingston Road eastward, and on Dundas Street westward. At least as early as 1826 Playter's Stage Line was running on Yonge Street; while from the thirties to the coming of railways in the late fifties numerous stages were leaving and approaching Toronto at all hours. In 1850, for example, four stages

[1]George Walton; *York Commercial Directory for 1834*. 1833, p. 147.
[2]The original document may be seen at the City Hall.

left for points east each day, two or three for the west, and four or five northward up Yonge Street, the macadamising of which in 1847 induced several new lines to commence operations. In 1841 ninety four-wheeled open or closed carriages and 130 gigs and pleasure waggons were returned upon the assessment rolls of the city, and if the public vehicles of various types were added the total would be quite large.

The first vehicle to be denominated a "cab" in Upper Canada is said to have been the *City*, built in Toronto in 1837 by Paul Bishop, a French-Canadian whose name had originally been the French equivalent, L'Evêque. It was constructed for Thornton Blackburn, a negro who had obtained a pattern of a type of vehicle then in use in Montreal, whither it had been introduced from London, England. Blackburn, who had come from the United States in 1834, lived at 54 Eastern Avenue, east of Parliament Street, in a very small one-storey frame building, and had found employment for some years as a waiter in the dining-room at Osgoode Hall. Bishop was a skilful mechanic and an expert lockmaker, and built the new vehicle in his shop at the north-east corner of Sherbourne and Duke Streets. Yellow and red in colour, the *City* was drawn by one horse and accommodated four passengers, who entered from the rear; the driver sat on his box in front. For a short time Blackburn had a monopoly of the cab business in Toronto, and over half a century later his pioneer cab was to be seen in the York Pioneers' log house at the Exhibition Grounds.

Since cab-driving proved to be a remunerative business, others soon entered into competition with Blackburn. Concerning these later cabs and their builders and drivers, John Ross Robertson collected a large amount of interesting information, which is best rendered as he wrote it:

"One Monday morning Owen, Miller & Mills, carriage-makers on the south side of King Street, a little west of York Street, turned out for Guest & Griffin, the proprietors of a livery stable on King Street East, about the site of Hugh Miller's drug store, six cabs. These were like a little dark-coloured sentry box mounted on wheels. They were drawn by one horse and carried two persons. The driver sat in front. They were called after the names of the

An Act

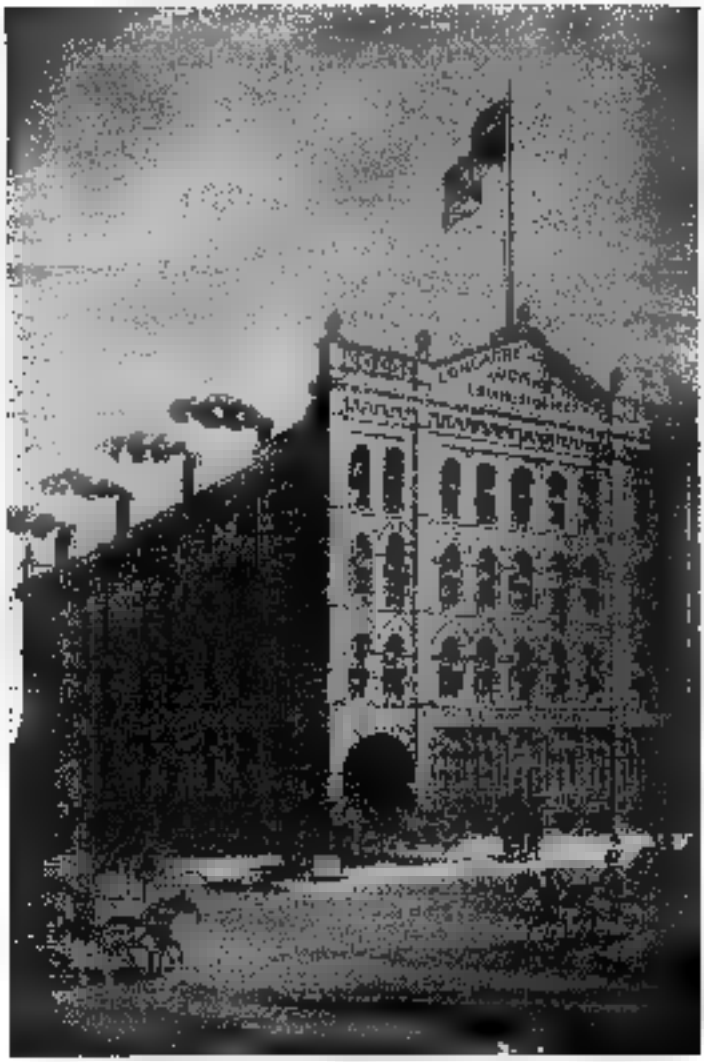
to license and regulate the Drivers and Cartmen of Common Carriers in the City of Toronto.

Be it enacted by the Mayor, Aldermen and Commonalty of the City of Toronto in Council assembled -

Section 1

That of any person shall drive any Cart, Truck, Dray or other Carriage for the Conveyance of any Goods, Wares, Merchandise or any other thing, within the limits of the said City for Hire or Hyre, without being licensed as hereinafter by the Mayor, and have the same by the Mayor, and have the same be shall perform and do, and be subject to the terms of the Licence, and if any person who has been licensed as a Cartman shall be convicted as hereinafter by the Mayor and thereafter shall drive any Cart, Truck, Dray or other Carriage for Hire or Hyre, or permit the same to be used for said purpose, he shall be liable to such penalty as the Magistrate for such offence

THE FIRST PAGE OF THE "CARTMEN'S ACT", 1886



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DIXON'S LONGACRE CARRIAGE WORKS

This manufactory, established in 1837, was long one of the most prominent in Canada. It was situated at 53-55 Adelaide Street West.

principal lake steamers: the *Chief Justice Robinson*, *Britannia*, *Queen*, *Transit*, *Niagara* and *Princess Royal*. Other cabs built by Owen, Miller & Mills, a few years after Mr. Blackburn's initiation of the movement, were called after the saints who had furnished names to the wards of the city. At first there were no fixed rates, but later, as these public conveyances increased in number, certain fares were fixed for one, two or more persons, according to the distance, and also by the hour. For ordinary distances the fare was one shilling for one person and one shilling and sixpence for two. The cab stand was on Church Street, at the west side of St. James', where it now is. At first no license was paid. Then a tax was fixed, varying from six to twelve dollars a year. Of late years this has been somewhat increased. The numbering of the vehicles also came into practice at this time.

"The first cabman made so much money that soon the business was overdone. Many servants left their masters and went into the new occupation. Amongst these were Charles Abbott, a servant of William H. Boulton, at The Grange; James Alexander Fitzpatrick, and Judge Hagerman's coachman. George Davis, who had been in the service of Lord Tullamore, built a cab which he named after his old master. Later two brothers, John and William Newell, went into the business, and about the same time Robert Paul. Mr. Joseph Hazleton is an old Toronto cab-owner. His life in one respect is remarkable. He has never travelled in any vehicle but a cab. He was never on a steamboat, a railway train or a street car. He came out to this country in a sailing-ship.

"Some of the cabmen, finding the competition too strong, abandoned cabs altogether and went into the livery business. The first two-horse cab was driven by Louis Walker. Like Bishop, he was a French-Canadian, and like him, too, his name was changed from the French La Marche into Walker. He lived on the north side of Duchess Street, a few doors east of Sherbourne Street. From this time onward cabs, stages, busses and public conveyances of every kind increased with the growth of the city. Mr. Blackburn, the first cab-driver in the city, retired from the business with a competency a score of years ago, but he is not forgotten.

for grey-haired men now (1888) frequently greet him with the exclamation, 'Ha! It is you who drove me to my wedding,' or 'You are the man who drove my eldest boy to his christening'."[3]

A number of the early cabs in use in Toronto were constructed in John Bell's Carriage Factory on Victoria Street, and named after prominent generals. The first three made there were called *General Wolfe*, *Wellington*, and *General Brock*; but the custom of naming the vehicles passed away when their numbers so greatly increased. In 1850 Toronto had [redacted] licensed cabs, though a man who lived in the city at that time recalled in later years that "the number of horses and vehicles of all kinds was so small as to make it an easy matter for any inquisitive person to know the owner of every particular turnout in the town. The only city omnibus at this time was one that ran to Yorkville every hour, and a ride in this was not very exhilarating at certain seasons, especially when the frost was breaking up. The jolting was terrific, but, as few or none of the Toronto people lived in Yorkville, there was not much travel up or down. An hourly omnibus started from the Market to Parliament Street, but it did not pay and was soon discontinued."[4]

Reminiscences are, of course, limited in accuracy, and cannot be expected to include anything outside the scope of one's experience and knowledge. It is very unlikely that Mr. Taylor or any other "inquisitive person" was familiar with all the vehicles on the streets at the middle of the century; and in addition we are informed by a *City Directory* published at the time that apart from the service on Yonge "every half hour from 7½ o'clock a.m. to 8 p.m. . . . . omnibuses also run between the Blue Bell Tavern, corner of Queen and Dundas (Osgoode) Streets, and the Market Square, and between the Garrison and the Clubhouse and various hotels, every hour".[5]

H. B. Williams is credited by John Ross Robertson with being the first to operate omnibuses on Toronto streets.

[3]John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*, 1894-1914. Vol. II, pp. 677-8.

[4]C. C. Taylor: *Toronto Called Back*. 1896. pp. 55-6.

[5]Henry Rowsell: *City of Toronto and County of York Directory, 1850-1*. 1850. p. xxxiv.

The best evidence that there were others before him is afforded by the specific mention of omnibuses in the 1843 "Act to Regulate Common Carriers" in the city—six years earlier than the appearance of Williams' first omnibus on Yonge Street. We have also the statement in Francis Lewis' *Directory* of 1843 that "cabs and omnibuses ply to all parts of the city, at very moderate fares".[1]

Williams' first omnibus was built in his cabinet shop at 140 Yonge Street, near the present Loew's Theatre. In 1849 he inaugurated a bus line from St. Lawrence Market and from the corner of King and Yonge Streets to the Red Lion Hotel, Yorkville. Four omnibuses were in operation, running every ten minutes (later half-hourly) from both ends of the line. The fare was 6d., and the first buses were six-passenger vehicles with movable windows which could be closed in with leather curtains. In 1850, however, Williams built four large buses with a capacity of ten passengers. These he continued to operate for twelve years, and as Yonge Street was often in bad condition the travelling was frequently unpleasant.

When horse-cars were inaugurated on Yonge Street in 1861 Williams tried to meet the competition by narrowing the gears of his buses so that they would run on the street railway track; but after a year of opposition he gave up the fight as hopeless and sold out to the Company. One more type of transport had passed into the discard, and—as was to become so much more prevalent as the years passed—one more man saw his livelihood disappear.

When York assumed the dignity of city status in 1834 a large number of regulations were added to the by-laws of the Corporation. Among others was the first regulation of vehicles of public transportation. In 1835 "An Act to License and Regulate the Duties and Charges of Common Carriers in the City of Toronto" was passed by the City Council. In the following year an amending act was adopted, and in 1843 it was thought wise to combine all previous regulations in a new "Act to License and Regulate the Duties and Charges on Coaches, Carriages, Cabs, Carts, and other Vehicles, kept for Hire in the City of Toronto".

Section II of this Act required that all drivers of such

[1] Francis Lewis: *The Toronto Directory and Street Guide*, 1843, p. 110.

vehicles, and of sleds, carts, trucks and drays as well, must be licensed by the mayor or two aldermen. Proprietors of livery stables, whose vehicles did not "occupy any of the Stands hereinafter named and described", were omitted from this requirement. Any person over eighteen years of age who could give proper security might be granted a license on payment of the fee, which was as follows:

For every Coach, Omnibus or Carriage, drawn by two horses,—£3.

For every Cab or other such vehicle, drawn by one horse,—£2.

For every Cart, Truck, Dray or other such vehicle of transport,—£1 10s.

The security required from every driver upon obtaining his license was £30 in two sureties of £15 each, this being subject to use in payment of damages to other persons if accidents should occur, or for fines and penalties resulting from the neglect of his duties as driver. The renewal of a license from year to year cost from 10s. to 25s. per vehicle *per annum*.

Section VII of the Act named as follows the only stands where drivers might place their vehicles for hire:

"Number One,—that side of West Market-place adjoining the Market Buildings, provided that the vehicles on this stand be in single line, with the horses' heads toward King Street.

"Number Two,—the east side of Church Street, between King Street and Adelaide Street, provided also that the vehicles on this stand be in single line, with the horses' heads towards King Street, and north of the south Churchgate on Church Street.

"Number Three,—the southerly side of King Street, extending westerly from the west side of McDonald's Hotel, provided also that the vehicles on this stand be in a single line, with the horses' heads towards Bay Street."

The maximum charges which might be made for transporting persons or goods are elaborately detailed. The city was divided into three divisions—which recall the taxicab zones of today. There was, however, no tariff of minimum rates such as has been enforced in 1933 for

taxicabs. For the purpose of regulating the charges the divisions of the city were as follows:

"First Division—That portion between Simcoe Street on the west, Queen Street on the north, and Parliament Street on the east.

"Second Division—That portion between Simcoe Street and Brock Street on the west, the northern limits of the city on the north, and the River Don on the east.

"Third Division—That portion of the City and Liberties beyond the last-described division, and within the limits thereof."

The schedule of charges for passenger carriage was based upon these zones, together with the number of persons and the type of vehicle—whether two-horse coach or one-horse cab. There was also an hourly rate of 4s. for coaches and 3s. 6d. for cabs, with slightly lower charges for hours subsequent to the first.

It is stipulated that if a passenger had no more than five minutes' business at his destination he should, if he wished, be carried back to the point of departure without extra charge; if from five to fifteen minutes, for one-half additional; if from fifteen to thirty minutes, for two-thirds the original fare; and if beyond half an hour the driver might charge by the hourly rate. It is further provided that one-third additional to the schedule may be charged for night travel, i.e., after 9 p.m. from May 1st to September 30th, and after 7 p.m. between October 1st and April 30th.

Among miscellaneous provisions of interest is that which stipulated that no driver might "wantonly snap or flourish his whip", nor use any "abusive, obscene or impertinent language of any kind whatever", the latter restriction being limited, however, to the time that he was in charge of his vehicle! Night travel was carefully regulated, and, "unless it be moonlight", each vehicle of passenger transport must have "two well-lighted lamps with glass fronts and sides", and on them must be printed in black paint in letters at least an inch high the number of the vehicle. At all times each cab or coach must carry a card with the owner's name and number and the tariff of rates.

Similar provisions, and a similar tariff of charges, were

laid down with respect to the activities of carters, of whom there were 67 in Toronto in 1848. Some of the more minute regulations of the entire Act may be assumed to have been, like many others before and since, ignored or evaded by the drivers, though the general spirit of the law was no doubt obeyed, for one's license might depend upon it.[1] Until 1867—and even later, on occasion,—the carters of Toronto might be seen racing with puncheons of water to help extinguish fires; it was, in fact, their duty to do so owing to an ineffective waterworks system, and prizes were offered by the City Council for the earliest arrivals.

In 1883 the *Globe* published, for the information of Exhibition visitors, the tariff of cab charges. It was still based on zones, though of course the zones were different. For the benefit of travellers it is stated that children over 8 and under [redacted] years are charged half price; and that "one trunk and articles may be placed inside the cab, free"; but each article placed outside added 5 cents to the cost.[2]

The "Act to Regulate Common Carriers" has been superseded by others designed to apply under conditions of motor transport; but for nearly a century the old order ruled, and the disappearance of the last livery stables has occurred within the memory of most adults. William Wilson's Livery Stable, in fact, still remains at 586 Yonge Street. "I still keep a couple of old horses around," says the proprietor, whose establishment is now largely a motor livery. And even yet one or two private carriages continue to appear on the streets in leisurely, if incongruous, progression,—objects of curiosity in a world of speed.

[1]The provisions of the 1848 Act may be found *in extenso* in William Brown's *Toronto City and Home District Directory, 1846-7*, pp. 7-17.

[2]*Globe*, September 15, 1883.

CHAPTER VIII

Horse Railway and Trolley Car

With the passing of stage-coach days and the coming of the railway, attention began to be focussed upon the provision of some type of rail transport on city streets. Steam locomotives were obviously unsuited to the purpose, but, in the absence of self-propelling carriages, the use of horses to haul cars suggested itself as the best available method of making use of the popular "rail-cars" for the purposes of passenger carriage. The advantages of such a service were undeniable, for the streets were in most cases not even macadamized; cabs and carriages consequently made their way slowly, and their employment was expensive. Omnibus services with comparatively cheap fares had, it is true, been available for some twenty years over a few main routes in Toronto, but in 1860 it was the opinion of one man at least that the time was ripe for the inauguration of a horse railway.

On October 1, 1860, Alexander Easton, an Englishman resident in Yorkville, but formerly of Philadelphia, applied to the City Council for the exclusive right to build and operate a street railway. His plans as outlined in the application provided for a double track on Yonge Street from King Street to Yorkville village; a single track on Queen Street from its junction with King, near the Don River, to the Lunatic Asylum; and a single track on King Street from the same junction to Niagara Street, and thence to Queen. He proposed to charge a fare of five cents on each line; and, in return for the franchise, offered to keep in good repair 14 feet of roadway where the track was double and 7 feet on single-track lines.

Although there were at that time no street railways in Canada, several were in successful operation in the United States. In 1832 one was opened between New York and Harlem, but its unpopularity led to its abandonment for some years, and it was not revived until 1852. The projector of the Toronto railway wrote in 1859 that "street

railways have been tested in New York, Boston and Philadelphia and are found to [redacted] 'the improvement of the age', being so successful in their operations as to excite the surprise of their most sanguine projectors, and the admiration of the community at large". Comparing the street car with the omnibus, Mr. Easton was a firm believer in the great superiority of cars. One of his strongest arguments was humanitarian, for he considered that the street car "can be enjoyed by none so forcibly as by the horse, whose loads, though increased in weight, require a minimum of tractive power."[1] In spite, however, of this enjoyment on the part of the horse, there stands the experience that the animals seldom lasted more than a year in railway service in Toronto.

The Council did not immediately act upon Easton's application. It was proposed to refer the matter to a special committee, but Alderman Moodie thought that the question was so important that it called for a public meeting of citizens; he wondered what would become of cab and omnibus drivers if a railway were built. Alderman Conlin thought the country already had too many railways, and, in addition, he objected to encouraging Yankee speculators; but [redacted] modified his remarks when he was informed that Easton was an Englishman. Alderman Carruthers was also in opposition, stating that the franchise was worth $100,000 and should not be given away. Legal doubts provided ammunition for opponents of the scheme, and subsequent meetings were frequently disorderly.

Petitions from citizens, the *Globe* and other newspapers, and public bodies, were sent in favouring the proposed railway, and finally, on March 14, 1861, a special committee brought in a report recommending the acceptance of the proposals under certain conditions. Several of these were the result of investigations into lines in operation in the United States. The following provisions were included in the agreement of twenty-four paragraphs which was executed:

1. That all work was to be substantially constructed

[1] Alexander Easton: *A Practical Treatise on Street or Horse-Power Railways; Their Location, Construction and Management* . . . . 1859, pp. 4 and 8.

under the supervision of the city surveyor to the satisfaction of the Council.

2. Easton was required to pave and keep in repair the track allowance; while the city could take up the pavement for sewer repairs.

3. The flat rail "as used in Philadelphia" was to be employed, and the cars must similarly be of modern type.

4. Each car was subject to an annual license fee of $6.

5. In place of the lines proposed by Easton the city suggested that the Yonge Street route be from King to Bloor, the Queen Street line from Yonge to the Asylum, and that on King from the Don to Bathurst Street. As a matter of fact, however, the six miles of track laid in 1861 was on Yonge Street from King to the Yorkville Town Hall, just below the toll-gate at Davenport Road; on King Street from the St. Lawrence Market to Yonge Street; and on Queen Street from Yonge to Dundas Street (now Ossington Avenue). [illegible] the future extension of service Easton was to be given the option first, and, if he refused, others might be granted rights on other streets.

6. During the summer the cars were to operate sixteen hours, and in winter fourteen hours per day; they were to run at intervals of not more than thirty minutes, the speed limit was to be six miles per hour, and the fare five cents.

7. Among other contingencies provided for in the agreement was the impeding of traffic by ice and snow. While "every effort" was to be made to clear the tracks it was recognised that drifts might prevent the use of the regular cars in winter, so it was stipulated that sufficient sleighs should [illegible] provided to accommodate the public.

8. Paragraph eighteen of the agreement was of great future importance, for it stated that the franchise should extend for thirty years, "at the expiration of which the Corporation may, after giving six months' notice of their intention, assume the ownership of the railways and of all real and personal property in connection with the working thereof, on payment of their value, to be determined by arbitration". If this right was not exercised at that time it might be after any five-year interval thereafter; and if the proprietor should default in operation of the lines for

a period of three months the property would be forfeited to the city.

Before this agreement was completed another proposal was laid before the council by H. S. Williams, omnibus operator, who offered to lease the Yonge Street line if built by the city, on the basis of one-third of the gross receipts, the fare to be three cents per passenger. The committee declined to consider this proposal, however.

When the street railway was inaugurated in 1861 Toronto had a population of 42,000, and was about nine square miles in extent. The Don River, Bloor Street, Dufferin Street and the waterfront were the boundaries, except for an arm which ran eastward some three miles along King Street. Associated with Alexander Easton when the Toronto Street Railway Company was incorporated on May 16, 1861, were Alexander Bleakley and Daniel Smith, who, with Easton, were named directors, while Easton was the first President.

At a meeting of the City Council on September 9, 1861, it was resolved that "as a courteous invitation had been received from the Reeve and Council of Yorkville to attend the street railway festival at Yorkville on Tuesday, that the same be accepted"[3] Long before one o'clock, the time set for the starting of the first horse-car, large crowds had made their way to the village, and all were bent on enjoying themselves. Yorkville presented a gay appearance with its flags and banners, and every window had its full quota of spectators. "Seldom," says the *Globe*, "has the quiet village seen such a bustle and excitement, and when the first car came out of the depot and was placed on the track a grand cheer arose from the assembled multitude." Some difficulty in clearing the lower part of the line led to a delayed start, and it was four o'clock before the car commenced its momentous journey. On board were the Reeve and Council of Yorkville and several members of the City Council, and on the roof was the Artillery Band playing spirited airs suitable to the occasion.

It was planned that only civic dignitaries and other invited guests should participate in the first trip; but a general rush enabled a large number of others to obtain

[3] See the *Globe* of September 10, 1861.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

H. B. WILLIAMS' BUS, AT THE RED LION HOTEL, 1850

Williams' omnibus line on Yonge Street served the public until it was displaced in 1862 by Easton's horse railway.

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THE SEATON VILLAGE HORSE-CAR

Seaton Village centred at the Bloor-Bathurst intersection. Two horses were used on lines where traffic was greatest, as well as during rush hours and to surmount heavy grades.

WILLIAM WELLER
Famous stage proprietor.

H. B. WILLIAMS
Operator of an early omnibus line.

W. H. Bartlett.

THE FISH MARKET, 1840

Weller's Stage Office and the City Hotel (formerly the Steamboat Hotel) may be seen on Front Street, near Church. The fish market was directly south of the present St. Lawrence Market.

seats in the next three cars, and they held them "in spite of every remonstrance". After proceeding a few hundred feet to Bloor Street the first car ran off the tracks, but the passengers soon had it back in place. "This occurred several times with all the cars", says the *Globe*, "but the passengers treated the delay as a joke, and the crowd were always ready to give a shove or a lift to keep moving". The reason for these occurences is stated to have been that President Easton had not intended the opening to take place until two days later, but in his absence the wrong date had been announced; and though all was not in readiness it would not disappoint the public.

As the cars passed down Yonge the citizens who lined the streets cheered the advent of the new system of transport, and the members of the Independent Fire Company turned out *en masse* in front of Engine House No. 2. At St. Lawrence Hall the National Anthem and three cheers for the Queen welcomed the appearance of the cars, which were thereupon started on the return journey, though the rough state of the road prevented their running continuously during the evening as had been intended.

The *dejeuner* in honour of the auspicious event was held in Yorkville Town Hall at 5.30, when some 300 gentlemen "sat down to a very elegant entertainment, which was got up in a style exceedingly creditable to the skill of Mr. Steers, who was the caterer on the occasion, and to the liberality of the Yorkville Committee, under whose superintendence it was provided". Colonel W. B. Jarvis, long a leading figure in the development of Yorkville, presided, and most of the notabilities of the village and the city were present. The chairman incidentally referred to a projected railway between Yorkville and York thirty years earlier, when the magnificient sum of $50 was voted by the Corporation of York and entrusted to himself to expend on the line; which, needless to say, never advanced beyond preliminary plans. Among the speakers who responded to toasts were Mayor Bowes and Mr. Easton. The latter referred to his street railway activities in the eastern United States, and regretted that he had been unable to build any in his native England—where, paradoxically, an American was the chief promoter! He acknowledged the equitable

treatment he had been accorded by the governing bodies of Toronto and Yorkville, stating that all delays and doubts were merely the result of "due deliberation" before entering upon a pioneering project.

The festivities of the day were concluded by a Concert and Ball in the Yorkville Town Hall. A "very fashionable audience", including "the prettiest daughters and handsomest sons" of Yorkville, attended the entertainment. A heavy rain was considered a fortunate circumstance, for it prevented overcrowding. From eight until eleven-thirty a program "much superior to most entertainments of this description" was given. Mrs. J. Beverly Robinson, Miss Davis and Mr. Armstrong were the vocalists, and the band of the 30th Regiment rendered several selections. The only objection to the concert was in the nature of a suggestion that the "anxiety to get through the first part of the entertainment . . . . is scarcely fair to the singers"; while at the same time many dance-lovers "felt that too little time had been left for the dancing which was to follow"—an opinion characteristic of youth.

A rush to the supper room, followed the conclusion of the concert, and Mr. Coleman, King Street caterer, supplied with refreshments those who succeeded in entering. At midnight the ball commenced, and it "was kept up with vigour until the whole of the program was disposed of". A complaint often voiced before and since is playfully made by the *Globe* in suggesting that officers' uniforms at dances have a distinct tendency to catch maidens' eyes and monopolise their attention:

"Some of the officers of the 30th Regiment who were present have doubtless found out that their 'red jackets' are not unrivalled by the regimentals of some members of the Active Force. If these gentlemen would take a hint, the black-coated civilians who desire sometimes to dance with the fairest specimens of the better part of creation would be just as well pleased if the warlike attire were left at home."[7]

The railway so auspiciously inaugurated had been constructed in less than three weeks, the work on depot, stable and tracks being commenced on August 22nd, when 200

[7] *Ibid.*, September 11, 1861.

mechanics and labourers set to work under the superintendence of David Smith. The first cars were built in Philadelphia, and are described by the *Globe* as "having a neat and comfortable appearance, and are well lighted and ventilated. The larger ones are calculated to seat 24 passengers and the smaller 16. There are seven cars in all in the depot, but it is only intended to run four of them, the others being designed for Montreal". There is something pathetic in the statement that "Mr. Williams ran his 'busses' yesterday in opposition [redacted] the railway, and it is stated that he will continue the competition".[4]

In October the construction of the Queen Street line—the remainder of the project—commenced. The *Globe* of December 3, 1861, carries the following item with reference to the opening of this section:

"The Queen Street Railway was opened yesterday afternoon from Yonge Street to the Lunatic Asylum. Many persons, including several members of the Corporation, took advantage of the first free ride over the road. The cars were gaily decorated with flags, and although the novelty of a street railway has to a great extent worn off, the sidewalks were crowded with spectators [redacted] the cars passed along. The track has been admirably laid, and the cars moved very smoothly. This road promises to be very popular, and will, no doubt, prove a paying speculation. The double track is now completed from St. Lawrence Hall to Queen Street."[5]

The first report of the Company, dated December 31, 1861, shows that six miles of track were [redacted] operation, and that an average of 2,000 passengers daily used the lines, the service being at intervals of about forty minutes. Eleven cars, 70 horses, and several wagons and sleighs comprised the equipment of the railway. The roadbed for the railway track was originally macadamised rather than paved. The [redacted] lb. rails, placed on wooden ties, were laid on a gauge of 4' 10½", which is still the standard of the system, and were of the iron strap or "gutter" type. Not until 1889 was concrete placed under the ties. The technical details of the method of constructing the roadbed dur-

[4]*Ibid.*
[5]*Ibid.*, December 3, 1861.

ing the seventies and eighties is thus described in an official publication:

"A trench, twelve to fifteen inches deep, was dug along the single track right-of-way and 4" x 6" x 7' 0" sleepers were set every six feet on gravel ballast. Placed on the sleepers were 6" x 8" stringers fastened to the sleepers by spiked cast-iron angle cleats and extra long spikes passing through rail, stringer and sleeper. The strap rail, weighing thirty pounds to the yard, was laid on the stringers. This rail was a rolled section about 1¼ inches deep at the head and ⅝ inch deep on the flat part. The rail was 4½ inches wide and was fastened to the stringers by spikes through counter-sunk holes drilled at intervals of 18 inches. When the track structure was completed the trench was levelled to the bottom of the 6" x 8" stringers, and sufficient sand was spread to bring the level six inches below the finished surface of the track. As a paving surface, blocks 6 inches deep were cut from cedar poles, and these blocks, of varying circumference, were laid in a manner to allow minimum space between blocks on the surface. The space between blocks was filled with sand, and the surface of the block paving was levelled by pounding on boards laid across the blocks."[16]

The improved surface of that portion of the streets on which horse-cars were operated led to the interesting habit of jerking the cars off the track in case of fire, in order that the fire-engines might proceed with all possible speed. The introduction in the eighteen-seventies of cedar block paving resulted in the Company's being called upon, under the local improvement by-law, to contribute towards the new pavements. After paying some assessments the Company refused to pay more, on the grounds that they were neither permanent pavements nor suitable for street railway purposes. After considerable litigation it was finally agreed on January 19, 1889, to pay all overdue assessments, as well as $600 *per annum* per mile of single track, the city assuming the cost of all repairs and renewals during the remaining years of the lease.

The characteristics of horse-cars as they appeared to the citizens of that generation will be of some interest. In

[16] *Ten Years of Progressive Public Service*, 1931.

most respects they resembled omnibuses. The wooden bodies of the "single-truck" type were sixteen feet long, and there were no window panes to protect passengers during bad weather. At either end was an open platform, and the car might be entered at the front or the rear. The one-horse car was operated by the driver, who sat entirely in the open without protection from the cold of winter except that he had a box fitted with pea-straw in which to place his feet. No tickets were used at first, and, it is said, not even a fare-box, the driver being given some change at the commencement of the trip and handing in what he had accumulated at the end, without any check on his returns. In the days when six miles of railway served a population of from forty to fifty thousand, conductors frequently knew their passengers; it is even said that upon occasion a car would wait for a suburban citizen who was finishing a hurried breakfast! Certainly the service was slow, and the cars stopped with a sharp jerk whenever the bell was rung. No turn-tables or other elaborate equipment were necessary to turn the cars at the end of the line, this being effected merely by unhitching the horses and placing them in position at the opposite end.

The primitive method of collecting fares soon came to an end, and a fare-box was placed just inside the front entrance. Those entering at the front placed five cents in this box, while those from the rear were expected to come to the front to do so, and if they did not the driver would rattle the box and try to intimidate any who sought to avoid fares by a brazen countenance. To provide change for those who needed it there was a small wicket in the partition between the body of the car and the driver. Two-horse cars, which were generally used on the main routes, were operated by a conductor and a driver, and the former carried the fare-box and collected fares from the passengers after they were seated. The cars carried no stoves in winter, and the only protection from the cold was a deep layer of pea-straw on the floor.

In winter some outlying routes, such as McCaul Street and Spadina Avenue, were served by sleighs not greatly different from the cars. The entrance to these was usually at the rear, and it was consequently still more difficult to

collect fares from all passengers. The sleighs made their way through the snow-drifts, sometimes aided—as on the McCaul Street grade—by the male passengers, who frequently had to get out and push if any progress was to be made. Such help was rewarded by a free-and-easy attitude on the part of the drivers, who, on these routes at least, had no objections to stopping in front of one's house instead of the next corner.

The railway did not prove financially remunerative. Early in 1862 Easton assigned to the Company his contract with the city, and it was soon afterwards conveyed in trust to the Hon. William Cayley to secure certain indebtedness and mortgages. On January 23, 1869, "An Act for the Relief of the Toronto Street Railway Company" was obtained, and as a consequence the property was sold to William T. and George Washington Kiely on April 7th following, the price being $48,848, though the actual cash payment was only $7,500. A new Company under the old name was incorporated in 1873, and it commenced service with six miles of single track, 40 horses, 12 two-horse cars, 2 one-horse cars, and four or five buses. The first full year's business, 1869-70, showed that the street railway earned a net profit of $11,221.31.

The former Company had shown no disposition to extend its lines, but Mr. Kiely, when approached by the city, wrote in 1871 that further developments would be undertaken. A few years later the Toronto Railway Company, though finding that it inherited the obligations of its predecessor in the matter of upkeep of the roadway, secured from the legislature a peculiar amendment stating that, if the old block pavement was to be replaced by a more modern type, the city had to construct "that part of the street which the Toronto Street Railway is bound to repair". This intensified the strained relations which usually existed between the two bodies. As time passed, a more satisfactory profit was derived from the railway. In 1889-90 the net revenue was $242,983, an amount nearly half the total of $565,830.22 which represented the dividends, bonuses and salaries drawn from the Company by its proprietors between 1869 and 1890. The only revenue received by the

city, meanwhile, was the tax of [redacted] per annum per car—in 1871, for example, the paltry sum of $55.

In February, 1881, Toronto was considerably excited over a battle royal between the employees of the Street Railway and storekeepers, particularly along the Yonge Street route. During heavy falls of snow the cars carried snow ploughs to keep the track clear, and as a consequence the snow was piled high on either side, making the road impassable for all other vehicles. Shop hands turned out en masse and shovelled the snow back on the tracks, and in the ensuing battle the car-drivers were worsted, their cars, after a short defence, being blockaded and more or less buried in snow. A dozen of them, eight of which were piled up at one point, were temporarily rendered helpless by the determined assaults of shopkeepers and clerks.

By 1884 there were car lines on ten main streets, thirty miles of track serving a population of 105,211. The service at that time was on Yonge, Queen, King, College, Spadina, Church, Front, Sherbourne, Carlton and Parliament Streets. In the previous year the end of horse-cars was forecast when a practical electric railway, the first in Canada, was in operation in Toronto. The 1883 program of the Exhibition called for the "First Trip and Excursion on the Electric Railway" on Wednesday, September 12th. It was delayed a day, but on the 14th the press announced that "the locomotive and track having been completed yesterday, the trial trip of the electric railway was made. The wheels and bearings of the different parts of the locomotive were stiff, having never been in use before, and it was thought that some difficulty would be experienced in making this first trip. When the engine that generates the electricity was started and the lightning caught up by the little locomotive it started away at a good speed and ran from the little station near the ring to the terminus of the track at the road leading to the ferry wharf. The locomotive ran over the track several times, and once drew the car over it. The car is a neat little platform arrangement with ordinary back seats, affording accommodation for about 16 persons. It was thought by some that the electric railway would [redacted] a failure, and its ultimate success was not expected to come up to anticipations. The success of the

railway, its promoters say, may now be looked upon as certain, and the silent steed will be ready to do service for an admiring crowd of passengers to-day."[7]

On the 17th, however, it is stated that "the idea of attaching a passenger van to the engine on the Electric Railway has been abandoned owing to the non-arrival of a large dynamo machine from New York, and the engine in the main building not possessing a sufficiently strong motor to enable a car to be drawn behind the railway engine. The cap of the engine will be taken off, and the whole of the mechanism of the machine will be displayed to view, which will probably prove as instructive and interesting as the original scheme. On Saturday afternoon the engine made several trips with no car attached, and a few of the many persons who displayed an interest in the railway were enabled to enjoy the novelty of a trip along it".[8]

At the close of the Exhibition the *Globe* commented editorially as follows:

"The electric railway was not so great a success as the people expected. Enough was shown to demonstrate that electricity can be used for traction purposes, but those who witnessed the performance of the model must have left the grounds fearing that it would be their grand-children's time before electric railways would be of practical use. It is understood that while attending the Exhibition of Railway Appliances in Chicago some of the members of the Association saw the electric railway at work. They did not want to pay the large sum demanded for the use of this railway, so they came home and made one 'out of their own heads'. The confidence in their own ability thus exhibited was a manifestation of the very qualities which have made the Exhibition a success, but the failure of the Exhibition should not be imperilled by the use of 'attractions' which are partial failures."[9]

In 1884, however, failure was changed to success. The Inventor, Charles J. Van Depoele, (usually called Vandepole or Vanderpool in the press), came from Chicago to superintend the arrangements, and, though there were "a thou-

[7]The *Globe*, September 14, 1883.
[8]*Ibid.*, September 17, 1883.
[9]*Ibid.*, September 24, 1883.

sand and one annoying causes of delay", he good-naturedly surmounted them all. The *Globe* notes that he did not stand on his dignity but went right at work as chief engineer and proved himself "the best mechanic among them". Early in the Exhibition, on September 5th, a trial was made, but the car did not go far, "as the belt attached to the engine running the dynamo flew off". On the 6th the Canadian Electric Railway, as it was called, was "in every way a complete success" as it performed before a large number of ladies and gentlemen invited by H. J. Hill, Manager of the Exhibition. The cars in use were "like small open street cars, and are nicely built and fitted up"; and on the 10th it was noticed that the train of cars went 15 miles per hour around the curves! The *Globe*'s account of the invention and its awe-inspiring effect upon onlookers describes that "the electricity, which is generated by two large-size generators in Machinery Hall, is conveyed into two copper bars which run the whole length of the railway track between the rails. The bars are partly covered over, both for protection against shock and from the rain. Attached to the motor are two pieces of metal which run along the copper bars, and the electricity is thus carried to the dynamo on the car, which, when put in motion, drives the car wheels by means of a system of pulleys and belting.

"The electrician on the car has full control of the movements of this motor, just as if he were running a marine engine or a locomotive. By means of a handle he immediately reverses the motion of the dynamo on the car. He controls the speed of the cars by means of a governor, just as the amount of electricity given to a man from a galvanic battery is controlled. To stop the car he simply breaks the current of electricity through the car, and the motor stops. There is a heavy grade on the line of the track, but the cars climb that grade without the slightest difficulty. . . . The thought of a motor run by an invisible force and drawing a car with fifty people aboard seems almost an impossibility, but it is even so."

On September 12th, in fact, the *Globe*, which had been pronounced in its criticism of the failure of 1883, commented that the railway was "one of the principal attractions of the Exhibition". The cars were "under perfect

control and brought to a stop without jerking", providing "an exhilarating ride", as well as being "a perpetual delight to the small boys. . . . Nothing could be more satisfactory".[29]

As will have been observed, there was neither electrification of the rails nor a trolley wire in the early years of this line—at the time the longest in America. In 1885, however, the underground conduit was replaced by a rough trolley-pole. In an address given in Baltimore early in 1886 and printed in the *Electrical Review* of March 6th of that year Mr. Van Depoele stated that he entered into a contract with the directors of the Exhibition in 1885 to operate a train of three cars and a motor car:

"Having only a single track I had to prepare here for a light train and good speed. . . . We began placing poles, etc., on the 1st of September, and made our first trip on the 5th. From beginning till end not the slightest hitch occurred, running regularly from 8 a.m. until 10.30 p.m. without stopping a minute. On many occasions we carried from 225 to 250 people. . . . The distance was a mile and the round trip never exceeded eight minutes; so, including starting and stopping, we made, for part of the way, at least thirty miles per hour. During the last five days of the Fair we carried 50,000 people".

The small railway ran from the Exhibition entrance at Strachan Avenue through the grounds to the vicinity of Dufferin Street. It thus provided for a fare of five cents a service supplemental to the King Street horse-car line nearly half a mile distant. Its use was discontinued in 1892 when the King line was extended along Dufferin Street to the grounds. Meanwhile, in 1887, there was in successful operation the first large electric railway in Canada—between Thorold and St. Catharines—and it is said that all the watches within several miles had to be demagnetised!

The Toronto Street Railway, however, continued to use horse-cars, which provided a slow and inconvenient service. The experimental railway at the Exhibition grounds had aroused widespread interest, and thousands of people had patronised it; but, while the Company was willing to extend its system if the privilege were accorded them of using

[29] See the *Globe* of September 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12, 1884.

Canadian Illustrated News. W. H. Langton.

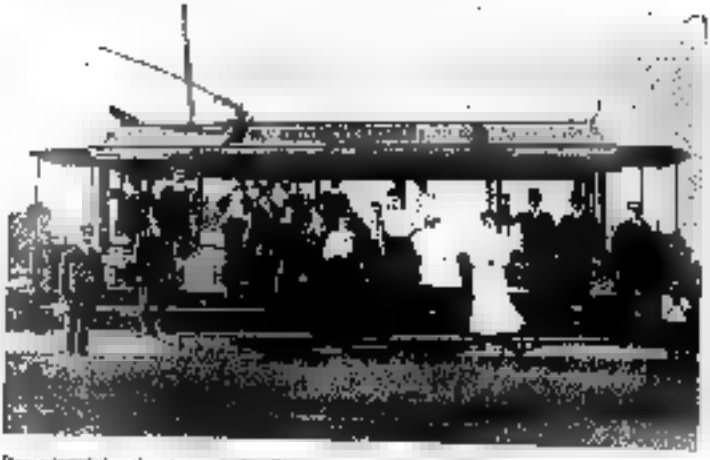
THE FIGHT BETWEEN THE STOREKEEPERS AND THE COMPANY'S EMPLOYEES

Canadian Illustrated News. W. H. Langton.

THE BLOCKADED CARS AFTER THE BATTLE

SNOWING UP THE TORONTO STREET CAR COMPANY, 1881

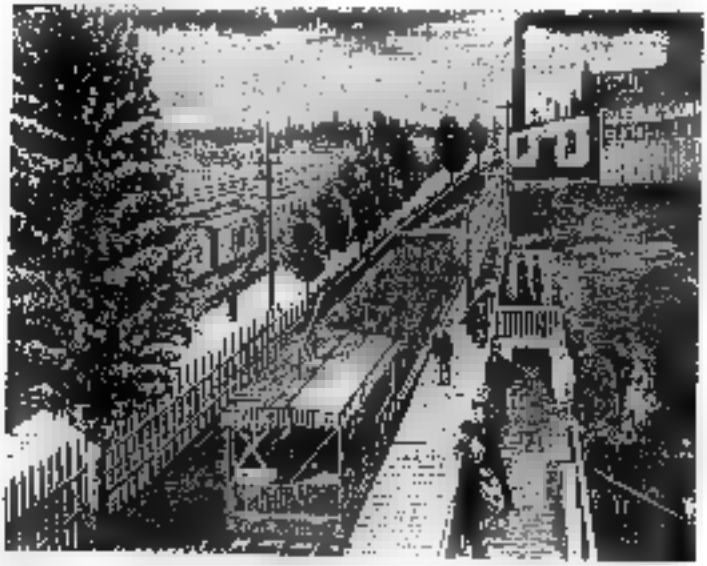
Twelve cars were temporarily rendered helpless by exasperated Yonge Street storekeepers when they found that the Railway employees had blocked the approach to their establishments.



Reproduced by courtesy of the Toronto Transportation Commission

An Open Street Car, 1906

For many years open cars were used in summer, and closed cars in winter. Convertible bodies were later employed.



Electrical World, 1891

The Exhibition Electrical Railway, 1889-92

A failure in 1883, this pioneer Canadian line was in successful operation in succeeding years. Two generators in Machinery Hall provided the electricity.

"electricity cables" or other motive power, there was no disposition to add to the horse-car lines or to replace obsolete equipment. The city, on the other hand, opposed the applications by which the Company tried to obtain from the legislature variations in the agreement, for the franchise was due to expire on March 14, 1891, and it was feared that legal rights might be prejudiced by any changes prior to that time.

The lack of effective street railway service was one reason for the promotion of the Toronto Belt Line Railway,[11] commenced in the "boom" times of the late eighties. This twenty-mile steam line followed the course of a series of ravines outside the city, passing up the Valley of the Don, crossing Yonge Street a short distance north of the boundaries of Mount Pleasant Cemetery, and returning southward *via* the Humber Valley—a section along the waterfront serving to connect the eastern and western sections. By 1891 the railway was ready for traffic. Not only did it become a fashionable diversion to take a trip on the Belt Line, but real estate brokers seized the opportunity to show clients the amazing possibilities of speculation in land in its vicinity. But after a few months the line closed down, its bonds being taken over by the Grand Trunk, to which it had been leased. Another "South Sea Bubble" had burst, and property values almost disappeared. As for the railway it became a pathway of rotting ties and tumble-down stations, a pleasant walk amid the quiet beauty of the ravines, and an example of the philosophy of Robert Burns:

> "The best laid schemes o' mice and men
> Gang aft a-gley."

At the expiry of the thirty-year agreement between the city and the Toronto Railway Company the population of Toronto was 170,000 and its area 17 square miles. The boundaries were, approximately, Greenwood Avenue, Danforth Avenue, the North Toronto line of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and the westerly limit of High Park. There was 68 miles of single track, and the assets of the Company, valued by arbitrators at $1,453,788, included 90 two-horse

[11] For a longer account of the history of the old Belt Line see an essay by the present writer, in the *Toronto Mail and Empire*, January 11, 1934.

closed cars and 56 open, 116 one-horse cars, 99 buses, 106 sleighs and 1,372 horses. The stable for the Company's horses was a large building, 444 by 66 feet, extending from the Esplanade to Front Street and from George Street to a lane. Apart from its size the building is of interest from the circumstance that on July 10, 1902, while it was the storage warehouse of P. McIntosh & Sons, five firemen lost their lives when its walls collapsed.

Valuable reminiscences of the circumstances attendant upon the transfer of the street railway to the corporation are given by Dr. Lockburn B. Scott, formerly a reporter on the staff of the *Empire*, and in that capacity in close touch with Mayor E. F. Clarke and the administration:

"For months prior to midnight of the 31st December negotiations were carried on, but with little satisfaction to the City. It was freely rumoured and quite generally believed that the Company would use every ruse in their power to prevent losing control, and all sorts of plans were considered and discussed in the public press and among the City's politicians; but nothing definite was given out by the Company. For a day or two previous to the 31st, and especially on that day, it was currently reported that the Company was going to mass its large force of employees and forcibly resist any attempt on the part of the City to take over the property. While the members of the Council were generally of opinion that the Company would not take such an evidently illegal position, yet there was much unrest among them. So much so, that without any public announcement the City Police Force was held in readiness to interfere in any untoward events. The City Fathers were firm in determination to put the thing through irrespective of any offered opposition. Bloodshed was freely prophesied by men on the street.

"It was planned that the Street Railway Committee of Council with the press representatives should gather at the City Hall at 10.30, where a luncheon was served and the latest developments (which were exceedingly meagre and uncertain) discussed. Having arrived a little late, I found the only vacant chair at the left of the Mayor, and we indulged in quite a little private discussion of the matter. Mr. Clarke, always optimistic, was inclined to think there

would be little or no trouble; but was not [redacted] sure of [redacted] as [redacted] fail in necessary precautions. When the clock pointed to a few minutes before midnight, he rose, told me to keep close to him, and the entire company, probably some [redacted] or 18, set out for the office of the Street Railway Company situated but a short distance from the City Hall, which at that time was located close to the old Grand Trunk Railway Station. The distance being so short we went on foot, scouts being sent out to warn of any impending danger.

"However, though there were crowds of citizens on the streets, we arrived at the office without molestation and entered a commodious room, where just before the stroke of the clock we were very quietly joined by Sir Frank Smith and several of the higher officials of the Company. As the big clock boomed out the midnight hour, Sir Frank stepped forward and in a neat little speech in which no jarring note was sounded, he formally handed over the Railway to the City and received a check for, as I recall it, some million and a quarter, but I am not sure of the amount. It was the largest check that most of us had ever seen, and had been previously photographed and was featured in all the city papers. After a very few words of friendly chat we all started for our homes in peace and harmony. The actual transfer, which did not take more than 10 to [redacted] minutes, was indeed a very peaceful function."[17]

Some people favoured public management of the Street Railway property which was taken over in 1891, but the consensus of opinion was that the risk was too great for a municipality to operate an electric railway—though the electric car was then a commonplace and practical apparatus. Mayor Clarke and his council decided, therefore, to lease the system to the highest bidder, the city managing the horse-car lines only during a four-months' interval between two franchises. The service during this period was irregular and deficient, and many were the protests of citizens. At times fares were refused and the passengers rode free; and the drivers themselves reflected the general uncertainty by showing a lack of interest in their work.

Four rather involved tenders were received by the city,

[17] Reminiscences of Dr. Lockburn B. Scott, Norfolk, Virginia, December 26, 1933.

the best being that of Messrs. George W. Kelly, William Mackenzie and Henry A. Everett (of Cleveland), which was accepted. The new Company undertook to pay the award of nearly a million and a half dollars; to change the whole system to electricity or cable within three years; to heat all cars during the winter; to give transfers over main lines and branches for one fare; to run all-night cars; to give cheaper fares during rush hours; to pay $800 *per annum* per mile of single track; to uniform all conductors; [redacted] lay down a 70-lb. grooved girder rail in place of the light 30-lb. rail on timber stringers; and to restrict hours of work to ten per day, while paying a minimum wage of 15c. per hour. That the city secured a very favourable agreement is further shown by the provision stipulating that the Company should pay to the corporation percentages on gross receipts varying from 8% on the first million to 20% on amounts over three million dollars.

On the afternoon of Civic holiday, August 15, 1892, the electric railway was inaugurated in Toronto. Prominent citizens had been sent cards of invitation by the Company, and they began to assemble at the old City Hall, Front Street, long before 3 p.m., the time set for the event. The *Mail* describes the celebration in considerable detail under the head "A Successful Test":

"It was nearly 3.30 p.m. before the first electric car left in front of the City Hall on its way to the terminus of the Church Street route, at the upper end of North Sherbourne Street. Among the party on board were several aldermen and ex-aldermen and some prominent citizens in addition to several city officials. The progress of the car was watched by crowds at several intersecting points, and twelve minutes after a start had been made it reached the bridge at Sherbourne Street. The trip was made without a stop, the car slowing up occasionally at the crossings, and no incident of note occurred during the journey. After arriving at the terminus the party adjourned to a large marquee where they were welcomed by the officers of the Company. On the arrival of the second detachment of invited guests all were asked to partake of the hospitality of the Company, which had provided solid and liquid refreshments."

A long toast list was still fashionable at such events.

and the custom enabled a large number of men to express their opinions on various topics more or less related to the matter in hand. The report in the *Mail*, however, emphasises Mr. Grace's speech in behalf of the Company of which he was Secretary: he noted that men of the greatest integrity had been entrusted with the franchise, for which the city had been recompensed by remuneration unequalled in any other city on the continent; "and he begged to state that it was only by the united efforts both of the city and the Company that the earnings would be increased and the wants of the public satisfied". The proceedings terminated after five o'clock, "a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon having been spent by all".[14]

In the *Globe* appeared the delightfully whimsical "Impressions of Uncle Thomas" concerning the proceedings of the opening day. He commences by noting that "'Your trolley is off' has already obtained a recognised place in the slang of today", yet "the great inaugural was a success in every department from start to speeches. . . . The new cars are wider than the old horse-cars, and a man of ordinary dimensions can sit reasonably cross-legged in them without his boot on the shin of his travelling companion on the opposite side. They have a fresh store-like appearance and are as bright, inside and out, as the new paint on the City Hall door. The springs and padding in the cushions are in perfect order, and long rows of commodious and upholstered straps hang invitingly from the roof for the suspension of standing passengers. Everything connected with the trip was auspicious, even to the weather, and when the motorman, whose title has recently enriched the language, clanged his bell in front of the City Hall, the rows of distinguished personages that festooned the front steps foregathered into the cars. The binder-poles on top were fastened in their places with ropes, and as the motorman turned on the taps the cars started."

"Uncle Thomas" describes in lively style the trip up Church Street. The first part of the journey was made "at an easy jog-trot" and those on board had time to pass comment on "the artistic merits of the new pavement in front of the public library, and the extent and beauty of

[14]The *Mail*, August 16, 1892.

the King Street excavations". After passing Queen, however, the car bounded forward, "the trolley overhead struck up *Scots Wha Hae*, and I held my breath and the straps waiting for what tragic writers call the final plunge". Dogs barked, children screamed, and telegraph poles looked like rungs of a ladder as the car flew past. Horse-cars on the down trip went by at their best speed, "as if they were in dread of losing their job"; groups of smiling ladies on street corners were out of sight before one could smile back; the car "walked carefully around the corner at Bloor"; and finally "the conductor rang the bell to announce that we had arrived at the end of the Sherbourne Street track in Rosedale".

Everyone present at the ceremonies was impatiently anticipating the refreshments. "Good Mr. Webb had provided mountains of enticing sandwiches, olive-crowned salads, feather-weight cakes, watermelons carved to imitate gigantic tulips, oceans of lemonade, and bottles of liquid, stimulating and sedative. . . . Ex-Ald. Hewitt was there to witness the triumph of his statesmanship and diplomacy, and Senator Frank Smith was on hand to give away the bride. . . . Whatever may be said of the Company, every one present must admit that they provided an excellent lunch. And though the transfer of the franchise may produce [illegible] years of bickering and litigation, it has also yielded a most enjoyable celebration. And a free lunch covereth a multitude of sins."[14]

The introduction of the new type of transport was unfortunately not without accident. Charles Z. Zwick, of Rochester, a visitor at the St. James Hotel, was riding on a horse-car on Front Street, "and in his eagerness to note the progress of one of the new electric cars, which was approaching that in which he was seated, he stretched over too far, lost his balance, and fell in front of the electric car, which struck him on the shoulder and inflicted an ugly scalp wound. Dr. Garrett was called in, and the injured man was removed to St. Michael's Hospital, where he was reported to be doing as well as could be expected."[15]

On the 17th the *Mail* commented editorially on the ac-

[14]The *Globe*, August 16, 1892.
[15]The *Mail*, August 16, 1892.

cident, suggesting that only those easily alarmed would find cause for apprehension and suggest that electric cars be abandoned; for "the victim would have been just as much hurt had he acted as he did towards an ordinary horse-car. . . . The new cars are so arranged that passengers cannot get on and off between the tracks. The public must get accustomed to using the cars from the starboard side. The idea is an excellent one, and when thoroughly understood should inure to safety rather than danger".[10]

The opposition to electric railways came in part from horse fanciers and buyers. A local paper, in supporting them, asked: "What will be the result of the trolley's application to King, Queen and Yonge Streets? The trolley will drive carriages off these streets, decrease the value of property, and increase the danger to life. . . . It is a mistake to accept it, and it will be a curse when it does come." A similar feeling was sometimes evident in the United States, where in 1892 a Brooklyn publication, in referring to interference with telephone services owing to electricity escaping from trolleys, stated that "this will be thought a minor inconvenience when the demon begins his daily harvest of victims. Then this town will rise up and call blessed the man who would deliver her from the trolley".[11]

The argument as to whether the storage battery or the trolley system of power should be adopted did not end when the first electric cars were placed in operation. The city engineer recommended the trolley as speedier and more reliable, but investigations in American cities were instituted before his opinion was accepted, for many citizens objected to any increase in the already numerous poles. In 1894 the remaining horse-cars disappeared from the streets, the last one, on the McCaul Street route, being withdrawn from service on August 31st. Trolley cars, somewhat larger and heavier, but differing chiefly in that the front platform was closed in and the windows contained glass, were then in use throughout the city. The electric cars

[10] *Ibid.*, August 17, 1892.

[11] Quoted in the *Fellows* manuscript account of the Toronto Street Railway, in the possession of the Toronto Transportation Commission. For a copy of this material, which contains considerable information not available elsewhere, the writer is indebted to D. W. Harvey, Esq., General Manager of the T.T.C.

necessitated heavier rails and a more substantial roadbed, so that a very considerable financial outlay was immediately essential. As to the operation of the early cars it may be said that they were none too certain, for short circuits, the filling of air-brake tanks, disconnected trolleys and other troubles often delayed them. Many a citizen recalls the slow trip homeward at the close of the day, and the reactions, good-humoured and otherwise, of the occupants of the crowded cars as they not infrequently aided the motorman to keep his vehicle in operation.

In construction the first electric cars did not differ greatly from horse-cars. The bodies were of wood, sixteen feet long. Platforms were not at first covered by a roof, but about 1895 the front end was protected in that manner. The motors were of 20 horse-power, and the trolley poles were of wood, the current being carried from the wheel to the trolley box through a bare copper wire stapled to the side of the pole. In 1893 the introduction of tubular steel trolley poles was a great improvement. A stationary life-guard protruded some five feet in front of the car, about eight inches above the rails. It was unsatisfactory, however, and there were a number of fatal accidents before an automatic fender replaced the old type. The first steel double-truck cars built in Toronto in 1895 were among the earliest on the continent. For many years an equal number of open and closed cars were built, the former being used in the summer months and the latter during the winter. In 1904 the construction of convertible bodies obviated the necessity of building two types. The use of open cars with running boards was prohibited by the Ontario Railway and Municipal Board in 1908. About 1905 air brakes were introduced, and the filling of storage tanks at stations along the route caused many tedious delays. The modern Westinghouse air brake as used by the T.T.C. put an end to this inconvenience.

It is characteristic of Toronto that the proposed introduction of Sunday cars caused a violent upheaval of public opinion. The "gay nineties" were, perhaps, not so gay in this city as elsewhere, but in any case there was five years of agitation before Sunday street cars were allowed. The agreement prevented their introduction until the electors

approved the principle at the polls. On January 4, 1892, there was a majority of 2,836 against, and one can readily imagine the heated discussions in church and street prior to the acceptance of the revolutionary idea on May 15, 1897, by a scant 300 majority.

It is not intended to give a detailed account of the operation of the Toronto Railway Company between 1891 and 1921, when the franchise expired once more. Most citizens remember the various civic street railways that had to be constructed in suburban districts after the extension of the city boundaries in 1910, for the Privy Council upheld the Toronto Railway Company in its refusal to extend service beyond the limits as they existed in 1891. The Gerrard, Greenwood, Danforth, St. Clair, Lansdowne and Bloor West lines were consequently operated by the city, which had to assume the deficit resulting from the two-cent fare.

There were no transfers issued during the horse-car period—not, at least, until its closing days. Passengers paid a separate fare on each line until about 1891, when a transfer "by verbal statement" was allowed; and this—which must have been most unsatisfactory—was superseded by a free transfer system in the following year. Conductors and drivers were not provided with uniforms during horse-car days, these being first issued upon the commencement of the electric service in 1892. In 1882 their wages were [illegible] a week for a twelve-hour day, and, in 1891, $10 a week for a ten-hour day. According to the agreement with the new company in 1892 no adult employee was to receive less than 16c. per hour, and up to 1902 that was the rate for the first year, and 16½c. thereafter. Since that date the wage rate has steadily risen. In 1918 it was 39c. an hour for a ten-hour day. In 1919 an eight-hour day was inaugurated, and the rate was raised to 55c., and to 60c. an hour in 1920. The latter is still in effect, except that operators of one-man cars receive 5c. an hour extra. Between 1902 and 1920 four strikes occurred, varying in length from 2½ to 13 days. During the first of these there was considerable rioting, and troops were brought to Toronto from Niagara Falls.

Between 1913 and 1921 proposals and negotiations concerning the acquisition of the system were continually in

1886 [illegible]?

the forefront of municipal politics. In 1917 the electors voted 40,323 to 3,725 in favour of the operation of street railways as a public utility. A company carrying on under an expiring franchise can hardly be blamed for refusing to sanction extensive capital outlay, and the service, never particularly satisfactory, became worse and worse. It may be interesting now to see historical illustrations of old types of cars "in use as late as 1921", but trips on a deteriorated roadway in antiquated vehicles overcrowded with exasperated and perspiring citizens vainly attempting to reach home an hour or two late by hanging on to someone's coat-tails while precariously perched with one foot on the running-board—such journeys were comparable only to an ocean voyage in the hold of a slave-trader during a sudden squall; and even if the ride was free—for the conductor could hardly hope to intimidate all of those whom he could reach with his coffee-pot fare-box—it was not appreciated, for in no particular did it even approach satisfactory street railway service.

In December, 1910, the first P.A.Y.E. (Pay-As-You-Enter) cars were instituted, the entrance being at the rear by a narrow passageway. Serious delays in traffic resulted from the use of this type of car, and an indignation meeting of citizens was held in Massey Hall. At its close numerous people boarded the cars and refused to pay their fares; and there were disorders in which bricks were hurled through windows—all of which goes to show that fights and riots, as common in pioneer days, are by no means merely a memory of the past.

On June 4, 1920, the Ontario Legislature passed an Act incorporating the Toronto Transportation Commission and authorising it to assume the operation of the lines of the Toronto Street Railway, together with the city suburban lines; and, in addition to the unification of the city's street railways, the Commission took charge of "the construction, control, maintenance, operation and management of lines of motor-buses, or of subways, or of tubes, or of any other method of underground or overhead local transportation". The rolling stock taken over by the Commission from the Toronto Railway Company numbered 832 passenger cars, and there was at that time 136 miles of single track under

the Company's control, the daily number of passengers totalling about 600,000. The Privy Council were the final arbitrators in the matter of the price to be paid for the property, and they fixed its value at $11,683,500.

In order to protect itself from excessive competition the Commission has also the right to acquire control of coach lines radiating from the city, and in 1927 substituted this service for several outlying electric railways, the use of which was no longer feasible. In the same year the city's transport services were further unified when the ferry boats running across the bay were placed under the control of the Commission. Since that time the islands have assumed much of their former importance as pleasure resorts.

In 1931 there were 254.5 miles of track in Toronto—nearly four times as much as at the close of the horse-car period. The rolling stock has increased in much greater proportion, for there were in that year 987 passenger cars, 93 service cars, 214 buses and coaches, 37 motor trucks and 9 motor snow plows and sanders. The modern pay-as-you-enter cars are of the double-truck type, and constructed of steel. Compressed air brakes, electric lights and an automatic stove are among the features which form a notable advance over the cars of other days. In spite of the fact that but one man operates many of the cars, a ride is normally (a qualification which eliminates the remarkably severe winter of 1933-4) much more comfortable than ever before, and at the same time the movement of traffic has been very considerably expedited by careful management. In the first eleven years of service under the control of the Commission street cars and coaches have travelled over 320 million miles and carried more than three billion passengers, and not one person was fatally injured during this period—certainly a notable record of efficiency. In recent years the patrons of the street railway have steadily decreased in number, a condition due in part to economic depression but to a greater extent to the motor-car; and as the congestion of traffic on the main downtown streets will become greater as the city expands, it may be necessary to relieve it by an underground railway on Yonge Street, which would not only replace the surface line but would greatly expedite travel.

CHAPTER IX

The Old Town Pump—and Its Successors

A supply of pure water has always been one of the most important problems of the human race, for pestilence and plague frequently resulted from impure water. During the first thirty years of Toronto's history, 1793-1823, the only public water supply available to the few hundred citizens who composed the population was that in the Bay, the Don River, or the several creeks which at that period emptied into the Bay. Those inhabitants who lived near enough carried water to their houses in buckets, while others hired carters to deliver it to them. A considerable number sank wells on their own property, and were thus provided with an independent supply. For example, John Hutchinson, one of the builders of the first public well, had two wells providing excellent water on his property on Duke Street, between Ontario and Berkeley. His house, by the way, is said to have been the first (or possibly the second) building in York constructed entirely of stone, and it remained until recent years. Many early citizens of the town had also underground tanks, barrels or cisterns in which to store rain water for washing and other similar purposes, and snow was sometimes melted to provide a supply in winter.

We do not know when the first well was sunk for official purposes; but the minutes of the Court of Quarter Sessions for 1800 show that advertisements were issued in that year asking for tenders "for the Sinking of a well in the Gaol Yard"; and that "the Sheriff be authorised to procure Six Water Casks and Six Water Buckets for the use of the Gaol, also a pump for the well".[1] It would appear likely that but few wells had been sunk in York prior to that time.

Nearly a quarter of a century elapsed before there was a public well in York. In the *Gazette* of June 9, 1823, an advertisement called for tenders to be sent to S. Heward, Clerk of the Peace, "for the sinking of a well, stoning and

[1] Minutes of October 15, 1800. *Report of the Archives of Ontario, 1933*, p. 9.

sinking a pump therein, in the most approved manner, at the Market Square of the said town, for the convenience of the Public". All proposals were to be in his hands by the first day of July.[7]

John Hutchinson and George Hetherington offered to do the work "for the sum of £25 currency on coming to the rock, with the addition of seven shillings and sixpence per foot for boring into the rock until a sufficient supply of water can be got, should it be required". Their tender was accepted, and on July 30th they were paid by the County of York for the work. They received £3 1s. [illegible]. for boring 8' 2" into the rock, and Hugh Carfrae, pathmaster, was paid £6 2s. 4½d. for placing around the pump a flagging of logs and stone; consequently the total cost of the well was £33 8s. 7½d.

The digging of the well is described by Dr. Scadding as "an event of considerable interest in the town. Groups of school boys every day scanned narrowly the progress of the undertaking; a cap of one or the other of them mischievously precipitated [illegible] the depths where the labourers' mattocks were to be heard pecking at the shale below may have impressed the execution of this public work all the more indelibly on the recollection of some of them".[8] In winter the pump sometimes froze up, and around it was usually to be found glare ice, but it served its purpose well. Many a citizen of later days recalled carrying jugs and pails to the well, either for his own home or for a neighbour's use, and a little pocket money was sometimes obtained in this way by the small boys of York.

It is believed that the old well was never filled in, but merely covered over. In 1831, when the wooden market building was torn down and replaced by a brick structure, the well was first covered; and after the great fire of 1849 the new St. Lawrence Hall and Market was commenced and the well again hidden from view beneath the flooring of the Market, probably at the southern end of King Street arcade. At the commencement of the present century the premises were again remodelled, and it is said that the well was uncovered during the laying of a new floor. Mrs.

[7] *Upper Canada Gazette*, June 9, 1823.
[8] Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old*, 1873, p. 41.

James Riddell, who is now caretaker of St. Lawrence Hall and whose father held the same position when the new floor was being laid, recalls the excitement among the workmen when the huge well was uncovered "exactly in the centre of the arcade leading into the market":

"Everyone around the market at the time went over to have a look, and the workmen threw a pail down and brought up water as fresh as though it had come from a spring. I was living here at the time so, of course, would take greater interest in an old well being found than other persons.

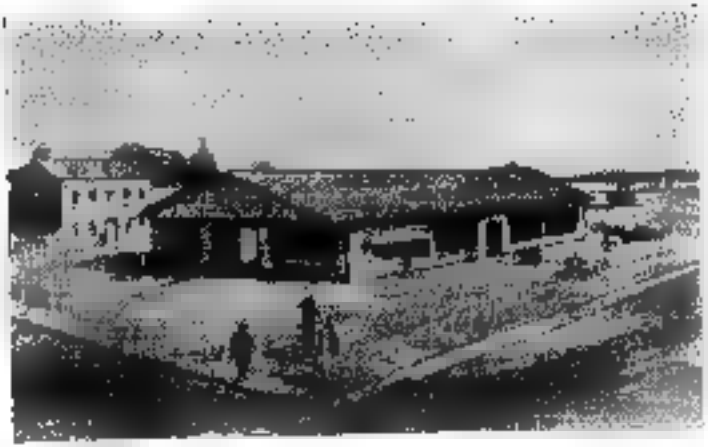
"But the well was there and it was very deep. We couldn't see the bottom, but the pail went down a great way. The market was empty for the remodelling and I doubt if anyone but the workmen and a few people around here saw it. They were laying the new floor at the time, so I doubt if it was uncovered for long, perhaps only an hour or so.

"I certainly don't remember them filling it in. I'm positive they didn't. I'm certain I'd remember that because it would take time, it was so deep a well. If I recall correctly they covered it over with something and laid the floor on top."*

Mrs. Riddell's statement is corroborated by Fred Duffy and John Wickson, butchers, whose families have for generations held stalls in the market; it would appear certain, therefore, that the old well might be revealed at small expense and trouble, to provide a remarkably interesting sight during the city's centennial celebration.

In 1824 the Market Square was, by the direction of the county magistrates, closed in on the east, west and south sides "with a picketting and oak ribbon, the pickets at ten feet distance from each other". The accessibility of the well was not greatly impaired, however, for there were three openings or footpaths on each side; though many a boy characteristically preferred to climb the fence. A second public well was sunk in the same year at the northwest corner of King and Princes Streets. On the 19th of August John James was paid £36 17s. 6d. for doing the work and providing a pump at this location. There do not appear to have been any other public wells in York.

*Quoted by Jessie E. MacTaggart in the *Toronto Mail and Empire*, July 17, 1932.



John Ross Robertson Collection.

THE FIRST MARKET AND TOWN WELL

The market was established in 1803, and the well sunk in 1825.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

ST. LAWRENCE HALL AND MARKET, KING STREET

The old City Hall on Front Street may be seen in the rear. The market region was long the centre of municipal and social life.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

ST. GEORGE RESERVOIR, HURON STREET, 1864

A part of the plant of the old Waterworks Company, this reservoir was in use until the late seventies.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

THE TECUMSEH WIGWAM, 1820-1874

A notorious tavern on the north-west corner of Bloor and Avenue Road. Later the site of Albert Nordheimer's residence, the corner now contains an uncompleted "depression skyscraper", a most unattractive addition to an otherwise beautiful intersection.

Sewers were provided in York previous to any public water supply,—before even the first town well had been sunk. Among the regulations drawn up in 1817 and enforced by the police of the town was one stating that "no person [redacted] permitted to carry a Private Drain into any of the Sewers sunk at the expense of the public in the Town of York, without especial permission obtained from the Magistrates in Quarter Sessions assembled; and payment of such sum for the privilege as under all the circumstances of the case shall be considered reasonable and just".[1]

Improved sewer accommodation commenced in 1835 after a lengthy report by the Committee on Draining and Paving. Over £5,700 was eventually spent in laying a main sewer on King Street from York to Berkeley, and thence southward to the Bay, and in constructing smaller drains down York, Bay, Yonge, Church and Jarvis Streets. At the same time a small creek crossing King Street near the old Government House at Simcoe Street was diverted into the main sewer. The Local Improvement System was instituted at this time by levying a tax on the properties adjoining the sewers.[2]

Though the sewer system was improved at that time, the day of incinerators and garbage disposal plants was far distant, and in May, 1835, a select committee reported that there were suitable dumping grounds for offal and rubbish near the old Parliament Buildings at the southern end of Berkeley Street, at the southern extremities of York and Church Streets, and in the fields at the rear of Jesse Ketchum's house and stables on Yonge, where Holt, Renfrew's and Birks-Ellis-Ryrie's are now. Presumably Ketchum used some of the refuse in his tannery, for it was suggested that the Council give him what he wanted, or that he pay 7½d. a load at the turnpike gate. One or more carters were to be employed to remove filth from the streets, and the same men no doubt buried "all dead dogs, cats, and other animal substance", which, as Alderman Turton pointed out on May 20, 1834, abounded in most sections of the city.

Among the streams which supplied water to early

[1] *Regulations for the Police of York, 1817, as amended in 1824.*
[2] The best summary of the proceedings of Toronto's City Council is to be found in J. E. Middleton: *The Municipality of Toronto, a History*. 1923.

citizens of York was one running north of Davenport Road. At least as early as the eighteen-thirties this creek was being used for the purpose, for in November, 1834, the following advertisement was inserted in the *Gazette*:

"Notice is hereby given that application will be made to the Legislature at its next session for an act of incorporation of a company to convey water by pipes to the city of Toronto, from the stream running in the rear of Davenport, Spadina, and Russell Hill, in the second concession of York Township.

Toronto, 25th October, 1834."[7]

Nothing appears to have come of this project, however. In connection with the use of water from the Bay and the streams which flowed into it, one must remember that even in 1834 York had a population of less than 10,000; consequently there was not that pollution which is characteristic of centres of population with numerous factories and extensive harbour activities. A contemporary writer, in describing York as a suitable location for intending emigrants, notes that "water in the town is not generally good from the wells, but excellent from the Bay which runs up to the town, most well water being to a certain extent brackish, and impregnated with limestone, which strangers instantly perceive; this may easily be remedied by boiling, and all immigrants should use this precaution; in most parts I consider the water perfectly good."[8] The first City Council was interested in the possibilities "of bringing into the city the water of the Humber or any other source in its vicinity", and an exhaustive report on the matter was submitted by Deputy Surveyor David Gibson on January 24, 1835. No action was taken, however, the necessary expenditure appearing prohibitive.

Fire-fighting was a difficult matter in the days when Toronto had no adequate water supply, as the primitive methods in use testify. A bucket brigade, consisting of two lines of men from the Bay to the fire, at first provided a rather precarious service of filled pails and empties, and this was succeeded by a "puncheon" supply provided by the carters of the place, all of whom were compelled by law

[7]*Upper Canada Gazette*, November 13, 1834.
[8]*Sumer Emigrants for Canada*, 1833, p. 54.

[redacted] hasten with all convenient speed to every conflagration. Water so supplied was pumped by eight men with an ancient hand pump which was carried on a wagon to [redacted] fires. This machine, possibly Toronto's first pumper for fire purposes, was to be seen at the Canadian National Exhibition a few years ago.

In a day of wooden buildings fires were very frequent, and it was everybody's business to aid in putting them out. In addition to furnishing their homes with ladders and buckets suitable for the purpose, each man was expected to aid in the carriage of water by hand. After the formation of the first Fire Company in 1826 somewhat better hand fire-engines were available, and prizes were offered to "licensed carters and others" who appeared promptly on the scene with barrels of water. [redacted] the *Gazette* of May [redacted], 1834, the City Council under Mayor W. L. Mackenzie advertised* among other inducements a first prize of £1 5s.

This method may be assumed [redacted] have been productive of results, though it is more than hinted that some carters reached the scene of conflagration with such speed that they were suspected of foreknowledge of the likelihood of the fire, whether or not they actually had anything to do with setting it. There were, it is perhaps unnecessary to add, numerous incendiary fires in the pioneer period.

On February 18, 1836, the City Council received a communication from Thomas Roy, engineer, concerning a plan to bring water into Toronto from neighbouring springs, possibly [redacted] Scarborough Township. A special committee was named to investigate the matter, and on October 13th a motion was passed adopting its report and pledging the Council "to aid and assist (except by appropriation of the city's funds) in every possible way any company or corporate body which shall be formed, the object of which shall [redacted] the bringing of pure, wholesome water into the city, either for domestic use or any other purpose connected with the city either in a manufacturing or mercantile point of view". The absence of financial assistance must have put an end to Roy's scheme, for we hear no more of it.

In 1841 Joseph Masson, Albert Furniss and John Strang were authorised by Parliament to form the City of Toronto

*The advertisement is quoted in full on pages 190-1.

Gas-Light and Water Company, the capital not to exceed £40,000. This Company obtained the right to dig trenches and lay pipes wherever necessary, at the same time guaranteeing to take precautions against accidents and to restore the streets to their former condition—not a difficult matter, for the roads were merely of mud and gravel. Within two years the waterworks system was to be established, and the Company secured a franchise for fifty years. Neither the gas nor the water service provided was satisfactory, and at the same time the charges were high. Imported metal pipes were too costly, so wooden ones of small size furnished an irregular supply of water which frequently failed, particularly at fires, when it was most needed. The first pumping engine of the Company was located at the southern end of John Street, and the water thus obtained from the Bay was stored in a reservoir on Huron Street. Many citizens depended, in preference, upon their own wells or the carter service, and especially outside the limited range of the waterworks system were chain pumps and big wooden cisterns in evidence, rain water being largely used for washing. Some memories of the old St. George Reservoir on the north-east corner of Huron and St. Patrick Streets, which was in use until the late seventies, will be of interest here:

"The structure was built in 1848 of red brick surmounted by a metal-covered top, ornamented by a diminutive flagstaff. . . . The supply was for the purpose of serving the western part of the city, but it was miserably inadequate for the purpose, and the authentic statement was made in September, 1858, that 'while we have nearly 100 miles of streets opened, there is not now in all more than 15 to 20 miles of pipe laid, and a great proportion of that is useless'."[20]

The Lunatic Asylum, Queen Street West, far outside the

[20] John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*, 1894-1914. Vol. III, pp. 309-10. The source of the "authentic statement" quoted herein is [G. P. Ure]: *The Handbook of Toronto*. 1858. While somewhat prejudiced, this book contains a great deal of valuable historical information, the section on the history of the waterworks being on pp. 160-9. As an example of the defective supply of water this account notes that in 1858 the New Masonic Hall, Toronto Street, had a storage cistern just under the roof, but a force pump was necessary to distribute the water to the various offices.

very limited service attempted by the early waterworks system, had equipment of its own, for we are told that "the centre building is surmounted by a lofty dome covered with tin, (which can be seen for thirty miles on the Lake), within which is the wrought iron tank or reservoir, capable of containing 11,000 gallons of water, which is pumped up daily from the Lake by a steam engine. The water is distributed through lead pipes to all parts of the building".[1] The building, it may be added, was heated by hot water circulated through 25,000 feet of small wrought iron pipes and supplied by no less than sixteen furnaces burning anthracite coal.

Meanwhile the Waterworks Company was supplying parts of the city with an unsatisfactory service. Manager Furniss replied to the rather general complaints by some of his own. On July 16, 1846, he wrote asking permission to erect six "waterhouses" at street corners, in order to enable his Company to sell water to carters and others. He complained that the outlet of the Peter Street sewer was too close to his intake pipe, and that the levelling of King Street brought some of his pipes within 3 feet 7 inches of the surface, subjecting them to frost. The city, however, refused to allow the erection of the six tanks because they would be unsightly and inconvenient; and the Council replied to Mr. Furniss that the Company certainly knew of the grading of King Street, for they left certain pipes on top of the road with the expectation that they would be covered in the process.

In 1839-42, the four years previous to the inauguration of the waterworks, the city paid £419 16s. 3d. to carters for hauling water to fires. Commencing in 1843 the sum of £250 a year was paid to the Company for the hydrant service, but the deficient supply from this source necessitated continued reliance upon carters, and the total annual expense was about £400 during the next few years. In 1847 the Fire and Water Committee added its criticism of the hydrant service to that of the firemen and the press. In fact it was at that time the opinion of most citizens that the existing waterworks system was more of a nuisance than a convenience and deluded people into a false feeling

[1] Alfred Sylvester: *Guide to Toronto*, 1856, p. 25.

of security in no way justified by the service rendered. It was worse than useless for the extinguishing of fires, and it was largely to serve this purpose that the Company had been formed in 1841. Even as late as 1867 carters were still occasionally employed to haul water for fire-fighting.

The City Council, however, appears to have been considerably to blame for the deficient hydrant service. On November 15, 1842, an agreement was made under the terms of which twenty "fire-plugs" were to be provided at an annual charge of £250. It was stipulated that additional plugs were to be furnished if the twenty were insufficient, so as to "equal the number supplied in the New York or Philadelphia Water Works in the same distance or length of pipes". The agreement[18] was to be in force 21 years, and although over fifty hydrants had been installed by 1858 the city took advantage of the loose wording and refused to pay more than the original £250. The hydrants were presumably for use only in case of fire, but their employment for other purposes became usual, and detracted from the available pressure when fires necessitated their use.

A few years after its formation the City of Toronto Gas-Light and Water Company had split into two, devoted respectively to the supply of gas and water. In 1851 Furniss sold the Toronto Water Company to a joint-stock company under Charles Bereay, the consideration being £23,020 12s. 6d.; but the City Council refused to enter into a new agreement, and Furniss, who had been sole proprietor and shareholder of the former company and had obtained a mortgage to ensure payment of the sale price, was soon afterwards once more the owner when the Metropolitan Gas and Water Company defaulted. Improvements instituted at that time included "a large Bath and Washing establishment". There were, however, great difficulties in the operation of the waterworks. To lay miles of pipes for the use of comparatively few customers, (there were in 1858 only from 800 to 900 "takers" in a city of 7,600 houses), was a problem which continually faced the directors of the Company; and they themselves admitted that the supply of water was not only deficient but impure, while at the same

[18] A discussion of this agreement, and the Company's side of the case, may be found in Ure, op. cit., pp. 151-5.

time the consumers complained of the exorbitant rates. Yet many citizens who were able to keep up with the times were soon being supplied with the new utilities. "We are now in treat", wrote Mary Jarvis in 1851, "for a house in Bay Street, which is of moderate size and has the advantages of water and gas."[13]

In 1854 the City Council made the first move towards the construction of a civic waterworks when "the Committee on Fire, Water and Gas, of which Alderman Romain was chairman, was authorised to offer two premiums—one of £100 and one of £50—for plans and estimates for supplying the city with water. In response thereto four designs were sent in by the competitors for the premiums. The two premiums were paid, and there the matter appears to have ended".[14]

On December 28th of the same year the large cabinet factory of Jacques and Hay was consumed by fire, and many persons were thrown out of employment. Urged to further action by this disaster, the Council gave some attention to a movement, probably inspired by the Waterworks Company, which had as its object the taking over of the works by the City. On September 10, 1856, a committee of the Council recommended the purchase of Mr. Furniss' plant, and to supplement this definite declaration of policy in favour of municipal ownership a committee was appointed to investigate the matter further. In the following April they reported that the Company would sell at its own valuation of £38,246 16s. [illegible]. But it was estimated that an outlay of $160,000 would [illegible] necessary to provide an adequate service, and T. C. Keefer, a noted civil engineer, was asked to draw up plans and surveys. Later in the year (1857) he submitted a long report. He estimated that the lowest cost possible [illegible] establish an effective water supply was $79,000, and to do this he advised pumping the water into a reservoir on Scarborough Heights and allowing it to

[13] Mary Jarvis to Fanny Jarvis, October 29, 1851. See Alden Meredith: *Mary's Rosedale and Gossip of Little York*, 1938, p. 205.

[14] *Toronto's Water Works*, in the Toronto *Evening News*, September 30, 1895. This good account, particularly of developments between 1872 and 1895, was "collated with much difficulty from official sources", and its publication in the press shows the public interest in the waterworks system.

settle in a number of basins before being drawn off for use in the city. Nothing definite, however, was decided one way or the other. On June 10, 1858, the Metropolitan Gas and Water Company under F. C. Capreol purchased the waterworks, and elaborate plans were made for a £450,000 plant. There was to be a reservoir on Scarborough Heights, and all streets were to be provided with pipes during the proposed extension of the service; but the whole program fell through when the opposition forces in the Council succeeded in securing the approval of a rival civic scheme—though the Act of the Legislature obtained at the time was never acted upon. In succeeding years the City Council's interest in the waterworks rose and fell from time to time, but no definite decision was reached in the matter.

One of the outstanding problems of the city in 1867 was still the water supply. The Fire Chief observed in his report that municipal tanks, private cisterns and the Bay had often to be used to combat fires when the hydrants failed to yield what was necessary. Citizens complained of "finding things in the water", living as well as dead, and the supply of it to homes was lacking in quantity as well as quality. Finally in 1872, following many ineffectual attempts to purchase the plant of the Toronto Waterworks Company, the city obtained the passage of an Act enabling the corporation to "construct, build, purchase, hold, improve, and generally maintain, manage and conduct waterworks and all buildings, matter and machinery and appliances therewith connected or necessary thereto in the City of Toronto and parts adjacent". This Act has been called the Magna Charta of the city's water supply. It provided also for the election of a commission to control the waterworks, and for the issue in three instalments of debentures totalling $3,000,000. When an agreement was finally executed in April, 1873, to purchase the Furniss waterworks the price to be paid for the existing plant was $227,000.

In 1873 and 1874 the works were taken over, and a start made in their improvement. The Board of Water Commissioners decided in 1875 to establish a municipal plant of sufficient capacity to serve three times the population—

then 68,000. During the reorganisation of the plant various suggested sources of supply were considered. The Don and Humber Rivers were found unsuitable. Bond Lake and Lake Simcoe entailed too great expense in piping, for it was estimated that $3,000,000 would have to be expended on a pipe of sufficient size to carry the water from Lake Simcoe, and that for several miles the pipe would have to be sunk about 900 feet in the earth through the ridges or highlands forming the watershed. Toronto Bay was rejected as unfit for use. Consequently Lake Ontario was the only alternative remaining, and, after consideration of various sites from Scarborough to the Humber, Toronto Island was chosen as the logical location. For the time being, therefore, the source of supply was settled, but the argument recurred from time to time. Two methods of obtaining water were then considered: one was to pump the water to an elevation at the north end of the city, and the second to form filtration basins on the island and then draw water from them. On account of the expense involved the first proposition, which would have entailed an intake about two miles from shore, was abandoned, and in its stead a basin was excavated near the lighthouse. The basin was 500 feet long and 150 feet wide, and into it, by natural infiltration, about 4,000,000 gallons found its way. The water was then carried under the Bay to the pumping house between John and Peter Streets, and thence by a basin pipe to the north end of the city and into the distribution pipes which carried it to consumers.

The progress made in the two or three years after the acquisition of the plant had been satisfactory, and by 1876 the system was considered to be in good condition. The map of the waterworks for that year shows the extent of the service. Bloor Street was the northern boundary, except that one of the new mains extended through Yorkville village to Summerhill Avenue, and eastward to the new reservoir. Dufferin Street was then the western boundary of the city, but there were many thickly-populated areas to which the service did not extend. The Don was the limit in the east, except for a small extension beyond the river and south of Queen Street. The map shows also the new hydrants, marked by a dot, replacing the old ones which

are designated by a cross. The Company's reservoirs, which were used to store water and to increase pressure, are also shown—St. George's, on Huron Street from D'Arcy to St. Patrick Streets, and the Clover Hill Reservoir, on the south side of St. Mary's Street a block west of Yonge. As soon as the new plant was in operation these were drained off and later filled in. The characteristics of the water supply in the late seventies are outlined in a publication of the time, where some attention is also given to the contemporary controversy over the source of permanent supply:

"There are ten fire stations in various parts of the town and a complete system of fire-alarm signal boxes. Attached to the brigade are a large number of hose-reels, salvage waggons, horses, and the necessary apparatus for fire escape. Water is supplied from hydrants connected with the waterworks system, which tap the mains at [illegible] convenient and necessary points. The water is obtained from the lake at a point regarded as beyond the contaminating influence of the city sewage. Recently the suggestion has been made to draw the city's water supply from Lake Simcoe, about fifty miles northward. The water would be exceptionally pure, and the supply as large as desired; while the fall from Lake Simcoe to the level of Lake Ontario, about four hundred and forty feet, would give sufficient pressure for the extinguishing of fire in the loftiest building. Surplus water could be stored in reservoirs in the neighbourhood of Yorkville, and the waste turned to aesthetic purposes in the Valley of the Don."[19]

Reports issued from time to time by the Commissioners describe new plant installed and improved service. The ravage of fire had been curbed, one report noted, for there was not a street in the city where water was not available in sufficient quantity: "The business portion is particularly well off in this respect, as there is a hydrant equal in power and capacity to a first-class steam fire-engine every three hundred feet, so that, if a fire occur in any locality in any of the five central wards, ten to fifteen heavy streams can be thrown with not more than four hundred feet of hose in use for any one stream. This was exemplified in the fire which occurred in Hamilton's Foundry last summer (the only

[19] C. M. Grant (Ed.): *Picturesque Canada*. 1878. Vol. I, pp. 412-18.

large and disastrous fire we have had), when eleven streams from the hydrants were brought into play." The same report also notes that "not half the inhabitants take water" from the plant, and that the average daily consumption is 14,000,000 gallons, well within the capacity of the pumps.[14]

Old habits are hard to change, and many citizens had continued to use their wells, even though such a water supply in a growing city was dangerous. During 1879 and 1880 the water rates were reduced 42 per cent. largely through the efforts of Mayor Beaty, formerly Secretary of the old Metropolitan Water Company. An attempt was then made to close up the wells on the property of numerous citizens, and to induce them to take water from the city waterworks system; and as a result of this campaign 8,000 new customers were placed on the lists. In 1881 those who had persisted in their refusal were compelled to abandon the use of wells, and the same rule was applied thereafter whenever any territory was added to the city.

The difficulties were not all solved at once, however, for wooden stave pipes and cast iron pipes with flexible joints were frequently the cause of trouble. The filter basin proving inadequate, channels were cut connecting it with the lake; but this did not remedy the failure sufficiently, though for a time things went merrily along as usual. The proverbial last straw which broke the camel's back was provided by the report of a special committee, which found no evidence of infiltration on the south side and but little on the north, and observed that the water in the basin "was exceedingly filthy, of a putrid, fishy smell, in colour a dirty yellow"; while frog spawn and rank weeds covered the bottom and sides of the reservoir. No more was needed to get action, and in 1881 the basin was abandoned in favour of a six-inch wooden stave pipe, nearly half a mile long and drawing water from a depth of twenty-five feet.

Between 1874 and 1894, inclusive, debentures totalling over $3,700,000 were issued by the city for the development

[14]Report of 1877. The Hamilton Foundry fire occurred on November 21, 1876. At this period the village of Yorkville had a waterworks of its own. A *Directory* announces with some pride that the plant inaugurated in 1875 provided water "from a living stream" and distributed it "by iron pipes" to fire hydrants and customers. (See *Sinnott & Parsons' Directory of the Village of Yorkville*, 1876, p. 15.)

of the waterworks system. $227,000 of this was paid to the Furniss estate in 1874 as the purchase price of the old plant, and the remainder was expended in laying mains, supplying meters, purchasing engines, and in other ways developing the service. Included in the debenture issues was one for $75,000 by Yorkville village, and another for $140,000 by the town of Parkdale, both of which municipalities were incorporated within the city soon afterwards.

In 1892 there occurred what the *News* called "a Christmas Day surprise for the citizens".[17] A bad break in the conduit pipe under the Bay caused a considerable section of it to float to the surface. This disaster, caused in part by the extremely low level of the water in the lake, created a serious condition, which was repeated in 1895 when other breakages once more aroused the citizens. The topic of the day was "the water supply", and almost everyone had his opinion of the existing waterworks and how it might be improved. A writer noted that the defects of the system at that time were numerous, and suggested that "the impure quality of the water frequently introduced into the houses and, necessarily, into all domestic uses—drinking, cooking, washing—demands immediate consideration. . . . . The health of the citizens is of the first importance, and it is menaced by the unsanitary water. The uncertainty and inadequacy of the supply for fire purposes brings home to every property owner the necessity of demanding a radical and permanent change in the system".[18]

Edward H. Keating, City Engineer, reported on October 20, 1893, that seven proposals had been made to him with reference to the water supply. Three of these suggested Lake Ontario as the origin, the vicinity of Mimico and Scarboro being added to the existing source off the Island. A fourth suggestion combined the Oak Ridge Lakes and the Rivers Don and Rouge, from which water was to be supplied by the force of gravity. Lake Simcoe, wells sunk in the gravel beds north of the city, and springs and artesian wells in the Township of Erin made up the other three suggested sources of supply.

In discussing these proposals at length Dr. Beaty found

[17] Toronto *Evening News*, September 30, 1895.
[18] James Beaty: *Civic Relief*, 1896, pp. 37-8.

many objections to Lake Ontario, which may be summed up in his statement that "the trouble is to get it in its pure state". Engineer Keating, however, whose opinion might be assumed to be more valuable, favoured the development of the existing supply from Lake Ontario. As to Lake Simcoe it had been estimated that its level would be reduced one inch every 23½ days in order to supply Toronto with water. Since it was fed by creeks and rivers many authorities believed that the water would grow neither purer nor more abundant as settlement progressed; and Keating was certain that the cost would be enormous. Although other engineers had highly recommended the Oak Ridge lakes and rivers as a source of supply, Keating believed that the water would be "impure and unfit for domestic consumption".

In discussing the value of "wells north of Toronto, near Eglinton", Keating noted that "the North Toronto pumping station is supplied from a well adjoining, about 18 feet in diameter and 24 feet in depth, the normal depth of water in the well being about eight feet". The daily consumption of 8,000 gallons was raised in about 2½ hours, but the water was lowered some four feet in the process. While Dr. Beaty considered that "enough water of the purest and best quality could [illegible] obtained in that way for all purposes of the city", Mr. Keating dismissed the idea as a theory of no importance. The "springs and rivers in the Township of Erin" contained "a considerable quantity of water", and the prospects, [illegible] believed, were much better than in North Toronto; but the water was so hard as to be unfit for general use unless modified by that from other localities.

Dr. Beaty adds some proposed sources of his own to those already described. He elaborates upon his idea of constructing aqueducts and tunnels to bring water from Lake Scugog, Balsam Lake and Sturgeon Lake; and suggests also Lake Tiee, west of Milton, and Lake Medad on the mountain north of Burlington. He appears, however, to have convinced no one but himself that either source had any possibilities. It is of interest here to note that a sewage disposal plant, then to be found only in a few great cities like London, England, was not seriously advocated, but it was merely hoped to keep sewage away from "the marsh

at the mouth of the Don" and from the Island, and to conduct it a mile or so out in the lake.[19]

The numerous suggestions advanced concerning the water supply, and the conflicting opinions of experts (to say nothing of the general public), resulted in the decision that James Mansergh, a noted English engineer, be retained to report upon the efficacy of the existing waterworks. He appears to have been very efficient, for between November 2nd and November 20th, 1895, he surveyed the entire system, visited all possible sources of supply in the vicinity, and assembled all the detailed information necessary for his report. Eliminating as impossible the Oak Ridge Lakes and the Don and Rouge proposals, he considered in detail Lake Simcoe and Lake Ontario. Chemical and biological examination showed definitely that the water in Lake Simcoe was inferior to that of Ontario. The report outlines in detail the advantages and disadvantages of obtaining water from each source, either by gravitation or pumping. While expressing an inclination towards Lake Simcoe, Mansergh advised the retention of the existing source at the Island.[20]

In 1898 a 72-inch steel intake pipe almost half a mile long was laid, and in 1905-8 a tunnel of concrete and brick construction was pushed nearly a mile into the lake. In 1910-11 a typhoid fever epidemic was blamed upon breakages in the intake pipe, and during repairs the water supply was obtained from basins and channels on the Island. A duplicate system near Scarborough Heights was advocated, but the Great War prevented its commencement and limited operations to the extension of the Island system. In 1913 a second intake pipe was placed in commission, and improvements were made in the connection with the filtration plant on the shore of the Island; and in 1916-18 a second filtration unit was constructed.

In recent years work has been progressing upon the duplicate system located off Scarborough Bluffs. An account of the work appeared in the Toronto *Mail and Empire* of June 20, 1933, and gives us some conception not only of

[19]See Beaty, *op. cit.*, pp. 38 *et seq.*, for the various proposals and a long discussion of their value.

[20]See James Mansergh: *The Water Supply of the City of Toronto, Canada*, 1896.

the plant itself but of the remarkable accuracy and precision characteristic of modern methods of surmounting engineering difficulties. The description affords an interesting comparison with waterworks projects of early times:

"With the laying of the last section of the pipeline and intake of Toronto's new duplicate water system by the Foundation Company of Ontario, Ltd., yesterday, one of the most hazardous and difficult feats of engineering ever undertaken in connection with city works came to a close, and a definite advance was made towards the completion of the entire system.

"The construction of the lake section of the system was begun a year ago last March by the Foundation Company, and since that time work has continued through fair weather and foul, as many as 200 men being employed upon it at various times. Not only had the bed of the lake to be prepared for the line, but the gigantic tubes of concrete and steel had to [redacted] built, carried [redacted] the scene of operations, and lowered into position with an accuracy, end to end, of amazing precision, some 50 and 60 feet below the surface of the lake.

"The intake, lowered yesterday, is actually the mouth of the pipeline which extends a mile and a half out from the shore off Scarboro Bluffs. Leading to the shore from the intake the pipeline of concrete and steel extends 4,100 feet, joining a tunnel extending from the shore, which takes the water to the filtration plant. Despite the fact the last section of the line, or the actual intake, weighed 153 tons, the *Foundation Scarborough*, derrick boat especially built for the job, lowered the section with ease in less than half an hour.

"The building of the *Foundation Scarborough* was but part of the enormous amount of preparation and equipment necessary for the handling of the contract. She has the highest lifting capacity, 300 tons, of any such derrick ship in the world, with the exception of naval ships, and to prepare her design R. E. Chadwick, president of the Foundation Company, visited Europe to study lifting gear in the Port of London, Hamburg, Bremerhaven and the Zuyder-Zee.

"Before actual laying of the pipeline began last July, a

trench was prepared along the bottom of the lake for the pipe to lie in. Difficulty lay in the necessity of the levelling of the trench and the carrying on of the work through all kinds of weather. In the meantime, pipes for the line were prepared. They were built in sections 100 feet in length, each weighing 250 tons. Each is actually a steel tube, lined and covered with concrete, the inside diameter or bore being eight feet.

"A cassoon, or steel cylinder, was sunk to a depth of [illegible] feet at the point where the pipeline begins, 3,000 feet from shore line. From the cassoon the pipeline was laid 4,100 feet out in the lake. The sections of the pipe were built in the Foundation Company's yards at the foot of Spadina Avenue, and were carried by the derrick boat seven miles down the shore to the point of operations. Part of the difficulty of this work came from the hazards of the weather. A corps of eight divers assisted in the actual laying of the line. As each section was lowered a diver at either end of the site of the section, under water, informed operators of the lifting equipment by telephone of the position of the section. Indicating the difficulty of the work, each section had to meet the adjoining one with an accuracy of a quarter of an inch. Divers then sealed sections together with concrete, . . . and the line will be covered over with earth to protect it from disturbances."[1]

In the meantime, pending the completion of this enormous piece of work, our water supply is obtained from two 72-inch intakes, is filtered and chlorinated at the plants, and distributed to all parts of the city. The average daily consumption is 118 gallons *per capita*, and 714 miles of water mains combine with 762 miles of sewers to supply the needs of the population in a manner vastly different form the primitive and restricted service of the first waterworks system. And how much better the water is in Toronto than elsewhere may readily be observed by a comparison with that of many inland communities who have to depend upon small rivers or mud-bottomed lakes for their supply.

[1] Toronto *Mail and Empire*, June 20, 1933.

CHAPTER X

From Candle to Electric Light

Jean Baptiste van Helmont (1577-1644) made the first important discoveries of the existence of gases other than air, noting that a heated crucible "did belch forth a wild spirit or breath"; and the name "gas" which he bestowed upon it is thought to be derived from the Flemish *geest* (ghost). But the first employment of gas for purposes of illumination occurred in a chemical laboratory in Louvain in 1784. In the seventeen-nineties an English engineer, William Murdoch, was experimenting in the use of gases from coal, peat, wood, and similar inflammable substances, and was able to illuminate his house and grounds by conducting gas through tinned iron and copper tubes. It was, however, the perseverance of a German scientist, Frederic Winzer (Winsor), that led to the ultimate adoption of gas distribution from a central source. He came to England in 1803, and his National Light and Heat Company, the first system of public gas lighting, was responsible for the illumination of the Pall Mall, London, in 1807.

Winsor's project met with but little enthusiasm at first. Sir Walter Scott wrote to a friend: "There is a madman proposing to light London with, what do you think? Why, with smoke!" Napoleon commented "*C'est une grande folie*", and his opinion was held by many people.[1] But the success of the first gas company in London resulted in the organisation of many others, and by 1829 there were over 200 gas works in Great Britain. In the United States, meanwhile, Baltimore had the first gas company in 1816, to be followed by Boston in 1821 and New York in 1823. In 1836 a committee of the Toronto City Council was formed to consider lighting the streets with gas supplied by a plant to be erected near the old Parliament Buildings at the foot of Berkeley Street. Nothing was done at this time, however,

[1] See *75 Years, 1848-1923*, compiled by Edward J. Tucker for the Consumers' Gas Company of Toronto.

and Albert Furniss introduced the use of gas in Canada when he established a company in Montreal in 1840. In the following year he extended his enterprise to Toronto.

The early inhabitants of York, however, used other means to supply themselves with light. The blazing fireplace itself was not infrequently sufficient, for most people went to bed early. There were no matches, and the red coals were carefully covered with ashes to keep them alive till morning. To strike a light, many were expert in rubbing together dried pieces of pine, or the flint of a gun against the blade of a knife. Tallow dips—candle wicks dipped in sheep's tallow—were long in common use, particularly in the rural districts, and there were moulds in which candles of regular size and shape could be more easily manufactured. It is probable that at first most candles used in York were imported, but the chandler soon became an important manufacturer, while many citizens engaged in candle-making and soap-making for their own households. Inns, homes, stores and public buildings were equipped with sconces in which to place candles, or were fitted with hanging lamps with oil-dipped tapers; while many an early traveller considered himself fortunate to be able to replace the rushlight torch by a primitive candle lantern. Sperm-whale oil was a luxury available only to the rich, for it was frequently 9s. a gallon. As an illustration of the type of lighting usually found in halls may be taken the first Methodist Chapel, on King Street, which was illuminated "by a liberal supply of tallow candles in eight old-fashioned sconces, one at either side of the pulpit, and three down each side of the building. A short intermission was always a necessity at each service while the lights were being snuffed."[1]

In 1839 steps were taken in Toronto to investigate the possibilities of the use of gas for purposes of illumination. A joint committee of citizens and aldermen discussed the matter in that year, and Messrs. Bluchford and Cull, civil engineers, submitted specifications and estimates. Mr. Cull was sent to Montreal to inspect the plant in operation there,

[1] W. H. Pearson: *Recollections and Records of Toronto of Old*. 1914, p. 286.

and his diary[4] gives particulars of the cordial reception accorded him by Mr. Furniss and of the information he obtained. Tenders appear to have been requested by the Toronto City Council, and several persons, including Mr. Furniss, sent in estimates. An early example of the desire for public ownership is provided by the proceedings of Council at the time, but the Chairman of the Finance Committee temporarily set the minds of the members at rest when he assured them that there was no way to finance such a project except by loan. A public meeting was called, Mr. Furniss spoke, and the work was undertaken by a private company under his management.

In July, 1840, Thomas Gegg, architect, proposed that gas lamps of a style designed by him should be used in Toronto. He wrote as follows to the City Council:

"To the Right Honourable the Mayor, Aldermen and Common Council of the City of Toronto, this elevation of an obelisk, suggested to be erected at the junction of King and Yonge Streets, is most respectfully inscribed by their obedient humble servant, Thomas Gegg. It is proposed that this obelisk be lighted with oil until it is decided to introduce gas into the city. The requisite number of lamps similar to the above to be made and the lamp posts to be cast of a pattern as near as possible to agree in design with the obelisk."[5]

Mr. Gegg's proposition does not appear to have elicited much comment, and no action was taken. Albert Furniss and his associates, Joseph Masson and John Strang, secured the right "to break up, dig and trench so much and so many of the streets, squares and public places" of the city as should be necessary. The Toronto Gas-Light and Water Company was incorporated by these men in November, 1841, and their small plant at the foot of Princess Street was situated on land granted as an inducement and a mark of civic encouragement. An authority states that "the city was partially lighted in the winter of 1840", and that

[4]Gall's diary appears to have been published in 1839. It is quoted in [G. P. Dyer]: *The Handbook of Toronto*, 1858, p. 158, a work which contains much historical material not available elsewhere.

[5]The original design of this lamp is in the Board of Works Office, City Hall.

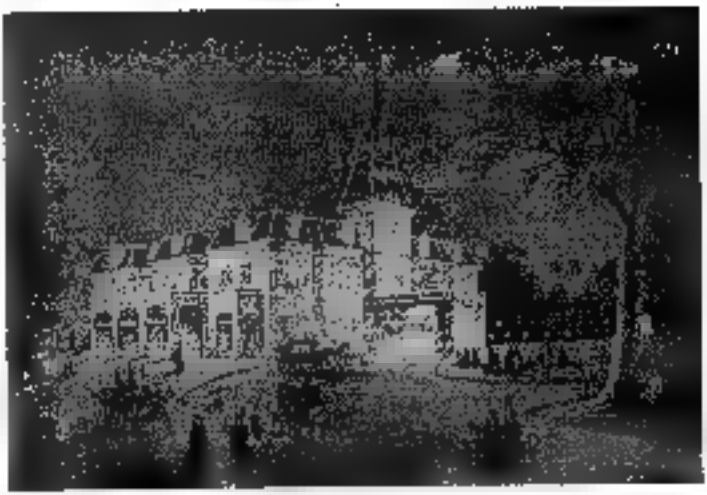
twelve lamp posts comprised the original street equipment.[4] Possibly an experimental illumination was arranged at that time, though references in the press a year later imply that gas lighting commenced then. In any case a considerable number of lamp posts were erected in December, 1841, on King Street and at a few main intersections elsewhere. It appears to have been originally planned to inaugurate street lighting on the 20th of the month, as the *Toronto Herald* stated:

"It is, we believe, Mr. Furniss' intention to commence lighting the City with Gas this Evening, when we hope merited success will attend the undertaking. Our good City, therefore, will present a brilliant display, the advent, we may term it, of that general illumination which of course will take place in honour of the birth of a Prince of Wales."[5]

The notable event was postponed until the 28th, however, for in the issue of Thursday, December 30th, we are informed that "on Tuesday evening the city streets and several of the stores were lighted with gas for the first time; and the novel and brilliant spectacle thereby presented was highly interesting. The whole arrangements are not yet complete—when they are we shall return to the subject: in the meantime we congratulate Mr. Furniss upon the success of his spirited undertaking".[6]

Thus did the first important substitute for the candle become available to Toronto citizens. "Illuminations" had been from York's earliest days the most notable means of celebrating victories, Royal marriages, and other occasions of the kind—even though the celebration was commonly from seven weeks to five months after the event. At first every window in town was expected to have a light—not particularly easy in the days of candles; but as fireworks became available they tended to replace some of the illumination. On January 4, 1842, Toronto was lighted in honour of the birth seven weeks earlier of an heir-apparent to the throne. Presumably the new gas lights aided in making the illuminations "most brilliant", though no direct reference to them is made in the press account.[7]

[4]Ure, op. cit., p. 160.
[5]The *Toronto Herald*, December 20, 1841.
[6]*Ibid.*, December 30, 1841.
[7]The *Examiner*, January 5, 1842.



Canadian Illustrated News. M. Stevens.

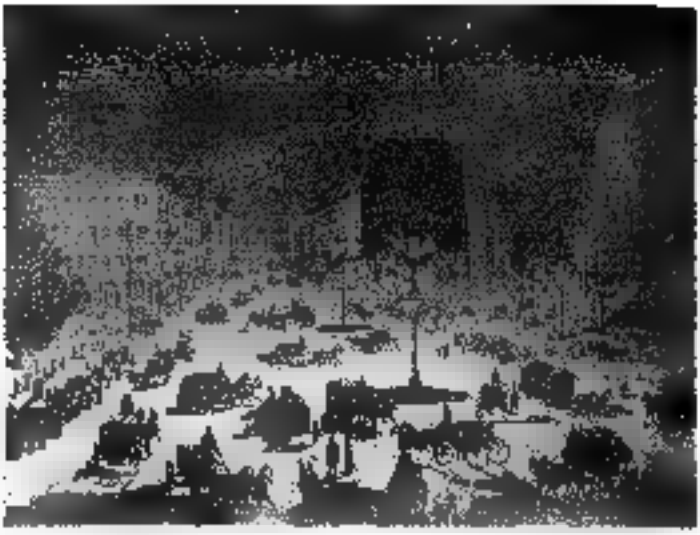
An Illumination

Government House on fire in 1872 in honour of the visit of Lord and Lady Dufferin.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

The Theatre Royal, 1836-40

This theatre was situated just east of the Shakespeare Inn, on the north-east corner of King and York Streets, and was approached by a lane.



Canadian Illustrated News.

FIRST ELECTRIC STREET LIGHTS IN NEW YORK, DECEMBER 28, 1880

Twenty-two 2,000-candle power arc lamps were used to illuminate Broadway from 14th to 34th Street. The streets of Toronto were first lighted by electricity in 1884.

LOOKING EAST ON KING STREET IN THE EIGHTIES

Gas lamps, early electric arc lights and a street watering-cart may be seen. The Rossin House and the Revere Hotel are prominent at the corner of York.

For some years the use of gas in Toronto was largely restricted to the lighting of streets and a few of the larger stores and public buildings. The Court House was illuminated by gas in 1846, and the Gaol in 1850. In 1845 a [illegible]-year agreement was executed by the Company and the City, by which the former agreed to light the streets of Toronto for £6 13s. 4d. per light per year, the Company to bear all expenses of erecting, cleaning and lighting the lamps. In 1848 the cost to city was £1,108 ($4,432), so that there were then about 166 lamps. By 1857 the number had increased to 828, the cost in that year for illuminating the streets, the City Hall and certain other municipal buildings being £5,135 12s. 6d.

Owing to the high cost of the gas provided by the original company but few citizens could afford to use it, and, since coal oil was not introduced until some fifteen or twenty years later, an early inhabitant recalled that "tallow candles were in general use for lighting. People had moulds and made their own candles—I have made them myself. They were sold by the pound by the grocer and chandler, some six to the pound and some nine. . . . The soap and candle manufacturers used to send around to the residences for grease, for which they exchanged candles or soap".[4] These conditions applied to a very considerable extent until the seventies and eighties, though by that time the use of gas and coal [illegible] was quite general except among those whose poverty or inclinations prevented them from keeping up with the times. The uncertain supply and poor quality, as well as the high cost of the gas provided by the original producers, led in 1847 to the formation of the Consumers' Gas Company, which purchased the plant of the Furniss Company for £22,000. A better service and cheaper rates were soon available, and gas lighting was consequently rapidly extended to the homes of many citizens. In the late fifties the introduction of coal oil lamps provided a serious competitor. Their coming was forecast in the following news item appearing in the Toronto press in 1855:

"A new light produced from an oily liquid extracted from bituminous coal or native bitumen—rock oil or naphtha—has been tested lately in New York and is said

[4]Pearson, op. cit., p. 121.

to afford a light exceeding the best gas in brilliancy and whiteness. A company in New York have erected a manufactory and will soon supply it in abundance. It is called Kerosene and is very cheap in its manufacture."[10]

The characteristics of early illumination by oil are well exemplified by Parson's Improved Coal Oil Lamp, which was advertised in 1858 under the caption "The Great Coal Oil Lamp!" People are assured that it is "perfectly safe, and cannot be blown up! There is no longer any reason for using Explosive Fluids—IT IS AT THE RISK OF YOUR LIFE—don't tamper with them!" The advertisers, Parson Brothers, "Coal Oil Lamp Manufacturers and Sole Agents for Canada for Pure Coal Oil", were located at No. 61, Boulton's Block, Front Street, and they announce that their lamp "produces a light of UNSURPASSED BRILLIANCY, and combines economy with simplicity—affording a better and purer light than any other known substance, at one-fourth the cost! Call and examine our LAMPS, and we pledge ourselves to demonstrate:

"1st. That no accident can occur by explosion!

"2nd. That they emit no offensive odour while burning!

"3rd. That they are very easily trimmed!

"4th. That they are easily regulated to give more or less light!

"5th. That they burn entirely free from smoke!

"6th. That it is the most economical light now in common use!

"This is not a random statement, but can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the most incredulous." And the advertisers guaranteed to cut anyone's annual lighting bill to one-third.[11]

The early history of the Consumers' Gas Company is coincident with advances in lighting in Toronto. In the forties, under the old Company, and for some years also under the new, gas was supplied either by meter or by flat rate contract. When supplied by contract some rather amusing stipulations were laid down:

"Lighting must not commence on any day until the sun

[10] The *British Colonist*, June 21, 1855.

[11] The advertisement is from the *Descriptive Catalogue of the Provincial Exhibition*, 1858, p. 4.

has set, and all lights must be extinguished each night within ten minutes after the hour contracted for. If otherwise they will be held as used for an additional hour each night, and for the quarter charged accordingly. In like manner, if the flame is allowed to burn higher than stipulated a corresponding price will be charged; and, if on any occasion more burners or jets are used than contracted for, the additional number will not only be charged but the offender will besides subject himself to a penalty provided for by the statute."[32]

While it at first appeared that the purchase of the Toronto Gas Company's works in operation would enable the Consumers' Gas Company to specialise upon improvements in the service, yet the old plant was soon out-of-date. The laying of larger and better pipes, and other improvements, resulted in cheaper and better gas; but the success achieved necessitated a better office, concerning which the Director's Report of 1851 said:

"Suffering inconvenience from not having a sufficiently roomy office, with a workshop attached thereto, and not finding a house that answered the purpose in a proper situation, the Directors determined upon building one for the use of the Company, which is now in course of erection in Toronto Street, where they will have their board-room, office, show-room and workshop, with a residence for the manager above; the latter they consider of importance, that the Consumers and others should know where to apply in case of any emergency."[33]

The limited and rather crude plant purchased from Mr. Furniss soon proved entirely inadequate in the manufacturing division also, and in 1855 the Company erected new works on another site. The Directors' report states that "these works are considered by all who have examined them to be equal, if not superior, to any on the continent, and are capable of still further extension when required, the plan of the works having been laid out with a view of supplying a population of over 100,000."[34]

[32]Quoted in Pearson, *op. cit.*, pp. 203-4.
[33]*75 Years, 1848-1923*, p. 61.
[34]Quoted in Pearson, *op. cit.*, pp. 204-5. A full description of the new plant is given in Ure, *op. cit.*, pp. 227-8.

In 1854 there was a manager and two clerks in the office of the Consumers' Gas Company, as well as four gas-fitters, about twelve main and service pipe layers, and some twenty men at the works. In 1913 the employees of the Company numbered 1,417, but twenty years later there were only 1,360. The 300 consumers of 1848 gradually increased as the years passed. In 1854 there were 924 meters in use, in 1913 the total was 91,284, and in 1933 there were 172,528; while from $5 per thousand cubic feet in 1848, and but half that charge in 1854, the cost of gas has been gradually reduced until it is now 80 cents per thousand—ten cents higher, however, than it was in 1913.[14] For many years, too, a gas jet produced a light of but ten or twelve candle power, but by the eighteen-eighties the intensity had been increased about 50%. There are now in Toronto very few users of gas for illumination.

In 1853 the first extension of service beyond the city limits took place when pipes were laid to the village of Yorkville, above the Bloor-Yonge intersection. So numerous were the applications for gas in that year that the Company could not keep pace with the demand, and attempts were made to bring an additional gas-fitter from England. In 1861, however, the number of consumers diminished owing to an attempt to limit the supply of intoxicating liquors. Toronto had for many years been notorious for the number of its taverns and beer shops; but in 1861 the City Council sought to remedy the condition, for we find in the Directors' report that the falling off in consumers had been "occasioned principally by a reduction of tavern licenses issued by the city in January last, thereby compelling many tavern-keepers to close their doors".[15] In the following year the price of gas was reduced from [illegible] to $2.50 per M in the hope that the use of coal oil, which was noticeably interfering with the consumption of gas, would be to some extent lessened; but in 1863 the Company reverted to the former rate upon finding that the reduction had not caused an increase in consumption.

When the streets of the city were first lighted with gas

[14] For several items of information concerning the Consumers' Gas Company the writer is indebted to Edward J. Tucker, Esq., Assistant General Manager and Secretary.

[15] *75 Years, 1848-1923*, p. 65.

on December 28, 1841, only ten other cities on the American continent had preceded Toronto in this respect. About 100 gas lamps provided the first equipment, but by September 30, 1847, there were 164 street lights. With the growth of the city these increased to 2,557 in 1885. In the intervening years, however, some interesting developments occurred. In addition to the introduction of coal oil for illuminating purposes, the Company was worried by civic economy in 1861. The country was experiencing a severe depression at the time, and the City Council decided to discontinue the lighting of about one-half the street lamps; furthermore, probably in imitation of the policy adopted for the lighting of London, England, a century earlier, it was determined to have the remainder extinguished for eight nights per month during the time of moonlight! It is to be hoped that there were not many cloudy nights during this period of intense economy.

Prior developments in arc lighting, and the invention by Thomas Edison of the incandescent light in 1879, placed electricity definitely in the field of illumination, and in that year the Consumers' Gas Company obtained the power to use and sell electric, galvanic or other artificial light, provided that permission was obtained from the city of Toronto. In 1883 the Company sought the right to wire the streets, but their request was refused by the City Council.

That the competition of electricity was not felt more seriously by gas companies is due to the development of heating and cooking with gas, a department which electricity has entered only recently. As the use of gas for illumination was gradually superseded by electric lighting, there was a coincident increase in the employment of gas for these related purposes, commencing in Toronto in 1879, a few years prior to the inauguration of electric lighting as a public utility. The high cost of imported gas stoves and appliances exerted a deterrent effect at first, but in 1881 the price was greatly reduced by local manufacturers, and consequently the consumption of gas greatly increased year by year thereafter. In many old homes where gas jets had long been installed the wiring for electric lights was delayed, but before the closing years of the century the use of gas for purposes of illumination became old-fashioned, and

houses, stores, churches and other buildings soon came to be lighted by electricity as a matter of course.

For some years the use of electricity for illumination was not in the form of the incandescent bulb but by arc lamps. The inauguration of electric lighting in Toronto was under interesting auspices. The management of McConkey's Restaurant, long the best-known in the city, arranged in 1879 to have two arc lamps exhibited in their establishment at 145 Yonge Street, on the east side between Adelaide and Richmond Streets. Free ice cream was served until 9 p.m. to those who came to see the exhibition, and Mr. J. Manser recalls that he saw the lights on this occasion and also received the free refreshment.[17]

In May, 1881, R. H. Lunt applied to the City Council for permission to inaugurate electric lighting on the streets of Toronto. He was granted the right to use temporarily the fire-alarm poles on several of the principal streets in order to exhibit the new type of illumination. There was also in that year an experimental installation in the Golden Lion dry goods store on King Street, where the King Edward Hotel now stands; and one Sperry of Chicago had four arc lights at the corner of King and Yonge Streets, in an effort to obtain the contract for lighting city streets. On October 10th Alderman Hallam, seconded by Alderman Ryan, moved that "whereas the electric light for the illumination of public thoroughfares has passed beyond the region of experiment and is now an accomplished fact, being adopted in London, Liverpool, Edinburgh, and the large cities and towns on the continent, and is designed in no distant period to entirely supersede coal gas as a street illuminator, be resolved that this Council take means as early as possible to have the centre of the City lit up with electric light, and that a Committee be appointed and named by His Worship the Mayor to get all the information necessary as to the cost of construction and maintenance, and that the Council keep the same under their control, and that the Committee report to this Council at an early date". The motion carried.[18]

[17]Reminiscences of J. Manser. For this interesting item, as well as for considerable other information concerning early electric lighting in Toronto, the writer is indebted to H. C. Powell, Esq., Chief Statistician of the Toronto Hydro-Electric System.

[18]Minutes of the City Council, October 10, 1881.

In 1882 the Industrial Exhibition showed the city the way by arranging for an installation of electric lights by the Fuller Electric Light Company of New York and the Ball Company of London. The buildings and grounds were in a state of unprecedented illumination, and the show continued each evening until 10 p.m. instead of closing at sundown as had always been the practice prior to that time.

Messrs. J. J. Wright and Howard Blizard were early operators of electric generators in Toronto, and Wright was in control of the use in Canada of some of the most important electrical patents. In the early eighties these men were working in Wright's shop in the basement of the Firstbrook Box Factory on King Street, east of Sherbourne; and later their generators were situated in a lane off Yonge Street, near King. Mr. Wright, born in England in 1850, was among the foremost early workers in the electrical field. In a biographical notice it is recorded that he was "in the United States at the time of the Centennial Exhibition of 1876, at which time electricity was beginning to attract attention as a possible means of giving light. He there became acquainted with Prof. Thomson, who was then occupying the Chair of Chemistry in the High School in Philadelphia, Pa., at which time he, in conjunction with Prof. Houston of the same school, was commencing experiments which have led up to the brilliant results of to-day. Mr. Wright built all the machinery during these experiments; he also built and put up the first electric street lamp on the continent of America, which was placed on the corner of 21st Street and Washington Ave. in the year 1879. He was amongst the first to handle electric light wires in the construction of underground service".[19]

After some years of residence alternately in Philadelphia and Toronto, Mr. Wright located permanently in the latter city in the spring of 1883, and became the manager of the Toronto Electric Light Company, which grew out of the small plant of C. J. Van Depoele of Chicago, promoter of electric railways and, with Wright, the operator of the line inaugurated at the Industrial Exhibitions of 1883-4.[20] In

[19]*Canadian Electrical News and Steam Engineering Journal*, Vol. I, No. 1, p. 1, January, 1891.

[20]For a full account see Chapter VIII, pp. 185-8.

1882 his plant was in the old Bolt Works, corner of Sherbourne and Front Street, and in the following year the machines were removed to the Gerrard Heintzman Company building on Sherbourne Street, where the Toronto Electric Light Company assumed control of them. Such were the beginnings of the generation of electrical power in Toronto.

In 1883, when the Toronto Electric Light Company was instituted and was granted the right to place poles on the streets, there were 2419 gas lamps in the city, including [illegible] in Queen's Park. The erection of poles and other apparatus in that year appears to have been regarded as temporary and experimental, and it was stipulated that any other company might use the poles on payment of a proportion of their cost. The territory in which poles and wires might be erected was bounded by the Esplanade, Sherbourne, Carlton, Beverley and John Streets. Like old customs, out-of-date utilities die hard, and an attempt was made by the Gas Company in 1883 to meet the challenge of electric lights. The *Globe* carried the following news item on September 22nd of that year:

"Last evening the Consumers' Gas Company gave an exhibition on King Street between Yonge and York Streets, of 14 improved street lamps and burners, known as the Whitehall & Lambeth lanterns, manufactured by William Sugg, the well-known inventor of London, England. These lamps, which are of 100 candle effective lighting power, are similar to the lamps erected by Mr. Sugg on Charing Cross, Whitehall Place, and Trafalgar Square in London, England. The Gas Company have erected them with the view of meeting the requirements by the city for high candle-power lamps, being ten times that of the street lamps now in use in Toronto. The management of the Company say they feel satisfied that they can supply a larger amount of effective lighting for a less sum than can be obtained by the electric light. These lamps, they affirm, have superseded the electric light in the city of London."[32]

In the spring of 1884 the City Council adopted the recommendation of the Committee on Fire and Gas "that the Toronto Electric Light Company and the Canadian Electric Light and Manufacturing Company be requested

[32]The *Globe*, September 22, 1883.

to put up 25 lights each, to be tested for a period of [redacted] months, the company not making the best showing to the satisfaction of the Corporation to withdraw from the contract. The amount to be paid to both companies to be 62c. per light per night. The test to be commenced on or before May 16th next".[23] The Toronto Electric Light Company eventually received the contract, and the fifty 2,000-candle-power lamps were placed chiefly at street corners. The *Globe* was immediately suspicious, owing [redacted] the high price which was being paid for the new lighting. Successive editorials appeared on "The Electric Light Job", the editor claiming that the cost was three times that of the gas lamps displaced, and suggesting that the price should be less than 40 cents per light per night.[24]

These early electric lights were large sputtering arc lamps—the kind that the light-keeper visited periodically in order to renew the carbons (the boys and girls were usually on hand to pick up the used "pencils"). John J. Wright was the principal maker of arc carbons, and he used [redacted] copper-plate them [redacted] Fred Divers' electroplating plant, 14 King Street East. Two lamps were in the Council Chamber and their success may, perhaps, be gauged by Alderman Moore's motion that, "as the two electric lights in the Council Chamber are a nuisance, they be removed forthwith". The same alderman moved that immediate steps be taken to terminate the use of electricity in Toronto, and to remove all wires and poles from the streets. No such reactionary policy turned back the wheels of progress, however. Gas lamps immediately began to be displaced. Early in January, 1885, it was reported to the Council that 91 electric lights had been erected since May 1, 1884, and that 294 gas lamps had been discontinued. The annual cost per gas lamp had been $32.75, while the first electric lights entailed a yearly expenditure of $226.40. Mr. Howard Blizard recalled[24] in that connection that, if a light was out, a policeman would disconnect it and the Company would not receive its 62 cents! The rate was gradually reduced until in 1906 it was but $69.35 per light per year.

[23]Minutes of the City Council, April 16, 1884.

[24]See the *Globe*, September 2, 1884, et seq.

[24]Mr. Blizard retired from the Toronto Hydro-Electric System on December 31, 1933.

The use of gas for street lighting long persisted, however. In Queen's Park, and in certain downtown areas where wires were not desired, gas lamps remained; but gradually they were relegated to small back streets and lanes, from which the last finally disappeared in 1911—as did the remaining electric arc lights.

The Toronto Incandescent Company was established in 1889. Prior to that date several Toronto hotels and steamships had steam-driven plants of their own, and were served by incandescent lighting in emulation of the first plant of the kind—that inaugurated by Thomas Edison in New York in September, 1882. Short-lived lamps and the high cost of the inadequate wiring of the times made early incandescent lighting a costly luxury, and there was at first no thought of extending the service to the streets of Toronto. In 1896 the Toronto Incandescent Company was absorbed by the Toronto Electric Light Company, but more than ten years passed before there was any intention of superseding the street arc lights. In 1907 lines were installed to bring power from the Falls of Niagara, and in 1910 a start was made in the use of incandescent lights in the parks and streets of Toronto, 22,000 such lamps being installed by 1911. There are at present (1954) 574.7 miles of paved streets in the city, and 561 miles are lighted by electricity; and there are also 31 miles of lights in parks, islands, etc. The lamps on residential streets are 100-watt, and on main streets 300- and 500-watt. Operating on the multiple series circuit, some 58,095 bulbs are fixed in cast iron brackets 9½ feet from the ground, placed on cement poles one hundred feet apart. While we have no record of the hiring of torch-bearers in early Toronto, as was long customary in European cities, the darkness of pre-gas days must have been most inconvenient for nocturnal travellers; and even the hundred gas lamps of the eighteen-forties provided street lighting scarcely comparable in any respect to the illumination made possible by Edison's great invention.

CHAPTER XI

Fire-Fighters of Old

For many years after the founding of the town in 1793 practically all of the buildings of York were of wood. In the early years of the new century there were two brick buildings—Quetton St. George's general store and the two wings of the Government Buildings. Log buildings predominated, though frame clap-board houses were occasionally found. Even the residence of the Lieutenant-Governor is described as "likewise formed of wood, in the figure of a half square, of one storey in height, with galleries in the centre. It is sufficiently commodious for the present state of the province, and is erected upon a bank of the lake, near the mouth of Toronto Bay."[1]

The first fire of which we have any record occurred on January 26, 1797, when "the dwelling-house of his Honour the Administrator, lately built at York, and in considerable forwardness, took fire by some accident and was entirely consumed."[2] This house, in which the Hon. Peter Russell was to live, was located on the north side of Palace (Front) Street, near Princes Street. The fire was, of course, by no means the first in York, for conflagrations were common in the days of wooden buildings. Consequently laws were passed both by the Provincial Government and the Magistrates in an attempt to lessen the possibilities of devastation by fire.

In 1800 it was ordered, in pursuance of an Act of the Legislature entitled "An Act to Guard against Accidents by Fire", that "every housekeeper in the Town of York shall, on or before the first day of October next ensuing, provide and keep TWO BUCKETS for carrying water when any house shall happen to be on fire, which buckets shall be made either of wood, leather or canvas, painted on the outside and covered with pitch on the inside, and shall hold at least two gallons of water. And the said buckets shall be marked with the Christian and surname of the

[1] George Heriot: *Travels through the Canadas*. 1807, p. 136.
[2] *Upper Canada Gazette*, February 8, 1797.

housekeeper [redacted] whose house they belong, and shall not be used for any other purpose than the extinguishing of fires". The regulation was also adopted that every householder "shall keep two ladders, the one to reach from the ground to the eaves of the house, and the other to [redacted] properly secured and fixed with hooks or bolts on the roof near the chimney".[2] In Lieutenant Stretton's water-colour of the York Barracks may be seen these ladders on the roofs of the log buildings, and there are still people living who can recall seeing decayed ladders on early Toronto structures.

In 1802 the Hon. Peter Russell presented a fire-engine [redacted] the town; whereupon the citizens, to show their gratitude, erected a fire hall by subscription "for the preservation of the engine; and such measures will be immediately adopted as are best calculated to procure the most easy access to the engine at all hours of the day and night".[3] For many years fire-fighting remained everybody's business, buckets of water being carried from the Bay or the nearest cistern or well to the scene of the conflagration. In 1812 the stacking of hay was forbidden in York, presumably to lessen the fire hazard. In the following year the Americans are said to have carried away a fire-engine belonging to York, possibly the one presented by Governor Russell, or a military engine used at the barracks.

In 1815 there was a fire in the Rev. John Strachan's residence, and included among those who aided in saving his property were members of the garrison, and several strangers who were fortunate enough to be denominated "respectable" in the card of thanks:

"Card—Dr. Strachan begs leave to return his thanks to the inhabitants of York, and also to the military, and several respectable strangers, for their prompt assistance last Sunday in first endeavouring to extinguish the fire which broke forth at his house, and in afterwards saving his property."[4]

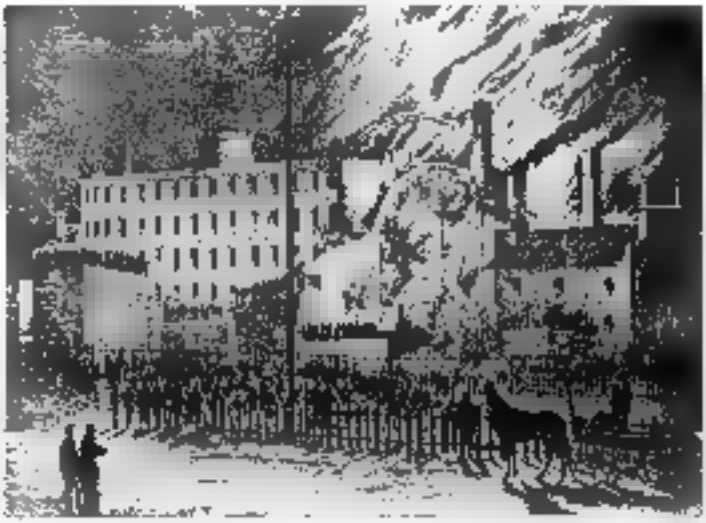
Chapter II of the Statutes of Upper Canada, 1817, provided for the establishment of a police [redacted] York, Sandwich and Amherstburg, and gave authority to the magistrates to

[2]*Ibid.*, April 12, 1800.
[3]*Ibid.*, December 18, 1802.
[4]*Ibid.*, March 11, 1816.

Canadian Illustrated News.

THE BURNING OF BOULTON'S MILL, NOVEMBER 18, 1870

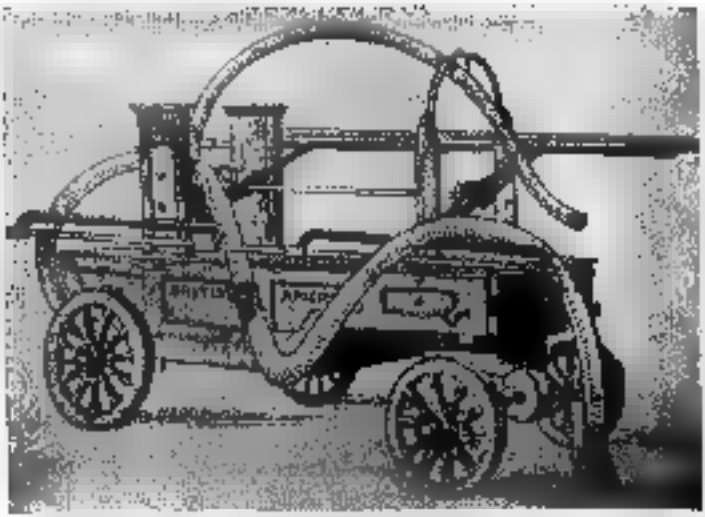
J. H. Boulton's Grist Mill was located at the corner of Bay Street and the Esplanade.



Canadian Illustrated News. W. Armstrong

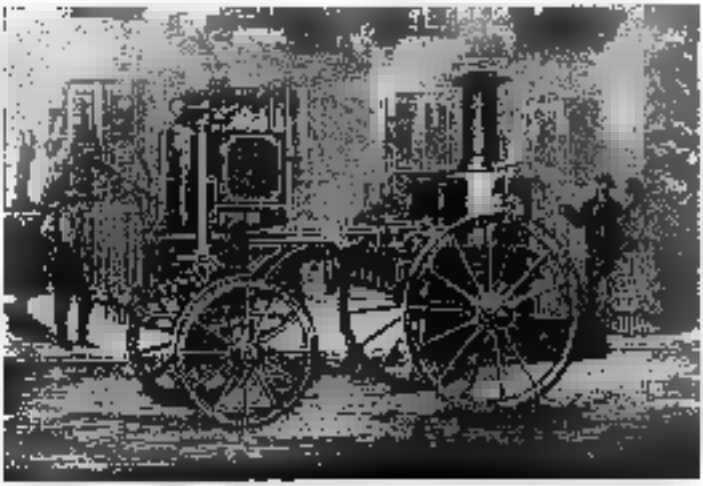
THE BURNING OF CLEMENT'S SASH FACTORY, DECEMBER 17, 1870

The building was situated on Front Street, opposite the Queen's Hotel, and its destruction was due to an incendiary.



THE BRITISH AMERICA, 1857

A "Montreal fore-and-aft" machine, much more powerful than the earlier "goose-neck" fire-engines. The *British America* was effectively used when Peter Matthews' men set fire to the Lion Bridge in December, 1857.



Canadian Illustrated News.

A STEAM FIRE-ENGINE OF THE SEVENTIES

The introduction of steam fire-engines put an end to the old hand-pumpers, and the volunteer Fire Brigade did not long survive.

raise by assessment a sum not exceeding £100 annually for the purchase of fire-engines, buckets, etc. Pursuant to this Act the town of York issued a series of regulations, the violation of which led to the imposition of fines. Prominent among these were laws having as their object the prevention of fires. The various regulations were printed in 1823 at the direction of R. Heward, Clerk of the Peace.* They were amended at the General Sessions in June of that year, but it may be assumed that they were substantially the same in 1817.

To facilitate putting out fires in private homes it was stipulated that "every inhabited Dwelling-house shall, by the occupants of the same, be provided with one good and serviceable Ladder, long enough to reach from the ground raised, so as to give ready access to the roof; and two or more roof holders suspended by iron fastenings from the ridge of the Roof, and reaching to the Eaves, and, where the Chimney or Chimneys rise more than three feet from the Roof, a small Ladder to rest against each Chimney, of sufficient length to reach the top of it. . . . That every Chimney or Flue in which a Fire is commonly made shall from the first day of November to the first of April, in each and every year, be swept under the direction of the Inspector of Chimneys at least once in every four weeks; and when the same are used daily, as in kitchens and manufactories, once in every year in the same manner. . . . Each and every owner, tenant or occupier of a Dwelling-house shall provide the said House with two or three good and serviceable leathern buckets, capable of containing three gallons each, which shall be hung up and exposed to view in the most convenient place nearest the front entrance of the said House, to be in readiness in the extinguishing of Fire". Persons disobeying any of the regulations were subject to fines of from ten to forty shillings.

In order to have someone in charge during fires, six "discreet and active persons", two from each ward, were appointed Firewardens, and their duties were "to command and enforce, with the help of Constables and other Peace

Regulations for the Police of the Town of York, in the Home District, Made and Ordained in Adjourned Quarter Sessions, May 13th, 1817—Revised and Amended in Adjourned General Sessions, June 23rd, 1823.

Officers, the aid and assistance of all the male inhabitants [redacted] the Town between the years of 16 and 60; and to preserve, as far as possible, order, regularity and despatch in the lines for the supply of water; and to appoint and establish guards for the preservation of furniture and other effects from injury and pillage". To prevent anyone from pleading ignorance of the Firewardens' identity, and so attempting to disobey orders, it was stipulated that each Firewarden should wear as a distinguishing badge of authority "a white handkerchief tied on the left arm below the elbow". Refusal to obey instructions subjected offenders [redacted] fines of twenty to forty shillings. The only bell in the town at that time was in St. James' Church, and the alarm of fire was sounded by ringing this bell and by shouting, at first solo and then in concert, until a large number had congregated. As speedily as possible a double row of citizens was formed from the burning building to the Bay, or the nearest cistern or pump, and along one line passed buckets of water, while the empties returned along the other. Prior to the formation of the first Fire Company an old pump, hauled to fires on a wagon, was worked by eight men, and such water as the bucket brigade and the carters provided was projected into the flames.

In 1818 a fire-engine costing £150 was ordered from London, England. In 1823, three years prior to the formation of the first organized fire brigade in York, thirty-eight citizens offered to serve as volunteer firemen, and among those who enrolled were representatives of the Jarvis, Small, Gamble, Ridout, McNab, Sullivan and other prominent families. Two years later cash prizes were offered to carters who earliest appeared with puncheons of water at fires, and this inducement was continued for over a quarter of a century. Among the members of the brigade organized in 1826 were, as before, "some of the most respectable merchants and tradesmen of the town".[1] There were Fire-Engine and Hook-and-Ladder companies, each with a full quota of officers, and the first captain of the brigade was Thomas Carfrae, Jnr. The engine purchased at the time was the *York*, and when worked by sixteen men it could

[1] [W. L. Mackenzie's] *New Almanack for the Canadian True Blues*, 1834, p. 11.

project a ¾-inch stream of water a distance of 140 feet. The engine-house of the original fire department was a two-storey brick building which stood on the west side of Church Street, between Court and Adelaide Streets. The *U. E. Loyalist* makes the following comment concerning the inauguration of the fire company:

"We are happy to hear a number of spirited individuals are taking the necessary steps for forming themselves into a fire company, under the provisions of an act passed during the last session of Parliament. The necessity of such a company having been severely felt on former occasions, much praise is due to those who came forward to enroll themselves as the protectors of the property of their fellow-townsmen when visited by the most dreadful of all calamities."[16]

In the same issue some space is devoted to impressing upon its readers that "too much attention cannot be paid by the police of the town in their regulations for the prevention of fires, and particularly where the buildings are of wood. At the commencement of the winter season more especially, when stoves are put up, the greatest attention is necessary in the manner in which they are placed, and the observance of regulations which relate to them should be strictly enforced. In carrying such regulations into due effect much depends on the efficiency of the police officer. In the event of fire breaking out, the offer of a premium to the person who shall bring the first puncheon of water has been found of infinite service".[17]

Regulations similar to those adopted in 1817 were in force in 1827, except that in that year they were amended to provide for the appointment of fifteen firewardens instead of six. When the town of York became the city of Toronto in 1834 a new set of regulations came into force, and the number of firewardens was increased to twenty-five, —five in each of the five wards which then composed the city. Instead of the former white handkerchief, each firewarden was to "have in his hand a baton or short staff with the words FIRE WARDEN painted thereon", and so accoutred he was to be master of ceremonies at all conflagrations.

[16]*U. E. Loyalist*, June 24, 1826. [17]*Ibid.*

The law of 1834 contains very detailed regulations[14] concerning stoves and stovepipes, ashes and ash-pans. The passing of pipes through floors, ceilings and partitions, and the securing of them to beams by wire, chain or iron hoop, are similarly regulated. Stoves must be at least twenty inches from partitions, and they must be furnished with metal ash-pans, which are to be at least four inches off the floor. Unused pipe-holes must be covered "with a tin or sheet-iron stopper".

The days when matches were uncommon, and when it was not easy to strike a light, are recalled by the regulation that "no person shall carry through any square, street or lane of the city, or through any yard, any lighted coals or wood, unless in a covered vessel made of iron or other safe material". To store ashes inside or outside the home a "safe receptacle" must be provided, and anyone not using one of such a type was subject to fine.

The burning of hay, straw, chips, shavings or other combustible materials shall take place only "on a damp day, when there is no wind; and all such fires shall be completely extinguished before seven o'clock in the morning from the first day of May to the last day of October, and before nine o'clock in the morning from the first day of November to the end of April, and the ashes or rubbish shall be removed without delay".

With reference to livery or other stables the law stipulated that no one shall keep or allow to be carried a lighted candle or lamp unless "enclosed in a lantern so constructed as to emit the light and prevent its communicating fire to any combustible materials". Smokers were similarly warned that anyone "who shall smoke or have in his or her possession any lighted pipe or cigar in any workshop wherein are combustible materials, or in any stable or barn, shall forfeit and pay for each and every offence the sum of five shillings".

In addition to the former regulation compelling home-owners to have ladders, there was one added stating that all buildings two or more storeys high which were thereafter erected must have "a scuttle on the roof, and a suitable stairway or ladder leading to the same from the

[14] See *Upper Canada Gazette*, May 22, 1834.

inside". Another regulation prohibited the setting off of any "gunpowder, squib, rocket, or any other fireworks, or to fire any firearms in any part of the city". No mention is made of the exemption from this rule of public holidays and similar celebrations, but it may be assumed that the rigour of the law was relaxed on such occasions.

The appointment of one or more fire inspectors was also provided for by this Act, and their duties were "to examine carefully at least once in every month every house, store or building, and to ascertain and note any violations of any of the preceding sections, and to report the same to the Mayor or any of the Aldermen".

As in earlier regulations, the periodic sweeping of flues and chimneys was ordered, and fines were to be levied against any persons refusing a visit of the fire inspector every six weeks between November 1st and April 1st. Peculiarly enough, there was a clause stating that a person need not have his chimney swept if he did not wish, provided that he was willing to pay 3d. to the inspector, and provided also that if a fire occurred in his home within the ensuing six weeks the tenant would be subject to a 40-shilling fine—eight times the penalty for a mere refusal. Even if the inspector swept the flue, however, the tenant was still subject to a 25-shilling fine if a fire occurred, as they got him one way or another no matter what course he followed!

The inauguration of the city of Toronto led to numerous other regulations calculated to reduce the fire hazard. A report in 1834 suggested that it would be preferable if new buildings should be constructed of brick or stone; but if a series of wooden structures were erected the contractor should, if possible, make the walls between them of brick. Another suggestion was that persons leasing or selling lots might aid in fire prevention if they preferred tenants who would build of brick or stone. In the first year of the city the total expenditure for fire-fighting, including the payment of carters for hauling water, amounted to the modest sum of £17 15s. 5½d.

In 1834 a number of regulations concerning the existing fire companies were also made. In the matter of organization it was stipulated that "the different engine and hook-

and-ladder fire companies shall be under the control and direction of a captain, first and second lieutenant, secretary and treasurer". Those in charge were expected to have all apparatus in good condition at all times so that they could proceed immediately to every fire; though, of course, it must be understood that those volunteer firemen were on duty only on occasions of fire, and at such other times after working hours as they wished to practise or parade. The only full-time worker appears to have been a man to wash, clean and oil the engines and apparatus, and it is stated that he "will receive for such services out of the funds of the city the sum of twenty-five pounds annually, to be paid in quarterly payments by the chamberlain of the city".

An important provision in the regulations of early volunteer fire companies, and what may be considered as their only remuneration or reward, was that each member was exempted "from militia duty in time of peace, from serving as a juryman or constable, and from all other parish or city offices". There was a Common Council in the firemen's organisation, and, in addition to being the ruling body, its members were distinguished at fires by "a white sash, to pass over the right shoulder and under the left arm". The members of this council, as well as the firewardens and the officers of the various fire companies were empowered to demand obedience from all citizens who might be present at fires.

The all-important matter was to secure sufficient water, and the conduct of carters was therefore regulated very minutely. There was no waterworks system, and the deficiency of the water supply allowed many a fire to threaten the whole town, so in 1834 it was stipulated—and similar rules had for some years been in force—that "every licensed carter in the city shall at all times provide himself with a good and sufficient puncheon of water for the purpose of conveying to fires; and on the alarm of fire being given he shall forthwith procure and proceed with a puncheon of water to the place of fire, and shall continue to actively provide water under the direction of, and until discharged by the officers in command of the engines, under a penalty of twenty shillings. To insure the utmost promptitude in furnishing water at fires the following premiums shall be

awarded to licensed carters or others: for the first puncheon of water brought to the fire and furnished to any of the engines, the sum of £1 5s. 0d.; for the second, 15s.; for the third, 10s.; for the fourth, 5s.; and for each puncheon afterwards furnished, £0 1s. 0d."

It was essential for carters to exercise some care in speeding over the rough roads of "Muddy York", for William Lyon Mackenzie and his Aldermen inserted the wise proviso that "no carter shall be entitled to any premiums whose puncheon is not at least three-fourths full when delivered to the engine." Canvas covers for their barrels were found valuable by some carters in meeting this regulation. That the conduct of citizens at fires was not always above criticism may be seen from the regulation that "it shall be the duty of the High Bailiff or his deputy, as soon as possible after every fire, to report to the sitting magistrate any person or persons who may have been imprisoned for offences committed thereat".[11]

In 1834 the Church Street fire hall was divided into three sections, No. 1 Engine Company occupying the south portion, No. 2 the centre, and the Hook-and-Ladder Company the northern part. At the south-west corner was the bell tower, and the bell was rung by a rope in the lower portion of the building. At the rear was a long one-storey shed for drying hose. Fifty men, two engines and 750 feet of hose made up the equipment of the two engine companies in the closing year of the town of York; while the Hook-and-Ladder Company, formed in April, 1831, was sixty strong. In 1835 a second hook-and-ladder company was organised, and the city voted £56 for the purchase of uniforms.

Number 2 Engine Company resulted from the purchase by public subscription of a second engine, and in 1837 the British American Life and Fire Assurance Company donated a third, which went by the name *British America*. In 1839-40 a hall was built at the south-east corner of Bay and Temperance Streets for this engine. It was known as a "Montreal fore-and-aft" machine, and a full crew of twelve to fifteen men at each brake were in charge of its operation. This engine was much more powerful than the "piano" or "goose-neck" machine, which could accommodate only seven

[11] *Ibid.*

or eight men at each brake. No. 2 Company's engine was of the latter type, the name resulting from the fact that the hose was attached to a pipe curved like the neck of a goose, and rising about three feet above the deck of the machine. A cistern or water tank with a capacity of four or five puncheons was attached to the rear of the engine, and when it was in use a suction hose was fastened to a valve at the rear of the machine and the other end put in the cistern.

Competitions among volunteer fire brigades were frequently international in scope, and the chief stress was laid upon speed in reaching fires and in distance to which water could be projected from the hose by efficient working of the engines. On September 4, 1837, No. 3 Company was pleased to find during a practice that the *British America* could throw water 140 feet horizontally. In December of the same year this Company was particularly prominent during the scare that Toronto experienced when William Lyon Mackenzie and his "Patriots" gathered at Montgomery's Tavern on Yonge Street and seriously threatened to capture the city. On December 7th the fire brigade met for the purpose of forming a volunteer company to aid in resisting the invaders. A section was also formed to patrol the streets at night and keep order during the Rebellion, and it carried on until superseded by a body of 120 men enlisted at the suggestion of the Mayor. When Peter Matthews' men set fire to the Don Bridge and adjacent buildings on Thursday, December 7, 1837, the members of the British America played a notable part:

"With great spirit the members of the company started for the scene of action, most of them with a musket in one hand and the drag rope in the other; but ere their arrival at the building on fire the enemy had disappeared, not even waiting to see us, much less to fight, the heavy rumbling of the engine and cistern having frightened them into the belief that the cannon was on the track. On our arrival at the bridge our gallant captain ordered the engine into operation, but upon reconnoitring it was found the buildings were beyond salvation, with the exception of the toll-house. The bridge was saved by pulling up some of the planks and pouring water from buckets upon the burning embers. After

the fire was extinguished the company again made its way to the station into the Market Square about 9 in the evening."

Remaining there as a guard for the night, No. 3 Company was again called out by the Mayor at midnight, intelligence having reached him that 61 rebels were stationed beyond the Don Bridge. He asked for volunteers to go with him and capture the enemy, and with twenty men and "the High Bailiff on horseback" the doughty Chief Magistrate marched along the Kingston Road "to the lower toll-gate, or the fourth mile tree". Finding no one in the vicinity the detachment returned to the city, arriving about 3 a.m., and received hearty thanks from the Mayor. On the following day two members of the Company were expelled for refusal to take up arms in defence of the city."

It must be kept in mind that for most of the nineteenth century these fire companies were composed entirely of volunteers. The chief attractions of the organisation, apart from the sense of public duty, were the excitement of the work and the social activities connected therewith, though the exemption from military and other duties in time of peace was no doubt pleasing to some members. Annual festivals at which the men paraded in uniform amid the applause of their friends, competitions with brigades from other towns, suppers, social evenings and grand balls,—all of these activities contributed greatly to the social life of a large number of people; and there were occasions, too, when a minstrel show or some other theatrical venture would be undertaken by the members of the brigade. There was a feeling of *camaraderie* in firemen's organisations that led to much wholesome rivalry between companies; and in some towns it was more than suggested that a spirit of bravado was responsible for many of the incendiary fires which were common almost everywhere. But in general the public spirit and self-sacrifice of fire-fighters has been a noted characteristic, and it is as true today among permanent civic employees as it was among the volunteers.

Processions were characteristic of the times, and the

[1]The Minute Book of the British American Company is quoted at considerable length in J. Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*, 1896-1914. Vol. II, pp. 583 *et. seq.*

Fire Brigade always took a prominent part. In June, 1838, the officers of the three fire companies met at Baker's Black Swan Inn to make arrangements for a firemen's procession on Queen Victoria's Coronation Day, June 28th. It was there agreed that the British American Fire Engine Company (No. 3) should lead, the Hook-and-Ladder Company be placed second, and the Toronto Company bring up the rear. The minute book of the British America describes that on the 28th "the hydraulic engine owned by Watkins and Harris, hardware merchants, King Street, drawn by a horse and having a handsome flag upon it, came up, when the Company, preceded by the assistant engineer No. 1, Richard Woodsworth, with the engine, drawn by four horses, with banner and flags of a splendid description, proceeded to the City Hall, in front of which they were joined by the other fire companies, and after being arranged by the Chief Engineer, accompanied by the united bands of the Queen's Foresters and Rangers, proceeded down King Street to Berkeley", ... and so over the chief streets until the City Hall was again reached. Here, "leaving the machines in front, they repaired to the Council Room, where a collation was being prepared for them by the stewards, of which they partook and then withdrew to their respective quarters, the display being considered one of the most gratifying the citizens of this place ever witnessed."[73]

On the 18th of July following, a similar parade was held as part of the reception accorded to Lord and Lady Durham. The *cortège* proceeded to the Parliament Buildings, "the steps being carpeted, and a crimson chair of state awaiting his reception". About 10,000 persons were present on this occasion, "the most numerous and splendid display ever made in the city". On the following day another procession was organised to give the Governor a send-off. As on the previous day, the members of the City Council and of the National Societies of St. Patrick, St. George and St. Andrew joined the fire companies in honouring the Earl of Durham, and at 8 o'clock "they proceeded to and lined Mr. Brown's new wharf, east of the foot of Scott Street", and there awaited the arrival of the party. As usual upon such occasions there was a long wait, but at five the official party

[73] *Ibid.*, p. 572.

approached the wharf and the boat, "when a most violent thunderstorm suddenly coming on drenched such as could not get shelter, and prevented the Earl from addressing the spectators". The cheers of the citizens, however, followed him far out into the Bay."[11]

The importance attached to appearances in these firemen's processions was very great. The Cobourg Brigade sported a "parade machine" which cost $1,500, but was of no value apart from the admiration it engendered on gala days; while in 1862 the Toronto British America Company resolved to purchase "a carved and gilt lion for the use of the Company on procession days, in consequence of the desire to be in possession of a lion of their own without the difficulty of procuring one for processions similar to the last, by being under obligation of borrowing from Mr. Parkins or any other person".[12]

The by-laws which early fire companies passed to regulate the conduct of members are of considerable interest. As an example may be taken the regulations in force in No. 3 Engine Company in 1837. It was usual to meet one evening in each month, and any absentees were fined 2s. 6d., or if merely late, 1s. 3d. Sickness, or absence from the city on business, were the only recognised excuses. The fines went to a general fund which was drawn upon for such purposes as the majority approved, and any member failing to pay a forfeit was expelled. Similar fines were levied for disobedience at meetings or at fires; while "any member found guilty of smoking or swearing at any meeting of the company shall be fined one shilling for the first offence, two for the second, and expelled for the third". Similarly any member appearing at engine practice or on duty without his fire-hat was subject to fine. A typical regular meeting of firemen is that described by the minute-book of this company for June 4, 1838:

"On Monday, June 4th, 1838, the Company met at half-past six o'clock, called the roll, and took out the machine to King Street, where, having some hogsheads of water ready, the force was tried over the Commercial Bank. It was found that the machine worked well, throwing fully 20 feet over the tops of the chimneys of that high building.

[11] *Ibid.* [12] *Ibid.*

After trying her satisfactorily they returned to the engine house and collected twenty shillings in fines".[16]

In 1838 there was a reorganization of the various fire companies. Those men who wished to continue as members of the brigade had first to report to the City Council before they were considered eligible, whereupon they could choose which fire company they wished to join. The reorganization was necessary because of dissension in the Brigade, probably caused by the ill-feeling aroused during the late Rebellion. Thomas Harris was placed in charge of the new brigade.

In 1842 Fire Company No. 4 was organized and equipped with a "goose-neck" machine. Three years later the Firemen's Benefit Society was established with the object of providing for firemen disabled at fires, or, in the event of their death, in some measure compensating their widows and children. This was the period of the first waterworks in Toronto, but the pipes were so small and the hydrants so few and so unproductive of water that an almost entire dependence was placed upon the carters and their water puncheons. The average puncheon would hold sixty to eighty gallons—about three times the capacity of a flour barrel.

The Toronto waterworks was in operation in 1843, but sufficient progress had been made by 1842 to cause the British America Company to write a letter to the Chief Engineer advising him that the hydrants should be increased to provide an adequate supply of water at fires. In 1847 the deficient hydrant service led the same company to suggest to the city that "the so-called waterworks, for which the citizens are taxed so heavily, are in general of little service in case of fire, and might with advantage to the safety of the inhabitants be at once shut up". It was suggested that unless by some means the Company could not be compelled to live up to their obligations in that respect "the members of the fire company cannot be expected to remain associated in the service".[17]

In the same year the Fire and Water Committee of the City Council suggested that the service provided was worse than useless at fires, since the arrangement with the Company "had considerably enhanced the danger by leading the

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 570. [17] *Ibid.*, pp. 572-3.

Reproduced by Courtesy of Members of the Goderham Family. — William Arrowsmith.

BURNING OF THE GODERHAM MILL, OCTOBER 26, 1869

For over a century the Goderham & Worts' establishment—at first a grist mill, then a distillery—has been located on the same site.

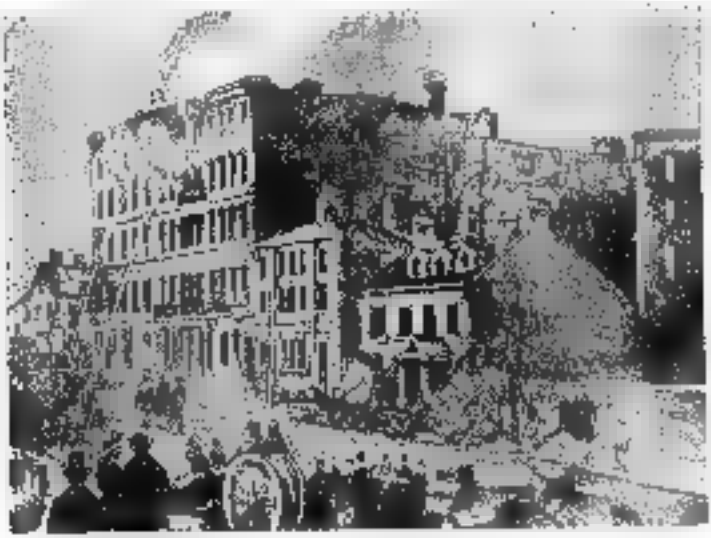
Canadian Illustrated News.

AN ALARM OF FIRE IN THE EIGHTIES

While public executions have long since come to an end, fires still remain notable spectacles, though modern fire-fighting equipment has rendered unlikely a repetition of the great conflagrations of the past.

History of the Toronto Fire Department

THE TORONTO FIRE DEPARTMENT IN 1897



Graphic Illustrated News.

Shakespeare Inn | Royalty House | Club Chambers | Toronto Club

ROSSIN HOUSE FIRE, NOVEMBER 22, 1862

In 1833-4 John Cotter's New British Coffee House was erected on the site. Rhab's Hotel and the Rossin House (since 1909 the Prince George Hotel) round out a century of social life on the corner.

citizens to the entertainment of a deceptive dependence on a source of supply which had in almost every instance proved defective". One example will suffice. In the second week of January, 1848, there was a serious fire on Yonge Street, and in describing it the *Examiner* remarked: "As usual, the fire engines, although on the ground, were of no use for about a quarter of an hour. No water could be had at the hydrants, and when it did come it was insufficient to supply one engine. . . . The waterworks are justly regarded as a public nuisance instead of being a benefit".[10] At that time the Fire Brigade delivered an ultimatum stating that they would resign if the system was not improved; some of them even suggested a march upon the Waterworks and the destruction of the plant. Three weeks later Rennie's Tavern was burned, but for an hour no water could be obtained from the Church Street hydrant, only the proximity of the fire to the Bay enabling a plentiful supply.

In the years just previous to the establishment of the Waterworks the annual cost of having carters haul water to fires averaged a little more than £100 a year. During 1839, 1840, 1841, and 1842 a total of £419 16s. 3d. was expended for this service. When the Waterworks opened in 1843 the city agreed to pay £250 for the hydrants, or "fire-plugs" as they were early called. As carters, of whom there were fifty-seven in that year, had still to be relied upon to provide puncheons of water, the total expense per year for having water supplied at fires was about £400 during the period 1843–1847. The puncheon supply system continued until 1861, and prizes of four, three, two and one dollar were awarded to the first four carters reaching a fire with a loaded puncheon, while a "York shilling" (12½c.) was paid

[10] The *Examiner*, January 12, 1848. It was not unusual for Mr. Furnis, owner of the waterworks, to appear at fires and tell the citizens in no uncertain terms that they were getting all the hydrant service the city was willing to pay for. In early years there was no pressure in the hydrants after nightfall, and the entire supply of water was afforded by the cartmen. An illuminating description of a fire under these circumstances in 1847 may be found in Patrick Slater's *The Yellow Briar*, 1952, pp. 50-52. Racing carters—many of them drunk,—volunteer firemen pitching house furnishings out of upper windows, the odd dishonest citizen scurrying home with what he could pick up, even the pumping equipment in flames—no wonder a fire long remained the most exciting public spectacle!

for every additional arrival. When a carter reached the fire with his cask he was given a round disc of tin or lead. On the disc was marked the number of the company which issued it, and upon its presentation to the proper official the bearer received his money. At times it was usual to pay cartmen on a time basis after the prize-winners were decided. Some carters were always in readiness for a race to a fire, keeping a full puncheon on their wagons both day and night. Concerning these good old days, C. C. Taylor recalled the prevalence of fires at week-ends:

"It was very remarkable that about this time scarcely a Saturday or Sunday night passed without a fire taking place. Some said they occurred opportunely on these nights, because everybody was at liberty, and, the firemen being volunteers, their occupations were not interfered with; and this, as a way to relieve the monotony that prevailed over everything, had led to the wilful acts of incendiarism which undoubtedly took place, but which were all overruled for the growth and general improvement of the city.

"The fire brigade in 1850 consisted of four engine companies, two hook-and-ladder and one hose company, Mr. Ashfield being then the chief engineer. The old hand-engines were not very powerful, and, when the firemen grew tired at the pumping, the law compelled any bystanders to 'lend an hand'; while many were willing, many more could be seen taking their departure when there was a prospect of a 'draft' for active service.

"There were some remarkable instances of destruction of property, one of which the writer distinctly remembers. A fire took place in a frame building on King Street, one door from the corner of Yonge, then occupied by Messrs. Betley & Kay. The flames from the wooden building were driven by an easterly wind into the millinery and mantle room over the store of Betley & Kay. On the arrival of the firemen the fine windows were immediately smashed in with axes, when the door might have served as well; and when the fire was extinguished it was found that a number of fine silk velvet mantles had been placed at the door of the room to prevent the water from spreading to other parts of the building."[10]

[10] C. C. Taylor: *Toronto Called Back*, 1886, p. 69.

Mrs. Anna Jameson, an observant traveller who spent some months in Toronto in 1837, was similarly impressed by the attitude of indifference which many of the inhabitants affected towards fires. She was assured that "whatever might be the private loss or suffering, a fire was always a public benefit in Toronto—a good brick house was sure to arise in the place of a wooden one".[20] However that might be in theory, few fires were ever a benefit to individuals in a day when fire insurance was unusual. In May, 1858, as a result of the great number of fires which were continually occurring, the Mayor called a special meeting of the Council to consider means of more effectively preserving citizens' property from destruction. It was resolved to organise a volunteer night patrol throughout the city, and to offer $1,500 reward for the apprehension and conviction of incendiaries.

A primitive means of spreading the news of fire was long in use in Toronto. Even in 1846 the bells to be rung in case of fire were the two in St. James' Cathedral, and it is announced in a publication that the key to the church may be obtained "at W. Atkinson, Esq.'s, City Buildings, and at the Police Station, West Market Place".[21] It is rather remarkable that any such antiquated and uncertain means of notifying the public should have been used at such a late date, but perhaps the town crier or bellman (for Toronto had one in imitation of the custom prevalent in the Old Land) aided in spreading the alarm, though a citizen who remembered him recalled that his "principal duty seemed to be to call out the names and give a description of lost children and animals".[22]

Among fire regulations enacted in Toronto in 1850 was one requesting permission from Council prior to the erection of foundries, blacksmith shops or steam engines; while the manufacture of varnish, fireworks or other combustible materials was similarly controlled. Steamers in dock had to have screens over their smokestacks to prevent the escape of sparks, and the Mayor directed a surveyor to examine

[20] Anna Jameson: *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada*. 1838, Vol. 1, p. 111.

[21] *Brown's Toronto City and Home District Directory, 1846-7*, p. 3.

[22] W. H. Pearson: *Recollections and Records of Toronto of Old*. 1914, p. 124.

"all fireplaces, hearths, ovens, boilers, furnaces, or any place where fires were made or kept". It was also stated that no person might keep more than twenty-eight pounds of gunpowder in one place for more than 48 hours, unless it was in an approved powder magazine.

These regulations followed closely upon the great fire of 1849, a conflagration of such magnitude that firemen and citizens despaired of being able to stop it. The fire commenced early in the afternoon of April 7th at Covey's Tavern, in the centre of the Frederick, Nelson (Jarvis), Adelaide and King block. There was a strong north wind, and the efforts of carters and bucket brigades availed but little when the chief fire-engine broke down. The total loss exceeded £100,000, and only a comparatively small amount of insurance was carried by the owners. The City Hall was among the many buildings destroyed, and one man, Mr. Watson, publisher of the *Upper Canada Gazette*, lost his life while trying to save manuscripts in the *Patriot* office. In describing the destruction of St. James' Church, Dr. Scadding states that the open space around it did more than anything else to check the fire as it rolled irresistibly westward:

"The energies of the local fire brigade of the day had never been so taxed as they were on that memorable occasion. Aid from steam-power was then undreamt-of. Simultaneous outbursts of flame from numerous widely-separated spots had utterly disheartened everyone, and had caused a general abandonment of effort to quell the conflagration. Then it was that the open space about St. James' Church saved much of the town from destruction.

"To the west the whole sky was, as it were, a vast canopy of meteors streaming from the east. The church itself was consumed, but the flames advanced no further. A burning shingle was seen to become entangled in the buffer-boards of the belfry, and slowly to ignite the woodwork there: from a very minute start at that point, a stream of fire soon began to rise—soon began to twine itself about the upper stages of the tower, and to climb nimbly up the steep slope of the spire, from the summit of which it then shot aloft into the air, speedily enveloping and overtopping the golden cross that was there.

"At the same time the flames made their way downwards within the tower, till the internal timbers of the roofing over the main body of the building were reached. There, in the natural order of things, the fire readily spread; and the whole interior of the church, in the course of an hour, was transformed, before the eyes of a bewildered multitude looking powerlessly on, first into a vast 'burning fiery furnace', and then, as the roof collapsed and fell, into a confused chaos of raging flame.

"The heavy gilt cross at the apex of the spire came down with a crash, and planted itself in the pavement of the principal entrance below, where the steps, as well as the inner walls of the base of the tower, were bespattered far and wide with the molten metal of the great bell.

"While the work of destruction was going fiercely and irrepressibly on, the Public Clock in the belfry, Mr. Draper's gift to the town, was heard to strike the hour as usual, and the quarters thrice, exercising its functions and having its appointed say amidst the sympathies, not loud but deep, of those who watched its doom; bearing its testimony, like a martyr at the stake, in calm and unimpassioned strain, up to the very moment of time when the deadly element touched its vitals."[3]

In 1856 there were the following six fire companies:

No. 1. Phoenix Company—29 men, at Court Street Hall. (One member, J. C. Steele, died March 20, 1934, aged 96.)

No. 2. Rescue Company—29 men, at Court Street Hall.

No. 3. British America Company—30 men, stationed at the Bay Street Hall.

No. 4. Victoria Company—17 men, St. Patrick's Market.

No. 5. Deluge Company—24 men, stationed at the Berkeley Street Hall.

No. 6. Provincial Company—35 men, at Bay Street Hall.

In addition to these engine companies there was the Hook-and-Ladder Company, comprising [redacted] men and stationed at the Court Street Hall; and the Hose Company, with 45 men at the Bay Street Hall. The total number of firemen was 227, in addition to the Chief and the engineers. In 1857-8 a Boys' Hose Company was attached to Phoenix Company, George McCoukey being boy captain and John

[3]Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old*, 1873, pp. 172-3.

Ross Robertson first lieutenant. The annual loss from fire was not usually very great, the total in 1856 being but £12,376.

An interesting commentary on the condition of Toronto streets at that time is seen in the practice of running the fire-engines on the sidewalks, which were at least somewhat smoother. When in 1858 a fireman was run over and killed during this procedure it was decided to impose a fine of £5 on any company proceeding faster than a walk when returning from a fire, though it appears for some time to have been considered that any means to attain speed on the outward journey was excusable. In 1860 the Hose Company was divided into two, and largely in the expectation that the twenty men in each section might more readily be prevented from using the sidewalks.

In the late fifties the era of hand fire-engines was drawing to a close in Toronto, though smaller centres of population could not so quickly substitute the steam engine. At the time of the Provincial Exhibition of 1858 the large brigade necessary for the operation of hand engines represented the peak of effectiveness and prestige for the days of volunteer fire companies. A notable parade was held at that time in Toronto, and the fire brigades of London, Hamilton and Cobourg were invited to participate in the firemen's demonstration. Led by the band of the Toronto Fire Brigade, the procession was formed on Duke Street and proceeded *via* Frederick, King, York, Front, Yonge and Queen to Bathurst Street. Behind the band was James Ashfield, Chief Engineer, and his deputies; whereupon followed in order:

Hook-and-Ladder Company.
No. 1 Phoenix Company.
London Fire Brigade.
No. 2 Rescue Company.
No. 3 British America Company.
Multvaney's Brass Band.
Hamilton Fire Brigade.
No. 4 Victoria Company.
No. 5 Deluge Company.
No. 6 Provincial Company.
Cobourg Fire Brigade.

Gaily caparisoned horses drawing engines profusely decorated, floating banners preceding each company, and the scarlet coats of the men, combined with the music of the bands to make the parade a colourful event which, with a torchlight procession in the evening, merited the comment in the press that the parades were "the grandest things of the sort that have ever taken place in Toronto".

Hand engines drawn to the fires by the men continued in constant use until 1861, the last one, the *Phoenix*, being sold to Oakville in that year. Although a committee recommended the purchase of steam engines in 1858, it was not until 1861 that two were bought at a cost of $6,000, of which one-third was donated by an insurance company. In later years, when these machines had outlived their usefulness, a junk dealer purchased the two for $30, while instead they might have been preserved for the historical education of later generations.

The change to steam fire-engines greatly decreased the number of men needed in the fire brigade. In 1862 there were only two fire stations, each with an engine, and the force, little more than one-sixth of the strength of the brigade of 1858, included the following men: 1 chief engineer, 1 assistant engineer, 17 branchmen, 11 hook-and-ladder men, 1 bugler, 2 engineers of steam fire-engines, 2 firemen, 2 drivers of hose carts, and 1 driver of hook-and-ladder truck; and the brigade had seven horses to pull the various engines and carts. It will be evident, therefore, that the heyday of the volunteer fire companies ended with the purchase of steam fire-engines, though some features of the old brigade were retained for over a decade longer.

In 1862, also, $2,000 was voted for the construction of tanks in various parts of the city, in order to afford a more adequate supply of water to extinguish fires. Twenty-eight tanks were erected during the year, and more added from time to time. In 1866 there were fifty-five fires in Toronto, and 750,000 gallons of water was used by the fire brigade at a cost of $11 per 1,000 gallons. Of the eighty-five hydrants in the city at the time twelve were useless because the pipes connecting them were too small for the purpose, or the hydrants were too far distant from the large water mains to provide an effective supply. The problem

was long one of the Council's chief sources of worry. The Fire Chief seized every available opportunity to belittle the service supplied by the Waterworks Company, and in his report in 1867 observed that municipal tanks, private cisterns and the Bay had frequently to be called into commission to supplement what little the hydrants could be forced to give. Undoubtedly Toronto's experiences with private companies in their effort to provide public utilities have been the most important factor in arousing such strong support for municipal ownership of such services. But the equipment of the fire brigade itself was not in every respect up-to-date. In the Chief Engineer's report concerning the year 1866 there is the following paragraph commenting on the crude method of sending in an alarm:

"The bells in use for the purpose of giving alarm on occasions of fire in this city are not as effective as formerly, when the city could not boast of as many extensive blocks of high buildings as at present. There is no lookout or watch kept at any of the engine or fire-alarm stations, and it often happens that fires occur for which some of the principal bells are not rung at all. Along with this it may be noticed that there are many parts of the city in which, should a fire break out, a messenger, to convey the intelligence to the nearest engine or alarm station, may have to travel nearly two miles; and before reaching it, saying nothing of the shortest time possible to get the engines and other apparatus to the place of fire, the building where the fire originated, with all its contents, together with other property adjacent thereto, may have been wholly destroyed."[22]

At this time (1867) the Council passed a by-law providing for the reward of distinguished conduct at fires, and for pecuniary assistance to widows and orphans of firemen killed in the discharge of their duty. No change was for some years made in the fire-alarm system, but in 1871 the

[22] A large amount of valuable information concerning Toronto's fires and fire-fighters was collected by John Ross Robertson, and appears in Volume II of his *Landmarks of Toronto*. The official *History of the Toronto Fire Department* (1922) is deficient in that it goes back only to 1820; but it contains many details of the personnel and organization down through the years, and particularly of the modern brigade. There are also numerous illustrations depicting fires, engines, and members of the department.

"electric telegraph" method was successfully demonstrated, an alarm being communicated in twenty seconds. In the next few years the electric alarms were greatly developed. In 1871, also, four new engine houses were opened, and the fire department was considered the acme of perfection and efficiency. Only the engineers and firemen were continuously on duty, all the other members of the brigade pursuing their usual vocations except when fires occurred; in fact they attended fires only when it suited their convenience, though they received $125 a year for their services.

It was soon seen, however, that Montreal's permanent force of firemen was worthy of imitation, and it was decided in 1874 that 36 men should comprise the department, a change that added $12,000 a year to the expenditure for fire protection, making the total annual cost $30,016. All part-time members were dropped, and two electricians were included among the thirty-six employees, while horses with drivers were furnished by contract; but in 1891 twenty-eight horses were purchased by the city. By 1885 the electric fire alarm system had been greatly extended, 154 boxes being located in various parts of the city. In the same year the brigade answered 203 calls, and the new chemical truck was effective in extinguishing seventeen fires without the help of other equipment.

In 1895, during the Osgoodby office building fire, the first use of a life-net saved three persons from certain death. Had such a net been available four days earlier, on January 6th, when a fire originating in the *Globe* office destroyed several buildings, the life of Fire Chief Richard Ardagh would not have been lost as a result of a forty-foot jump that he was compelled to make from a burning warehouse. The series of bad fires during this year led to the strengthening of the force to 132 officers and men, divided into sixteen sections. The equipment included three steam engines and a water tower, a double-cylinder chemical engine, a combination chemical fire-engine, five hook-and-ladder trucks, one aerial turntable hook-and-ladder truck, eleven single-hose carts and wagons, four two-horse hose wagons and thirty-six horses.

Toronto's greatest fire commenced during the night of April 19, 1904, when property valued at $10,000,000 was

destroyed. This fire, which swept through the Front Street business section, continued to burn for two weeks, but was stopped at the Queen's Hotel, though it appeared for a time as if the entire city might be destroyed. The ruins left in the wake of the fire were prominent on Front Street for many years, particularly on the sites of the present Union Station and Custom House.

The fire department under Chief Sinclair which protects the Toronto of today costs $2,000,000 annually to maintain, and in addition an extra $1,000,000 is necessary to provide for water and the use of hydrants. This seems a great expense when compared with the $71 spent for the purpose in the first year of the city, the $3,100 which maintained the volunteer brigade of 1848, or the $7,520 which it required in 1861; but it must be remembered that there is a permanent fire-fighting force of 697 men, as well as 34 fire-halls and extensive modern equipment to be kept in a high state of efficiency. Insurance companies rate the Toronto fire department among the best on the continent, and fires of the magnitude of the great conflagrations of other days are now highly improbable.

CHAPTER XII

The Police Force

The two or three hundred inhabitants of the town of York at the commencement of the nineteenth century included a large proportion of soldiers, and, it would appear, a considerable number of evil-disposed persons whose activities necessitated continual vigilance on the part of honest citizens. The various types of officials appointed by the Court of Quarter Sessions or at the annual town-meeting did not include police as such, though poundkeepers, fence-viewers and other officers were in charge of the enforcement of regulations in their particular fields of activity. Among his other duties Sheriff Alexander Macdonell performed the office of policeman, and arrested those suspected of crimes; and all officials were frequently aided in law enforcement by private citizens.

In 1800 Chief Justice Elmsley presided over the Court of King's Bench, and he was assisted by Mr. Justice Powell and Mr. Justice Alcock. Minor cases were dealt with by the magistrates, who were William Jarvis and William Willcocks, and it would appear that they had many crimes and misdemeanours to deal with. Charges of assault and battery were common in a day when fighting was a popular diversion; but we will hope that the case of Jesse Updegraff, who "Damned the King and used other disrespectful Language",[1] was an isolated instance. The *Gazette* contains numerous notices of robberies, even the magistrates and high officials being the victims on some occasions. In the issue of June 5, 1802, Mr. Justice Alcock offers $40 reward for the conviction of the person who stole from his "farm near the Garrison a number of Iron teeth from two harrows". He states that the culprit was thought to have been a deserter from the garrison, who had sold the teeth to two blacksmiths in York.[2]

[1] Minutes of the Court of General Quarter Sessions, April 9, 1811, *Report of the Archives of Ontario, 1922*, p. 176.

[2] *Upper Canada Gazette*, June 5, 1802.

In 1803 Peter Russell offered five guineas reward for the apprehension of the thieves who stole from his barn near the town "a turkey hen, with her brood of six half-grown young ones";[1] while Magistrate Jarvis announced that he would pay $50 for information leading to the conviction of the persons who stole from his "improved grounds" a number of fruit trees.[2] John McGill once had a quantity of onions and melons stolen from his garden, while Sarah McBride missed "a fine ruffled shirt" from her house.

The punishments of the time were, as in Europe, very severe. The death penalty was in force for a large number of crimes, including forgery and counterfeiting. In 1800 a man was executed in York for forging a note, and it is recorded that "with unparalleled fortitude he approached the place of execution; and to the last appeared much resigned to his unhappy fate".[3] Two years earlier, in November, 1798, a man was sentenced to be burned in the hand for grand larceny,[4] the law as to branding being part of the English criminal code adopted in Upper Canada on the formation of the province, though in 1802 branding was abolished in Canada except for manslaughter. Whipping was a common punishment for petty larceny, while in August, 1801, a thief was banished from Upper Canada for seven years.[5] Until the construction of the Asylum in 1846 no special provision was made for "lunatic persons". If they were violently insane they were confined in the jail, but all the other types of mental aberration were merely ignored, and the unfortunate persons so afflicted remained at home or wandered about the town as they or their relatives saw fit.

The old English punishment of standing in the pillory was also in vogue in early York. Elizabeth Ellis was sen-

[1] *Ibid.*, August 20, 1803.
[2] *Ibid.*, May 16, 1800.
[3] *Ibid.*, May 17, 1800.
[4] See *Ibid.*, November 17 and December 1, 1798.
[5] *Ibid.*, August 29, 1801. For many details of old-time punishments and the procedure of criminal courts both in England and Upper Canada see J. Edmund Jones; *Pioneer Crimes and Punishments in Toronto and the House District*, 1924. In the publications of many learned societies may be found essays on particular criminal cases by that versatile and indefatigable writer, the Hon. Mr. Justice William R. Riddell.

tenced in 1804 to six months' imprisonment, and in addition "to stand in the pillory twice during the said imprisonment, on two different market days, opposite the Market-House in the town of York, for the space of two hours each time".[8] Probably the first stocks wore out, for in July, 1811, it is recorded in the minutes of the Court of Quarter Sessions that the magistrates decided to employ a carpenter "to make Moveable Stocks that will confine two Persons at once, and when completed that they be erected where a Majority of the Magistrates of this Town may think most proper".[9] Stocks remained in the market-place until 1824, when, with the whipping-post, they were destroyed during a riot occasioned by the particularly wild elections during the year of the creation of the city of Toronto.

In connection with the last use of the stocks, in 1834, a writer describes that Mayor William Lyon Mackenzie "caused considerable ill-feeling by causing a drunken woman to be placed therein, after they had practically been unused for some time. A woman of notorious character was brought before the Mayor, charged with drunkenness, and he, during the hearing of the case, made some remarks not very complimentary, when she, stooping down in the dock, took off one of her wet and muddy shoes, and flung it at him as he sat upon the bench; for this, and her abusive language to him, he ordered her to be placed in the stocks. These stocks were not after the common English model for confining the feet alone, but confined the feet, head and arms of the offender, and are well remembered by many of the citizens of today (1877). Mr. J. H. Rogers, furrier, King Street East, relates many boyish incidents in connection with the now extinct mode of punishment. One celebrity who was a well-known drunkard, and who, after indulging in his cups, appeared to have a particular animosity against all boys, on one occasion found himself confined in the cumbrous frame. The news soon spread over the place; the boys, jubilant at having the opportunity of paying off old scores, congregated around him, jeered, laughed at, and derided him, and finally painted his face.

[8]Quoted in Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old*, 1873, p. 42.
[9]Minutes of July 13, 1811, *Report of the Archives of Ontario*, 1902, p. 106.

We are informed that being unable to use his arms and feet, he used his tongue all the more freely in reply to the jeers levelled at him by the youngsters, and when the crowning indignity of paint was put upon him he retaliated by gripping with his mouth the painter's hand and giving him painful proof that sharp teeth are worse than strong blows".[10]

From time to time local laws and regulations were adopted by the town-meeting. Those concerning fire prevention and road maintenance will be dealt with elsewhere, but a number of a miscellaneous character may be mentioned here. On March 3, 1800, the annual meeting was held at Abner Miles' Tavern, and after the election of the usual municipal officials matters of general interest to the inhabitants were discussed. The regulations adopted on these occasions show how primitive and how rural were conditions in early York. One deals with that old English custom of allowing hogs to be scavengers and garbage collectors:

"It is agreed by a majority of the inhabitants of the town that no hogs, of any description, shall be allowed to run at large within the limits of the city, from and after the first day of May next ensuing, and it is further agreed by a majority that every person or persons shall be liable to pay the sum of five shillings lawful currency for each time, and for each hog found running at large. It is further agreed that all persons who keep hogs shall cause them to be marked, which mark shall be registered with the town clerk."[11]

In April of the same year a notice signed by T. Ridout, C.P., announces that anyone obstructing the streets by piles of wood and stone, or by digging pits, will be prosecuted.[12] Two years later the law with respect to hogs was amended by the following resolution of the inhabitants at the annual town-meeting, held on March 1st at Myles and Playter's Hotel:

"With respect to hogs (under three months old) running at large in the country it was voted by a majority that

[10] J. Timperlake: *Illustrated Toronto, Past and Present*. 1877. pp. 98-7.
[11] *Upper Canada Gazette*, March 8, 1800.
[12] *Ibid.*, April 12, 1800.

they should be at liberty to run at large without yokes. And in the town it was agreed that all hogs shall have liberty to run at large, provided they be yoked and ringed, but if found without a lawful yoke and ring to the nose, shall be subject to impounding until the owner pays one dollar for each hog. This restriction to commence on the 1st day of May next."[12]

At a later meeting it was decided "that all lawful fences shall be the height of five feet, and that there shall be no space through the fence of more than four inches".[13] This appears to have been a matter of considerable importance in early York, for thefts were quite common, and men would even break down fences to revenge a grudge, or perhaps merely for the amusement. The following advertisement, signed by Robert Gray, the Solicitor-General, appeared in the *Gazette* under the heading "$20 Reward":

"Twenty dollars reward will be paid by the subscriber to any person who will discover the man who is so depraved and lost to every sense of social duty as to cut with an axe or knife the withes which bound some of the fence round the late Chief Justice's farm on Yonge Street, and to throw down the said fence. Independent of the said inducement it is the duty of every good member of society to endeavour to find out who the character is that can be guilty of such an infamous act, in order that he may be brought to justice."[14]

In 1802 a number of recommendations of a nature similar to those adopted by the town-meeting were presented by the Grand Jury. One was that taverns should not sell intoxicating liquors or allow disorderly behaviour on the Sabbath, particularly during the hours of divine service. The Grand Jury also considered that the butchers of York "should be obliged to bury the garbage and useless offal of their slaughtered cattle, or to remove from the town or otherwise dispose of the same, so that it may cease to be (what it now is) a public nuisance". They suggested in addition that "joiners, cabinet-makers, carpenters and other descriptions of workers in wood, by whose trade shav-

[12] *Ibid.*, March 6, 1802.
[13] *Ibid.*, July 9, 1803.
[14] *Ibid.*, July 23, 1803.

ings are made, should be obliged to burn or otherwise destroy the same on the Wednesdays and Saturdays of every week, at or about the hours of sunset".[16]

In 1817 an important change was made in law enforcement when the Legislature passed a bill entitled "An Act to Establish a Police in the Towns of York, Sandwich and Amherstburg." It provided that the magistrates assembled in Quarter Sessions might make such prudential rules and regulations as deemed expedient concerning paving, lighting, maintaining and improving streets, the regulation of the assize of bread, and, in general, the abating of any nuisances that might arise. Powers were granted to enforce local laws relating to the running at large of cattle and swine, the inspection of weights and measures, and the supervision of fire companies.

With relation to York it was specifically stated in this Act that the beach east of Russell's Creek and the carriageway in front of the town were to be considered as a part of the town, and subject to police regulation. The magistrates were given authority to raise by assessment from all property holders a sum not exceeding £100 in any one year for the purchase of fire engines, buckets, etc., and also to impose fines on any persons breaking police regulations.

Pursuant to this Act the town of York issued in the same year a series of laws, which were printed six years later under the title *Regulations for the Police of the Town of York in the Home District, Made and Ordained in Adjourned Quarter Sessions, May 14th, 1817—Revised and Amended in Adjourned General Sessions, June 21st, 1823.*[17] Constables and Peace Officers are mentioned in the *Regulations*, but most (if not all) of them were undoubtedly on duty only in cases of fire or other emergencies. The old English "Assize of Bread" was enforced by the following terms:

"No person or persons to sell, or bake Broad or Biscuit for sale, without having previously obtained a license, and entered into recognisance before the clerk of the peace, with two sufficient sureties in the sum of twenty pounds, to sell the same in conformity to the Assize, to be published

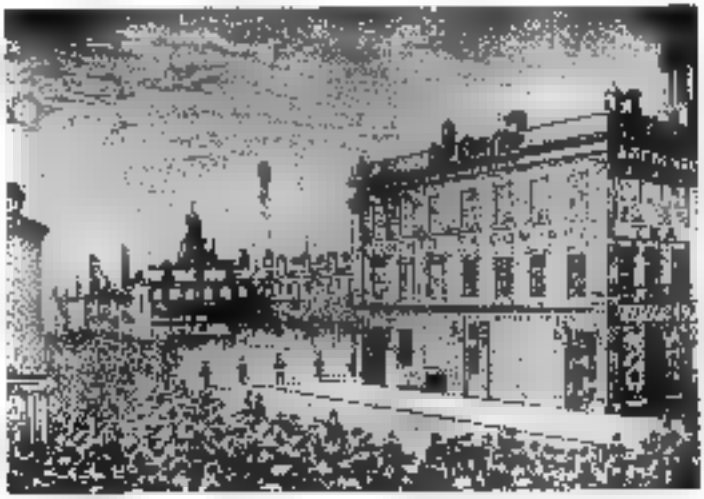
[16] *Ibid.*, July 10, 1822.

[17] A copy of this pamphlet is in the Legislative Library of Ontario.

John Ross Robertson Collection — J. G. Howard.

COLBORNE LODGE, HIGH PARK

The home of J. G. Howard, one of Toronto's greatest benefactors. He was the first City Engineer, and his contribution to art and architecture is second only to his munificent gift of High Park to the people of Toronto.



Reproduced by courtesy of Mrs. N. McMahon.

THE O'DONOVAN ROSSA RIOT, MARCH 18, 1876

Rossa, a Fenian lecturer, escaped from St. Lawrence Hall dressed as a woman. The rioters thought he had gone to Congreve's Hotel, at the north-west corner of Queen and Dundas (St. Patrick) Streets, and wrecked that building. As the illustration shows, many windows in St. Lawrence Hall were smashed, and the police had great difficulty holding back the mob.

PETER FERRLAND
Proprietor of the Soap and Candle Factory at the foot of Yonge Street.

JESSE KETCHUM
As a philanthropist and public benefactor he occupies an honoured position.

CAPTAIN W. S. PRICE
While he was Chief of Police, 1868-74, the force was greatly improved.

SHERIFF W. R. JARVIS
Prominent in the development of the village of Yorkville.

monthly by order of the magistrates; and also, during the continuance of such license, to bake and have daily for sale a reasonable supply of bread.

"Every baker to stamp each Loaf or Biscuit with the initials of his name. . . . An entry shall be made from time to time by the Clerk of the Market, in a book to be kept for that purpose, of the Assize of bread, as fixed each month, or oftener if required, which book any inhabitant may inspect at all reasonable hours, without fee. The Clerk of the Market, likewise, to keep an account of the prices of flour, to lay before the Magistrates when called for."

Offenders against these laws were subject to a penalty of from ten to forty shillings for each offence. The old regulations with reference to hogs were continued with some changes. It was stipulated that "every person duly convicted for having wilfully or negligently suffered his or her Hog or Hogs to run at large in the Town of York shall be liable to a penalty of Ten Shillings for every such Hog so suffered to run at large, and a further penalty of Five Shillings for every day the offence is continued". The informer was entitled to one-half the penalty, and all impounded hogs were to be sold at auction by the Poundkeeper three days later, if the owner did not pay the penalty, claim his hogs and remove them. And it is further stipulated that "after deducting from the proceeds of such sale the penalty and charges incident to such distress, the overplus, if any there be, shall be paid to the owner". To give effect to these regulations the Poundkeeper was authorised to employ such assistance as was necessary.

The embryo of a Board of Health may be seen in the rules regarding rubbish and offal. Slaughter-houses were subject to regulation, and no one could make use of one without special permission from the Magistrates. It was further stated that "no chips, shavings, or rubbish of any description" shall be thrown into the streets or along the waterfront. As these regulations were suggested by a Grand Jury in 1802 it may be assumed they were in force soon afterwards.

Among other laws adopted in 1817 were several concerning Weights and Measures, and those kept by the Clerk

of the Market provided the standard to be followed in "Shops, Taverns, Warehouses, or elsewhere". It was also stipulated that all measures used in the town were to be stamped { U.C. / York / S.M. } and all weights { U.C. / York / S.W. }; for the doing of which the Clerk of the Market was entitled to receive three pence, or five cents, per stamp.

Even as late as 1827 York was but a village in size, having at that time a population of only 1,817. But by the early months of 1833 immigration to Upper Canada had so increased that the town contained 6,094 people; and thereafter it developed still more rapidly. In 1835 it was considered that the new city of Toronto needed a professional police force, and on March 11th the Council determined that five persons should be appointed police constables; these men were to be in constant attendance at the Police Office, and their employment was to be under the direction of the High Bailiff and the Magistrates of the city. In addition to the five on the permanent staff fourteen men were appointed supernumerary constables to act as they might be required—presumably whenever riots or "bloody battles" necessitated an increased police force. Uniforms were first provided for the five Toronto constables in 1839.

On August 28, 1843, the Council authorised the renting of a house at the corner of John and Lot (Queen) Streets to serve as a police station for what was then "the west end of the city". By 1852 the Toronto police numbered about twelve and were under Chief Samuel Sherwood, who is described as "a quiet, good-natured man, who did not insist on any strict regulations as to the dress or discipline of the men. They wore a sort of uniform, but without uniformity except in one respect—they were uniformly slovenly. Day & Martin's blacking, and white gloves, were not considered at all necessary; the latter had not come into fashion, and as to the former the men might say as to their boots what was generally said as to waggons and carriages, —that if the mud was taken off they would be just as dirty in a short time again".[1]

[1] C. C. Taylor: *Toronto Collect Batch*, 1886, p. 74.

In July, 1855, there occurred what was long remembered as "the Circus Riot", and the apparent failure of the police to deal effectively with it resulted in the appointment of a special committee of Council to investigate the matter. They reported that the Chief's authority had been weakened by undue influence, exercised presumably by aldermen in favour of friends on the force. Though not belittling the Chief's difficulties, the committee was of the opinion that a new head, a man "habituated to command", would be necessary to bring the force up to the required standard, and it was consequently suggested that the Mayor communicate with police authorities in England and Ireland to see if they could recommend a suitable chief.

Meanwhile the appointment and dismissal of constables was taken out of the hands of the Council and given to a committee of three men—a Magistrate, the Recorder and the Chief of Police. The removal of the control of the police from the municipal council was not achieved without bitter debate and open quarrel, but the proposals were adopted by a majority of two in eighteen votes. The desire was given effect in 1859 by an Act of Parliament which constituted in every city a Board of Commissioners of Police, consisting of the Mayor, Recorder or County Judge, and the Police Magistrate. The first Board in Toronto consisted of Mayor the Hon. Adam Wilson and George Duggan, Police Magistrate.

In 1859 Captain W. S. Prince, late of Her Majesty's 71st Regiment, was appointed Chief Constable, and the force under him consisted of three sergeants-major, six sergeants and twenty-five constables. During the next ten years there was a gradual increase in the personnel of the force. A writer who lived through these changes in police administration recalled that "there was not much improvement in the Police Force till the appointment of Captain Prince, who, by the introduction of a semi-military system of discipline, brought about a complete revolution in every respect; not only in the dress and discipline of the men, but in the selection of a superior class, both as regards physique and intelligence, forming in a short time a body of police equal to that of any city in the world. The best men selected

were from the Irish Constabulary, who had been drilled at the barracks in Phoenix Park, Dublin".[19]

At the end of the first decade of the Board's control there were three police divisions in Toronto, and the force consisted of nine officers and fifty constables. No. 1 Station was then located in the old City Hall on the Market Square; No. 2 on Yonge Street, opposite Edward Street; and No. [illegible] on Queen Street West, near the corner of John.

Captain Prince resigned in 1874 and was succeeded as Chief by Major F. C. Draper, formerly of the Queen's Own Rifles. A year later the "Sunday Riots" occurred during the Roman Catholic Pilgrimage Processions, and there resulted considerable property damage and the injury of half the members of the police force. The riots were caused by the attitude of the Orange Order, which, although insisting upon its own right to stage public demonstrations, was strongly opposed to allowing other citizens the same rights. As the events occasioned the worst situation that the police of Toronto ever experienced, it will be of interest to give a description[20] almost contemporary with the riots:

"The city was the scene of considerable rioting during Sunday afternoon, September 26th and October 3rd, arising from a procession of the Roman Catholics in celebration of the Jubilee. It appears that once every twenty-five years the Roman Catholic Church holds a jubilee, but in consequence of the disturbed state of Europe in 1850 no jubilee was held by the Church. Formerly one of the conditions to gain Jubilee indulgences was to visit Rome, but in this year the Pope announced that indulgences would be given to any one visiting four different churches on three consecutive Sundays in procession with three other parishes. In Toronto two of the parishes performed the requisite procession or pilgrimage in July last without molestation. The other three parishes, St. Basil's, St. Patrick's and St. Paul's, postponed the pilgrimage on account of the heat of the weather. They had their processions arranged for the same three Sundays, and the first of these took place on the 19th of September and passed off without any disturbance. The second took place on the 26th, when the Jubilee procession in connection with St. Paul's parish, on returning from St. Patrick's

[19] *Ibid.* [20] Timperlake, *op. cit.*, pp. 152-4.

Chapel on William Street, was met at the intersection of Queen Street and Spadina Avenue with a shower of stones from a large crowd of thoughtless young men and women. The police made a dash at the assailants and drove them off, but throughout the line of march from here to St. Mary's Church on Bathurst Street stone-throwing was continued. Almost the whole of the police, consisting of detachments from Stations Nos. 1 and 2, were wounded. A very strong feeling was aroused by this proceeding, the Roman Catholics insisting upon their right to walk in public procession, while, on the other side, the Orangemen of the city met in public meeting and called upon the Mayor to prevent the procession taking place the following Sabbath, but the Mayor had no power to do so, though he requested the Archbishop to countermand the procession, [redacted] could not guarantee to keep the peace. On Sunday, the 3rd of October, a section of the Roman Catholic pilgrims assembled at St. Paul's Church, Power Street, and, having formed a procession, marched up to St. Michael's Cathedral by way of Queen Street. The procession included a large number of women. They, however, carried no banners, flags, or regalia of any kind, and marched along in the most quiet and inoffensive manner.

"A vast crowd had collected outside the Cathedral, and the pilgrims were allowed to enter without any hindrance. While the procession was in the Cathedral the entire police force, under the command of Major Draper, the Chief Constable, was drawn up at the entrance to the Cathedral. About half-past three the procession left the Cathedral, and, headed by a squad of police, moved along Shuter Street amid the yells and hootings of the large mob. Just as the foremost ranks reached the corner of Church and Queen Streets a perfect volley of stones came upon them from Queen Street. A halt was made, the police charging upon the rioters, who were soon driven off. This was repeated several times before the procession made any further progress. The procession moved down Church Street to Adelaide Street, where stones were incessantly thrown, and at the corners of Bay, Brock and Bathurst Streets the same scenes occurred, but at the latter place the riot assumed the most serious aspect; revolvers were freely used, the

fight between the police and the crowd being kept up for a considerable time.

"The police, during the whole time the processionists were passing along the streets, sustained the brunt of the fight with the opposing crowd; and though more than half the entire force were severely wounded, yet their coolness, bravery and self-restraint excited the admiration of all spectators. Though the riots were a disgrace to the city it is a matter for congratulation that mob law did not prevail, for, though under difficulty, the pilgrimage was made from and to the points intended."

In 1876 there was a complete change in the boundaries of the police divisions, and a new one, No. 4, was established in the east end. The increased supervision necessary led to the appointment at that time of a Deputy Chief Constable, Major McPherson being the appointee. During the same year Chief Draper thoroughly examined the Metropolitan Police Force of London, England, and his investigations resulted in the publication of *Orders and Regulations of the Toronto Police Force*, which for many years formed a highly satisfactory basis of police discipline. In 1886 Major Draper resigned his command owing to ill-health.

In October, 1884, a large gang of illicit traders were in practical possession of the territory surrounding Michipicoten, on the north shore of Lake Superior. The Canadian Pacific Railway was under construction at the time, and as local authorities were unable to cope with the trouble a detachment of the Toronto Police Force was sent out at the request of the Provincial Government. In less than two weeks they arrested a large number of the malefactors, and the rest left the district. Over thirty years later 152 Toronto police took part in that world-wide catastrophe—the Great War—and 26 made the supreme sacrifice.

The organization and activities of the present force fall outside the scope of the present work, but the 997 men who compose Brigadier-General Draper's corps form one of the most efficient of modern police forces. An interesting annual event which is of great importance in maintaining the morale and physical condition of the men is the Police Games, of which the tournament of the year 1933 marked the fiftieth anniversary.

CHAPTER XIII

Public Executions

Changes in laws and in the administration of justice occur from time to time, and a description of a few of the more notable crimes connected with early York, and the punishments which resulted from them, will illustrate legal procedure as far as it concerns executions, which, by the way, were long public spectacles. Until 1862 about 120 crimes carried the death penalty in England, and prior to 1850 at least twelve were punishable by death in Canada, but very seldom was the penalty actually imposed for what are now considered lesser crimes. Flogging, branding and the stocks were punishments not infrequently inflicted in York early in the nineteenth century, and they were the penalties for petty larceny and a variety of misdemeanours. The hangman also administered the lash, usually in public, and it was his duty to brand criminals who were sentenced to that punishment, the branding being inflicted on the hands or on the tongue; in 1802, however, this barbarous punishment was abolished in Canada, except for manslaughter.

The first execution in York occurred in 1798, and it was the result of the forging of an order for three shillings and ninepence. Mike Flannery was responsible for the drawing of the note, to which he signed another's name. He prevailed upon an illiterate tailor, John Sullivan, to cash it; but, upon hearing that the forgery had been discovered, Flannery fled to the United States, leaving Sullivan to face the charge of having uttered a forged note. He was speedily sentenced to death, and confined in the old log jail located near the present King Edward Hotel. The day of execution was October 11th, and in those days (and for some seventy years longer) an execution resembled a public holiday. The jail yard and surrounding common were crowded with men, women and children looking as if they fully expected to enjoy the spectacle, though we do not hear of the rich renting windows near the scaffold, as in England. Two upright pieces of scantling and a cross-

piece composed the gallows of that day, and the rope was in the hands of an executioner named McKnight. Everything did not go smoothly, however, and the first attempt to hang Sullivan was defeated by the breaking of the rope, or some accident of the kind; finally, after his statement, "McKnight, I hope to goodness you've got the rope all right this time", Sullivan, without prayer or consolation, paid the penalty of having passed a forged order for less than one dollar![2]

In 1801 two brothers by the name of Stotenburg were arrested for stealing horses. They were sentenced to death, but on the day previous to the execution a reprieve permitted them to spend the rest of their days in jail. This procedure not infrequently occurred when men were sentenced to death for crimes less than murder.

In 1816 Elijah Dexter shot James Vanderburg after a quarrel on Yonge Street. Many people were of the opinion that Dexter shot in self-defence, but he was found guilty of murder and sentenced to death. A proper scaffold was erected, and the Rev. John Strachan accompanied Dexter to the place of execution, where he was greeted with a cheer by the assembled populace who had left farm and business to see the sight. When the prisoner reached the foot of the scaffold, however, he took one look at it and thenceforth refused all suggestions that he ascend. Even Dr. Strachan's sympathetic "Oh, Mr. Dexter, do please come up" elicited no response. But the jailer was a man of resource, and, procuring a horse and cart, placed Dexter in the vehicle with his back to the scaffold and conveyed him under it. The noose was then adjusted, the horse lashed, and the unfortunate man left hanging in the air. The recital of the lurid details of these early executions enables us to appreciate the crude conditions of other times.

York, as the capital of the Home District, was the scene of all executions, no matter where in the district the crime occurred. What is thought to be the only lynching in

[2] John Ross Robertson is the authority for some of the material in this chapter. In certain instances his account appears to be based upon press descriptions, while in others, particularly where conversation is quoted, the source is probably the reminiscences of citizens who recalled the events. See his *Landmarks of Toronto*, 1894–1914. Vol. III, pp. 367-70.

Ontario's history occurred in 1819 near Whitby, and the circumstances of the crime almost excuse those who took the law into their own hands. A dissipated Frenchman, De Benyon by name, after turning his 13 year old step-son out of the house on a bitter winter night, tied him in front of the fireplace when he returned to the house almost frozen, and there the poor boy was literally roasted to death. De Benyon watched his victim die, and then tried to escape, but neighbours captured him near the bridge over the Don River, and he was summarily hanged to a tree. It is improbable that a more brutal murder ever occurred in the province.

In 1828 two men were hanged simultaneously in the rear of York's second jail, which was located across the street from the first, near the northeast corner of King and Toronto Streets. This was, indeed, a chance not to be missed, and over 10,000 people assembled to witness the "double-header", as it may appropriately be called. When it is remembered that York's population at the time was merely some 2,000 it is quite evident that people came long distances for the occasion. The gallows erected for executions were usually attractively painted and prepared at considerable cost, and no pains were spared to make the event worth while. The greatest excitement prevailed upon this occasion, but the executions went off without a hitch. One of the men was Charles French, a printer employed by William Lyon Mackenzie, a circumstance almost ominous enough to have him executed in those days! There appears to be no reason, however, why he should not have been hanged, though Mackenzie and others did what they could to have his sentence commuted; in fact it is said that to consider the matter there was held just previous to the execution a midnight session of the Executive Council.

On December 14, 1837, Julia Murdock was hanged for having murdered her mistress with arsenic, and she appears to have been the only woman executed in Toronto. About 4,000 people witnessed the event, and the *Christian Guardian*, while noting that the utmost decorum marked the conduct of the proceedings, considered that it was "exceedingly revolting to see among the spectators a large

number of females".[2] The crowd was kept back from the scaffold by a detachment of cavalry.

Probably the most notable execution in the history of Toronto was that of the two convicted leaders of the Rebellion, Samuel Lount and Peter Matthews. An immense concourse of spectators viewed the scene, of which we have a description that was pleasing, no doubt, to Family Compact readers, but in language which shows how much the *Christian Guardian* had diverged from the "Patriot" section of the Reform Party:

"The drop was erected in the open space between the jail and court house. Early in the morning persons began to assemble to witness the awful exit of the unhappy men who had forfeited their lives by the prominent part which they took in the late un-natural rebellion. A highly creditable degree of commiseration for them appeared to prevail almost universally, but not the slightest indication was given of any intention to interrupt the administration of the laws. An armed force composed of the volunteer companies in the city was in readiness under the direction of the civil authorities to preserve order; but we are happy to say their interference was not required. The criminals were attended to the place of execution by the Rev. James Richardson and the Rev. John Beatty, the former of whom offered up an impressive prayer on the scaffold, in which the unhappy men appeared to join, highly suited to their awful circumstances. It affords us unfeigned satisfaction to state that we learn from the reverend gentlemen who attended them subsequently to their condemnation that they were brought to acknowledge the enormity of their offence, and with every indication of true repentance to acquiesce in the justice of their sentence. During the last few days of their earthly existence they appeared to possess a considerable measure of religious comfort and hope."[3]

A more intimate account of this unfortunate event is given by Charles Durand, who was in jail at the same time:

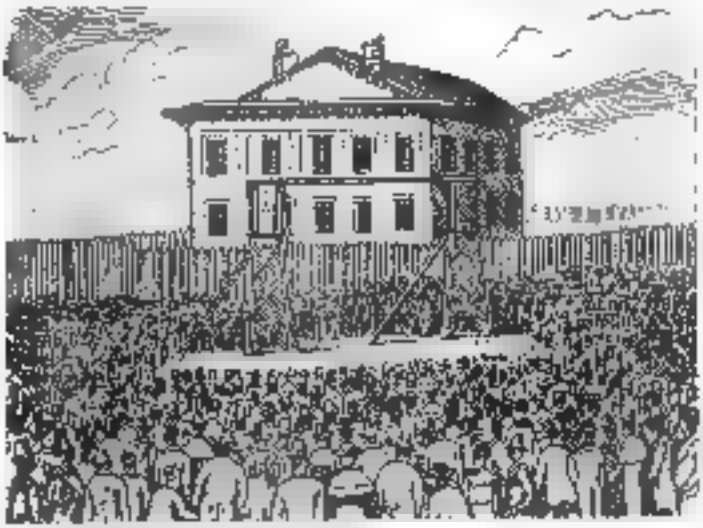
"The hours of April 12, 1838, were the saddest we ever spent. None of us could sleep, and we were all early astir. It was a fine spring morning. Looking through the window of our room we saw the scaffold. It was built by the late

[2]*Christian Guardian*, December 19, 1837. [3]*Ibid.*, April 18, 1838.

Hart's Illust. Canadian Dominion. William Dewgarth.

MRS. LOUNT PETITIONING SIR GEORGE ARTHUR, 1838

When her appeal failed, Samuel Lount went to the gallows.



THE EXECUTION OF LOUNT AND MATTHEWS, APRIL 12, 1838

Walls over a yard thick, the front elevation of the original building, two of the old cells adjoining the guard room in the basement, and the gallows' yard in which Lount and Matthews were hanged—these relics of a century ago are still to be seen in modern Toronto, for the city's second jail is incorporated in the old York Chambers, now the Canadian National Railways Building, near King and Toronto Streets.

John Ross Robertson Collection. W. H. Poole.

RICHMOND'S BLACKSMITH SHOP, QUEEN AND SIMCOE STREETS

The locality carried fond memories for Upper Canada College boys; and in the vicinity the Brown-Cameron election riot took place.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

TORONTO'S FIRST JAIL, 1800-1824

The jail was situated on the south side of King Street, at the corner of Leader Lane. When some spike nails were necessary to repair it in 1811 the Clerk of the Peace obtained a few from the King's Stores by making personal application to the Lieutenant-Governor.

Mr. Storm. His foreman was Matthew Sheard, then a fine young Yorkshireman, afterwards Mayor of the city. He was expected to share in the work of building the scaffold. 'I'll not put a hand to it,' said he; 'Lount and Matthews have done nothing that I might not have done myself, and I'll never help to build a gallows to hang them.' So, without the foreman's assistance, the gallows was erected near the spot where the police court building now stands. Around the gallows the Orange militia stood in large numbers with their muskets. The authorities dreaded a rescue. While we were watching and talking we heard steps on the stairs, and then the clank of chains. It was poor Lount coming up, guarded by his jailers, to say good-bye to us. He stopped at the door. We could not see him, but there were sad hearts in that room as we heard Samuel Lount's voice, without a quiver in it, give us his last greeting: 'Be of good courage, boys, I am not ashamed of anything I've done. I trust in God and I'm going to die like a man.' We answered him as well as we could, and sorrowfully listened until the sound of his sturdy tramp and clanking chains died away.

"I don't know why Peter Matthews did not come up with Lount, but I saw him as they were led through the jail yard to the scaffold where two nooses were swinging. They never faltered. I saw them walk up the steps to the floor of the scaffold as firmly as if they were on the pavement. Again Bishop Richardson, who attended Lount, and another clergyman who attended Matthews, prayed. Deputy Sheriff Robert Beard officiated. Lount and Matthews shook hands with the clergymen, and when we looked again their bodies were dangling in the air. Matthews struggled hard but Lount died instantly. When the bodies had been exposed for a short time they were cut down and quietly buried in the Potter's Field near where the Yorkville Avenue fire-hall now stands. Thomas Anderson, who lives on Yonge Street, and Mr. Gibson, a builder, assisted in 1843 to remove the bodies from the Potter's Field to the Necropolis, where they now lie near the western fence, with a plain marble slab over their remains bearing the simple inscription: 'Samuel Lount, Peter Matthews, 1838'."[1]

In 1847 William Turney was executed for the murder

[1]These reminiscences are quoted in Robertson, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 86–8.

of a Markham Township clerk, the crime being committed during the robbery of a store. The murderer was apprehended on suspicion, but would probably not have been convicted had he not secretly sent a letter to his wife informing her where the money might be found. The wife, who could not read, took the letter to a neighbour, who promptly informed the authorities. Turney was thereupon convicted, and expiated his crime on the gallows at the third jail, on Berkeley Street, surrounded by a crowd of over 2,000 people, hooting and jeering during his execution. In his last words Turney, who had formerly served in the British campaign in Spain, stated that he and four other troopers had once murdered an entire Spanish family, and if so, it is evident that his punishment was too long delayed. It is quite possible, however, that this confession was to a considerable extent fabricated for the benefit of his wife and family, for pamphlets were sold on the streets with that end in view. In any case his execution was a notable event, rendered still more exciting from the fact that one Hamilton was hanged at the same time. From an excellent account based on a diary we learn that "a double gallows had been built facing the Fair Grounds and high on top of the prison wall". Schools were closed so that the boys and girls might participate in the festivities, and a holiday crowd assembled from [illegible] directions.*

A notable tragedy occurred in 1869 on the Don Bridge. John Sheridan Hogan, M.P.P., was attacked there on December 1st by a number of ruffians known as the Brooks' Bush Gang, and his battered body was thrown into the river. For sixteen months, however, the cause of his disappearance was not known, and efforts were made to trace his supposed movements in the United States. The discovery of the body changed the course of the investigation, and a woman came forward with the statement that she had seen James Brown and others attack Hogan, rob him, and throw

*See the vivid pages of Patrick Slater: *The Yellow Briar*, 1933, pp. 48-50, for a full description of the event—from the gathering of the motley assemblage to the speeches of the condemned and the savage shouts of the mob. A press account in the Memphis *Press-Scimitar* of March 16, 1934, suggests that the days of barbarism in public executions have not yet passed in the southern United States. A revolting description of the hanging of three negroes is quoted in the Toronto *Mail and Empire*, March 17, 1934.

the body in the river. Corroborative evidence was obtained, but Brown only was found guilty. A second trial had the same result, though Brown insisted to the end that he was innocent. The execution took place on March 10, 1862, and a large number of women were among the spectators.[5]

The last public execution in England occurred in 1868, and the change in Canada was practically coincident, all executions being more or less private after 1869; and since 1905 the scaffolds erected in Toronto have always been within the prison itself. Old customs die hard, and there were no doubt many people who held the views so forcefully expressed by that famous dictator, Dr. Samuel Johnson, in an earlier period: "Sir, executions are intended to draw spectators. If they do not draw spectators they don't answer their purpose. . . . The age is running mad after innovation. . . . The old method was most satisfactory to all parties; the public was gratified by a procession; the criminal was supported by [redacted]. Why is all this to be swept away?"[6]

In any case the people who have witnessed executions in Toronto in the last sixty years have been those only who, for one reason or another, have been admitted by passes. On November 30, 1877, for example, John Williams of Weston was executed for the murder of his wife, and about 150 persons were given passes by the Sheriff in order that they might witness the event. It is of interest in this connection that the executioner, a man named England, scorned to wear a mask while performing his work, but walked out before the spectators and coolly pulled the lever which sent the doomed man to eternity, and then turned his face to the spectators, as if for approval. A few days afterwards, however, a mob attacked him with bricks and stones, near the Don, and he escaped with his life only with considerable difficulty. Consequently [redacted] was more discreet when he officiated at the execution of the murderer

[5]Brown was so certain he would be acquitted that he brought his civilian clothes to the Court House. For a full account of this case by a well-known historian see W. S. Wallace: *Murders and Mysteries*. 1931. pp. 255-71.

[6]James Boswell: *Life of Dr. Samuel Johnson*, 1791. Everyman's Library, Vol. II, p. 447.

of the Hon. George Brown, wearing on this occasion a mask of black glazed linen with small apertures for his eyes.

It will be appropriate to close this account of murders and executions with some details concerning one which aroused widespread interest as well as public indignation. George Bennett, at one time an employee of the *Globe* Printing Company, was involved in a domestic dispute, and his arrest, together with carelessness in the performance of his duties, led to his dismissal. It is noteworthy that habitual drunkenness was also a cause of Bennett's downfall, as, indeed, of almost all of the other murders in Toronto's history. While on bail Bennett was frequently seen prowling around in the vicinity of the *Globe* building, and on March 25, 1880, he entered the office of the Hon. George Brown and shot him with a revolver. After a painful illness Brown died, and Bennett was sentenced to death for the crime. The execution took place on July 23rd, and we are informed[1] that "for fully an hour before the doomed one left his cell members of the press, officials and spectators had been arriving, and even up to the last five minutes the door bell continued to twinkle, announcing fresh visitors. Hardly a word was spoken above a whisper, and all the spectators appeared to be deeply impressed with the sombre surroundings". Bennett expressed in a last-minute speech his sorrow at having killed George Brown, who, he said, "was a most popular man throughout the world." He blamed liquor for his act, and left a long epistle addressed to the governor of the jail. In this document he outlined in considerable detail the way of life which had led him to the gallows, and expressed contrition for the various sins of which he had been guilty.

[1]See Robertson, *ibid.*

CHAPTER XIV

Among the Merchants

Business conditions in a country in process of settlement are as primitive as all other fields of activity. Many an early storekeeper in Upper Canada was first a peddler, travelling from settlement to settlement with his pack on his back. Others were primarily engaged in the fur trade, but as conditions changed and the demand for settlers' commodities increased it was good business to develop into the general store. Abner Miles, probably York's first innkeeper, was among the more important early citizens of the town, for he was also one of the first merchants. In his inn he conducted a general store where such miscellaneous articles as butter, leather, buttons, cloth and lumber might be obtained at the prevailing high prices. His day-book for 1796-99 has fortunately survived to give us many interesting details of both business and tavern life in early York.[1]

As no newspaper was published in York until October 4, 1798, we have but little record of the development of business and the trades prior to that date. The announcements in the *Gazette*, (the word "advertisement" would be considered too vulgar in those days!), are invaluable in that they enable the compilation of at least a partial list of the merchants of the town in 1798 and succeeding years. In 1799 O. Pierce & Co. conducted a store in which spirits, brandy, port wine and gin were sold by the gallon, puncheon or barrel at prices ranging from 18s. to 22s. per gallon. They carried also teas, "Hyson, 19s. per lb.; Souchong, 14s.; Bohea, 8s.; sugar, beet loaf, [illegible] per lb.; lump, 3s. 6d.; raisins, 3s.; figs, 3s.; salt, six dollars per barrel, or 12s. per bushel. Also a few dry goods, shoes, leather, hats, tobacco, snuff, etc., etc."[2] P. Mealey also kept a general store in 1800; while in 1802 Quetton St. George & Co., at the north-

[1]This interesting record is in the Toronto Public Library. See pp. 296-7 for further references to Miles' day-book. It is printed in John Ross Robertson's *Landmarks of Toronto*. 1894-1914. Vol. I, pp. 446-53.

[2]*Upper Canada Gazette*, July 13, 1799.

east corner of Frederick and King Streets, advertises a line of groceries and goods of a general nature.[1] In 1807 St. George obtained bricks from Rochester and Oswego and erected the second brick building in York. In comparison with most others this large structure with its tinned roof, graceful porch, and neat finish stood out prominently, and in later years it became the office of the Canada Company. Dr. Scadding gives an interesting account of St. George's emigration to America, and his early activities in Upper Canada. The description is illuminating as to early business conditions:

"Mr. Quetton St. George was a French royalist officer, and a chevalier of the order of St. Louis. With many other French gentlemen he emigrated to Canada at the era of the Revolution. He was of the class of the *noblesse*, as all officers were required to be; which class, just before the Revolution, included, it is said, 90,000 persons, all exempt from the ordinary taxes of the country. The surname of St. George was assumed by M. Quetton to commemorate the fact that he had first set foot on English ground on St. George's day. On proceeding to Canada [illegible], in conjunction with Jean Louis, Vicomte de Chaldès, and other distinguished *émigrés*, acquired a large estate in wild lands in the rough region north of York, known as 'the Oak Ridges'. Finding it difficult, however, to turn such property speedily [illegible] account, he had recourse to trade with the Indians and remote inhabitants. Numerous stations, with this object in view, were established by him in different parts of the country before his final settlement in York. One of those posts was at Orillia, on Lake Couchiching."[2]

The announcement of another of St. George's stores appeared in the *Niagara Herald* in 1802:

"New store at the House of the French General, between Niagara and Queenston. Messrs. Quetton St. George and Co. acquaint the public that they have lately arrived from New York with a general assortment of Dry Goods and Groceries, which will be sold at the lowest price for ready money, for from the uncertainty of their residing any time in these parts they cannot open accounts with any person.

[1]*Ibid.*, December 11, 1802.
[2]Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old*, 1873, p. 182.

Will also be found at same store a general assortment of tools for all mechanics. They have likewise well-made Trunks; also empty Barrels. Niagara, July 23."[1]

Contemporary also with the York store was one in Kingston in charge of Mr. Boiton, and another in Amherstburg under Mr. Boucherville, and both were controlled by St. George. In various issues of the *Upper Canada Gazette* prior to September 20, 1806, St. George advertises his stores extensively; but on that date he announces that he is discontinuing advertising in the press, and refers his customers to his previous announcements. The contents of his general store in York are pretty fully particularized, and the goods are usually described as "just arrived from New York". The following list includes many an old-time piece of dry goods:

"Ribbons, cotton goods, silk tassels, gown-trimmings, cotton binding, wire trimmings, silk belting, fans, beaded buttons, black do., glove ties, cotton bed-line, bed-lace, roll-bands, ostrich feathers, silk lace, black veil lace, thread do., laces and edging, fine black veils, white do., fine silk mitts, love-handkerchiefs, Barcelona do., silk do., black crape, black mode, black Belong, blue, white and yellow do., striped silk for gowns, Chambray muslins, printed dimity, split-straw bonnets, Leghorn do., imperial chip do., best London Ladies' beaver bonnets, cotton wire, Rutland gauze, band boxes, cambrics, calicoes, Irish linens, callimancoes, plain muslins, laced muslins, blue, black and yellow nankeens, jeans, fustians, long silk gloves, velvet ribbons, Russia sheetings, India satins, silk and cotton umbrellas, parasols, white cotton, bombazetts, black and white silk stockings, damask table cloths, napkins, cotton striped nankeens, bandana handkerchiefs, catgut, Tickenburg, brown holland, Crean à la Morlaix, Indian lutestring, beaver caps for children."

In those days spices predominated among the groceries. We find listed: "Hyson tea, Hyson Chaulon in small chests, young Hyson, green, Souchong and Bohea; loaf, East India and Muscovado sugars, mustard, essence of mustard, pills of mustard, capers, lemon-juice, soap, Windsor do., indigo, mace, nutmegs, cinnamon, cassia, cloves, pimento, pepper,

[1] *Niagara Herald*, August 7, 1802.

best box raisins, prunes, coffee, Spanish and American Segars, Cayenne pepper in bottles, pearl barley, castor oil, British oil, pickled oysters." Jewellery and hardware are included in the following remarkable list:

"Chinaware in small boxes and in sets, Suwarrow boots, bootees, and an assortment of men's, women's and children's shoes, japanned quart mugs, do. tumblers, tipped flutes, violin bows, brass wire, sickles, iron candlesticks, shoe-makers' hammers, knives, pincers, pegging awls and tacks, awl-blades, shoe-brushes, copper tea-kettles, snaffle-bits, leather shot belts, horn powder flasks, ivory, horn and crooked combs, mathematical instruments, knives and forks, suspenders, fish-hooks, sleeve-links, sportsmen's knives, lockets, earrings, gold topaz do., gold watch-chains, gold seals, gold brooches, cut gold rings, plain do., pearl do., silver thimbles, do. teaspoons, shell sleeve buttons, silver watches, beads, paste-board, foolscap paper, second do., letter paper, black and red ink powder and waters."

The literature of other times and tastes is pretty well covered in the supply offered by M. St. George:

"*Telemachus*, Volney's *Views*, *Public Characters*, Dr. Whiteman's *Egypt*, *Evelina*, *Cecilia*, *Lady's Library*, *Ready Reckoner*, *Looking Glass*, Franklin's *Fair Sex*, *Camilla*, *Don Raphael*, *Night Thoughts*, *Winter Evenings*, *Voltaire's Life*, *Joseph Andrews*, Walker's *Geography*, *Bonaparte and the French People*, Voltaire's *Tales*, Fisher's *Companion*, *Modern Literature*, *Eccentric Biography*, *Naval* do., *Martial* do., *Fun*, *Criminal Records*, Entick's *Dictionary*, Gordon's *America*, Thompson's *Family Physician*, Sheridan's *Dictionary*, Johnson's do., Wilson's *Egypt*, Denon's *Travels*, *Travels of Cyrus*, *Stephani de Bourbon*, *Alaris*, *Pocket Library*, *Every Man's Physician*, *Citizen of the World*, Taplin's *Farriery*, *Farmer's Boy*, *Romance of the Forest*, *Grandison*, Campbell's *Narrative*, *Paul and Virginia*, *Adelaide de Sincere*, *Emelini*, *Monk*, *Abbess*, *Evening Amusements*, *Children of the Abbey*, *Tom Jones*, *Vicar of Wakefield*, Sterne's *Journey*, *Abelard and Eloisa*, *Ormond*, *Caroline*, *Mercutio*, *Julia and Baron*, *Minstrel*, *H. Villars*, *De Valcourt*, *J. Smith*, *Charlotte Temple*, *Theodore Chypon*, *What has Been*, *Elegant Extracts in Prose and Verse*, *J. and J. Jessamy*, *Chinese Tales*, *New Gazetteer*, Smollett's *Works*,

Cabinet of Knowledge, *Devil on Sticks*, *Arabian Tales*, Goldsmith's *Essays*, Bragg's *Cookery*, Tooke's *Pantheon*, Boyle's *Voyage*, *Roderick Random*, *Jonathan Wild*, *Louisa Solomon's Guide to Health*, Spelling-books, Bibles and Primers."[6]

In another advertisement we learn that customers have run off with some of M. St. George's goods, the return of which he attempts to effect in a very naïve manner; and also that he carried on the real estate business among his other activities:

"Mr. St. George has just received wine, Jamaica spirits, Rapee snuff, nails, best Spanish segars.

"Mr. St. George having missed two pair of Suwarrow boots, requests those persons who have purchased same from him to let him know, as he is afraid he has forgot to charge them; or should they have been taken on trial, it is requested that they may be returned.

"It is also requested that the gentleman or lady who has borrowed a volume of the *Revolutionnaire Plutarch* will return it immediately.

"He has for sale the following lots of land, viz.—Nos. 12, 13 and 14, in the third concession of Whitchurch; 29 and 30 in the fifth concession of Beverley; [illegible] in the second concession of Whitby; 19 and 20 in the third concession of Whitby; also No. 17 in the Township of Thorold, in the District of Niagara, with the improvements and buildings thereon."[7]

William Cooper's "Toronto Coffee House" was a combined inn and general store where "genteel lodging", "the best liquors and viands", "segars, pipes and tobacco", and "a general assortment of groceries and dry goods" could all be obtained for cash or in exchange for country produce.[8] It was a time when frequently a man found it necessary to be a jack-of-all-trades [illegible] was to support his family. In addition to his other activities William Cooper, who was the town's first schoolmaster, became one of the earliest auctioneers in York, and announces his new profession in the following notice:

[6] Lists similar to these appear in various issues of the *Gazette*.
[7] *Ibid.*, June 14, 1806.
[8] *Ibid.*, November 27, 1802.

"William Cooper begs leave to inform his friends and the public in general that he has lately received License as Auctioneer for this Town. That he has appropriated a part of his house in Duke Street for the purpose of an auction room, which will be made as commodious as possible; where every attention will be paid to such articles as his friends may be pleased to honor him with the disposal of. He flatters himself that the tenor of his conduct heretofore will entitle him to the confidence and patronage of the public; secrecy will be strictly observed on his part.

"He will sell by auction at the house of Mr. John M'Dougall, between the hours of 11 and 12 o'clock on Monday, the 22nd instant, 4 barrels of prime tobacco, 1 do. of pork, a well assorted library of books in different languages, some of the most fashionable coloured fine and refine cloths, together with sundry other articles too tedious to mention."[9]

It was never easy to collect debts in a period when money was very scarce and barter was the usual means of carrying on business. John Horton, in an announcement in the *Gazette* in 1801, "requests all those who are indebted to him, and whose accounts ought to have been paid long ago, to make payment in the course of one month from this date, or unpleasant measures will be recurred to; evasive answers from those whose accounts have been given in will not satisfy his creditors; he therefore hopes that this notice will be productive of something more than promises from those whose accounts remain unpaid."[10]

In early times it was believed that the inhabitants of Canada would derive great wealth from the ginseng that grew in the swamps, for in China it was worth its weight in silver, since it was considered a kind of "all-heal". In 1801 Jacob Herchmer was among those who were buying ginseng, which was then worth 2s. per pound dried, or 1s. if green. Hemp was another product which was early expected to add greatly to the profits of Canadian farmers, and at the same time, in this instance, to supply the British navy with sail-cloth and rope. The Hon. John McGill, the Hon. B. W. Smith and Thomas Scott were commissioners in York to distribute hemp seed gratis to farmers—the

[9]*Ibid.*, September 13, 1800.
[10]*Ibid.*, November 4, 1801.

first, and for many years the only government encouragement of agriculture.[11]

Horticulture, both for business and pleasure, was a popular pursuit in early York. For some years after 1800 William Bond operated a nursery garden at the corner of Duke and Ontario Streets. He had 41 apple trees, 30 peach trees, 1 cherry trees, and several plum trees, and produced as well such small fruits as gooseberries and red and white currants.

In early times, as not infrequently at the present day, merchants lived over or in the rear of their stores. On the south side of King, between Berkeley and Ontario Streets, was located the original home of the Cawthra family. In the *Gazette* of June 14, 1806, J. Cawthra advertises what appears to have been the first apothecary establishment. But this forerunner of the drug store was (like many a modern one) in reality a general store:

"J. Cawthra wishes to inform the inhabitants of York and the adjacent country, that he has opened an Apothecary Store in the house of A. Cameron, opposite Stovell's Tavern in York, where the Public can be supplied with most articles in that line. He has on hand also a quantity of Men's, Women's and Children's shoes and Men's hats. Also for a few days will be sold the following articles, Table Knives and Forks, Scissors, Silver Watches, Maps and Prints, Profiles, some Linen, and a few Bed-Ticks, Teas, Tobacco, a few casks of fourth proof Cognac Brandy, and a small quantity of Lime Juice, and about twenty thousand Whitechapel Needles."[12]

On November 27, 1806, he announced that he had just arrived from New York with a general assortment of "apothecary articles" and patent medicines, and that anything genuine in that line could be supplied; while dry goods, hardware and groceries are included in the following list:

"Broad cloths, duffils, flannels, swanadown, corduroys, printed calicoes, gingham, cambrick muslins, shirting, muslin, men and women's stockings, silk handkerchiefs, bandana shawls, pulicat and pocket handkerchiefs, calimancoes, dimity and check; also a large assortment of

[11] *Ibid.*, June 14, 1808.

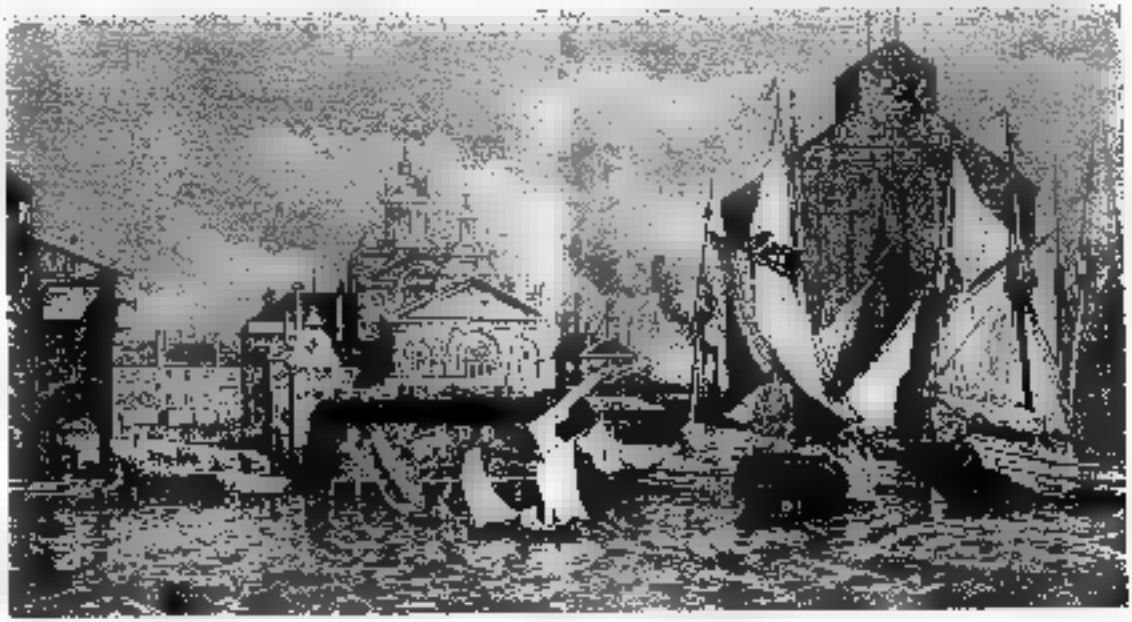
men's, women's and children's shoes, hardware, coffee, tea and chocolate, lump and loaf sugar, tobacco, &c., with many other articles; which he is determined to sell on very low terms [redacted] his store opposite Stoyell's Tavern."[11]

In the autumn of 1803 Lieutenant-Governor Peter Hunter issued a proclamation establishing a market in York. The document sets forth that "great prejudice hath arisen [redacted] the inhabitants of the Town and Township of York, and of other adjoining townships, from no place or day having been set apart or appointed for exposing publicly for sale cattle, sheep, poultry and other provisions, goods and merchandise brought by merchants, farmers and others for the necessary supply of the said Town of York". Realising the advantages which would arise from a weekly market, the Governor and his Executive Council "ordained, erected, established and appointed a public open market to be held on Saturday in each week and every week during the year within the said town of York, the first market to be held on Saturday, the 5th of November, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and three."[12] The first market-house was only 36 feet by [redacted], and was within the square formed by Front, New (now Jarvis), King and Church Streets, an area of five and a half acres having been set aside for the market-place. In later days the vicinity came to be not only a centre of trade but also of public meetings, entertainment, and social life generally, for [redacted] 1850 was erected the St. Lawrence Hall, for twenty years the most popular assembly room in the city.

Laws similar to those in mediaeval England with respect [redacted] forestallers and regraters were enforced against anyone who attempted to intercept produce on the roads leading to the market. Under the heading "Forestalling, Regrating, etc., Home District", occurs the following warning in the *Gazette*:

"Whereas at a Special Session of the Peace, holden at the town of York on Saturday of the present month of December, 1814, it was represented [redacted] the magistrates that sundry persons residing [redacted] the said town make it a practice of intercepting and buying up the provisions and other

[11] *Ibid.*, November 27, 1806.
[12] *Ibid.*, October 29, 1803.



Canadian Illustrated News. Henry VanDam.

TORONTO MARKETS, 1870

This Venetian scene shows the waterfront south of St. Lawrence Market. The old City Hall on Front Street may be seen in the rear of the sheds in the centre foreground.

Reproduced by Courtesy of the T. Eaton Co.

THE FIRST EATON STORE, 1869

Plank sidewalks and cedar-block paving are evident in the illustration. Knox Presbyterian Church may be seen in the background.

Baldwin Room Detroit Collection

TORONTO'S FIRST POST OFFICE

This log structure was situated on the east side of Frederick Street, south of King, and remained in use under the Hon. William Allan, postmaster, until 1827.

necessaries coming to the said town for sale, and that the said persons sell the same at very advanced prices to the inhabitants who are compelled to purchase from them:

"Notice is hereby given that any person or persons who shall after the date hereof intercept any provisions on its way to the said town, or purchase the same on its way in or after it shall be brought into the town, with a view to sell the same again, will be prosecuted to the utmost rigour of the law for each and every time he, she or they shall offend."[14]

In his account of the historical significance of the market district Dr. Scadding devotes considerable space to some of the lesser-known characters whose activities centred in the locality:

"Here business and bustle were every day, more or less, created by the usual wants of the inhabitants, and by the wants of the country farmers whose waggons in summer and sleighs in winter thronged to from the north, east and west; and hereabout at one moment or another, every lawful day, would be surely seen, coming and going, the oddities and street-characters of the town and neighbourhood. Having devoted some space to the leading and prominent personages of our drama, it will be only proper to bestow a few words on the subordinates, the Caliban and Gobbos, the Nyms and Touchstones of the piece.

"From the various nationalities and races of which the community was a mixture, these were drawn. There was James O'Hara, for example, a poor humorous Irishman, a perfect representative of his class in costume, style and manner, employed as bellman at auctions, and so on. When the town was visited by the Papyrotomia—travelling cutters-out of likenesses in black paper (some years ago such things created a sensation),—a full-length of O'Hara was suspended at the entrance to the rooms, recognised at once by every eye, even without the aid of the 'Shoot easy' inscribed on a label issuing from the mouth. (In the *Loyalist* of November 24, 1827, we have O'Hara's death noted: 'Died on Friday the 16th instant, James O'Hara, long an inhabitant of this Town, and formerly a soldier in

[14] *Ibid.*, January 21, 1815.

His Majesty's service.')—There was Jock Murray, the Scotch carter; and after him, William Petkit, the English one; and the carter who drove the horse with the 'spring-halt' (every school-lad in the place was familiar with the peculiar twitch upwards of the rear hind leg in the gait of this nag).

"The negro population was small. Every individual of colour was recognizable at sight. Black Joe and Whistling Jack were two notabilities, both of them negroes of African birth. In military bands a negro drummer or cymbal-player was formerly often to be seen. The two men just named, after obtaining discharge from a regiment here, gained an honest livelihood by chance employment about the town. Joe, a well-formed, well-trained figure, was to be seen, still arrayed in some old cast-off shell-jacket, acting as porter, or engaged about horses; once already we have had a glimpse of him in the capacity of sheriff's assistant, administering the lash to wretched culprits in the Market Place. The other, besides playing other parts, officiated occasionally as a sweep; but his most memorable accomplishment was a melodious and powerful style of whistling musical airs, and a faculty for imitating the bag-pipes to perfection. For the romantic sound of the name, the tall, comely negress, Amy Pompadour, should also be mentioned in the record. But she was of servile descent: at the time about which we write slavery was only just dying out in Upper Canada, as we shall have occasion to note hereafter more at large."[10]

Before the town of York became the city of Toronto most of the stores were of a more or less general nature, but as the time passed subdivision into various types of merchandising became more pronounced. In the late eighteen-forties business activities centred just east of the King and Yonge intersection. Some conception of the Toronto of that day will be made easier by a description of the buildings which at that time occupied parts of the downtown area. Front Street was then quite close to the Bay. The Custom House was the only building on the south side of the street, and there were comparatively few on the north, the section west of Yonge being then the fashionable

[10]Scadding, op. cit., pp. 175-6.

residential district. The homes of Judge Macaulay, Judge Jones, Joseph Rogers, and the Baldwins occupied the north side of Front Street between Yonge and Bay. Further westward, on the site of the old Queen's Hotel, were four dwellings owned by Captain Thomas Dick; these were soon to house Knox College, and a little later were altered to form Sword's Hotel. To the rear, on Wellington Street, was Holland House, erected in 1832 and occupied by the Hon. Henry John Boulton. At the corner of York and Front Captain Strachan, son of the Bishop of Toronto, lived in a picturesque cottage, and the Bishop's Palace—at one time one of three brick buildings in the town—adjoined the Front Street entrance. At the corner of Wellington and Simcoe was the Hagerman mansion, and eastward at the corner of Bay was a small white house entirely by itself. There were other outlying residences, but apart from a few on Yonge and Church Streets there were practically no buildings north of Lot (Queen) Street.

Many Toronto business men still followed the old custom of residing over their stores, though others lived in small dwellings in the immediate vicinity, especially to the east of Church Street. Among prominent retail stores in the late forties was that of Betley & Kay, located at the corner of King and Yonge; while the chief other retailers were Walker and Hutchinson's, P. Paterson's, and Walter McFarlane's. These firms gradually became "one-price" establishments, though business was in general characterised by argument or bantering over the price. The good old sport of shopping, not unknown at present, was then in its heyday, and the amusement of going from Yonge Street to the Market before deciding what to buy or where to buy it was almost universal. One who was employed in a store at that time recalled that the expression "We will look around, and return if not better suited elsewhere" was commonly used by prospective customers. The anxiety of clerks to press sales was consequently painfully apparent, and the chief inducement was to offer a reduction in the price; while the lack of system in displaying goods, and the scarcity of customers, made business life "tiresome beyond description."[14]

[14] C. C. Taylor: *Toronto Collect Book*, 1888, p. 49.

The practice of cutting prices was, of course, demoralizing to both buyer and seller, and usually led to exaggeration and misrepresentation. Among other characteristics of business life in the early years of the city was the confusion caused by the various types of money in common use. In one of the establishments mentioned above the daily cash sales averaged £1,000 sterling; this was taken in at five cashiers' desks, usually by boys under sixteen years of age, whose rapid work in making change from the cheques handed in by some 400 salesmen was rather remarkable when one considers the difficulties:

"The coins were farthings, half-pence, pence, sixpences, shillings, half-crowns, crowns, half-sovereigns and sovereigns. Farthings were strictly charged on all amounts to 2s. 6d., and no salesman could omit them at 2s. 6½d. The desks have frequently been swept out to find a missing half-penny, as everything must balance. There being no Canadian Silver Currency at this time, the process of making change out of what was technically called 'specie' was a perfect study. There were Mexican and United States dollars and half-dollars; United States 6¼, 12½, and 25-cent pieces; English sixpences, shillings, half-crowns, with a miscellaneous assortment from every other country.

"Coin and bank note detectors were used in every place to ascertain the value of the coin and the genuineness of bank notes, especially those from the United States. As each had to make his own change in the absence of a cashier, this was found to be a work of great difficulty,—to know when a York shilling ceased to possess that value by reason of abrasion or defacement and became a 10-cent piece involved many a dispute; and the same with all the other coins. In payment of a debt the Mexican dollar would go for [illegible] 1d., or $1.02, but in independent trading it was just one dollar.

"Anyone visiting New York at this time and buying a newspaper, if he gave a good 25-cent piece would generally lose in change through the manipulation of the boys from one to four cents, just as the boy happened to have more or less of the small coins. Toronto had no newsboys at this time. As for coppers I have no doubt a great many brass buttons found circulation just by flattening the shanks.

This state of things continued more or less for years, till the Decimal System was introduced by Act of Parliament, and the present silver coinage issued. Previous to this all wholesale or importing accounts were kept in sterling for French and English accounts, Halifax currency or $4 to the pound for Canadian, and in dollars and cents for the United States."[17]

Banking did not commence in Upper Canada until the early twenties, and for some years thereafter only the Bank of Upper Canada was available to the merchants of York. In the matter of loans there is no doubt that opponents of the Family Compact were at first discriminated against, but matters improved when the government connection was severed. The Bank of Upper Canada remained in business nearly half a century. John Ross Robertson gives the following account of the first building:

"At the legislative session of 1821 was announced the royal assent to the Act passed in 1819 for the institution of a bank which was to be situated at York, the seat of government of the province, and was to be known as the Bank of Upper Canada. The stock was not to exceed £200,000. It was to be opened when the deposit amounted to £20,000. The Government was allowed to subscribe for 2,000 shares, and it was declared that the institution might expire by limitation in 1848. The bank began business somewhere about 1822, taking the corner part of the building which is still standing at the south-east corner of King and Frederick Streets, the entrance to the bank being on Frederick Street. The vault of the bank—not much like vaults nowadays—may still be seen at the western end of the cellar. The wall is of brick, about a foot thick at the front, but much thicker at the sides and rear. The interior dimensions are about three feet square. The door is of iron, half an inch in thickness. Two locks, like ordinary door locks only stronger, were relied on to defend the treasure. At the point where the vault is located the outside foundation wall of the building is over three feet through and of stone. The bank occupied these premises quite a number of years."[18]

It was the middle of the century, however, before a

[17]*Ibid.*, pp. 70-1. See also page 281 of the present work.
[18]Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 288-70.

Stock Exchange came into being. On July 26, 1852, a small group of citizens met and resolved that "the gentlemen now present do constitute themselves an association to be denominated the Toronto Stock Exchange". The aims of the organization were "to expedite the transfer of stocks and extend the circulation of Canadian credit". It is a far cry from the stock market operations of that day to the heavy trading and the "bucket-shop" activities of modern times when "the markets" have become the great public gambling resort. In the early years of the Exchange speculative interest was but small, and a half hour spent each morning in one or other of the offices of the six members sufficed to carry out the transfer of bonds and stocks; while seats on the first Exchange were valued at five dollars each.

As cash was scarce it was usual for many years to pay wages in what was known as "store pay". The ramifications of this procedure are outlined by C. C. Taylor:

"Every builder or contractor made an arrangement with the various trades and stores for a line of credit, by which they could pay their workmen as much of their wages as possible with the smallest amount of cash. Orders were given on the stores, and mechanics' wives went to make their purchases, carefully concealing their written 'orders' as long as the knowing salesman failed to draw out the fact of their existence, the object of the caution on the part of the frugal housewives being to ascertain the 'cash' price of the goods. If the 'cat was let out of the bag' the salesman [illegible] once 'stood at ease', knowing well that the customer had no alternative but to take out the value of the order. A few immigrants, in perfect innocence, would present these orders at once, much to the satisfaction of the salesman. The block of buildings known as Ritchey's Terrace, and other large buildings, including churches, [illegible] Lawrence buildings, etc., were largely paid for in this way."[10]

Ritchey's Terrace, it is of interest to remark, may still be seen on the north side of Adelaide Street, between York and Bay, and it has not been greatly altered since its construction in 1854.

Wages were, of course, much lower than the scales in force now, and there were no strikes for higher pay. The

[10] Taylor, op. cit., p. 71.

first strike in Toronto is said to have occurred in 1847 when Messrs. Walker and Hutchinson introduced the first sewing-machine. The details are interesting:

"The tailors in their employment, regarding this innovation as contrary to all their time-honoured ideas of the manufacture of clothing, at once rebelled. Had not the old needle been used by hand since the fig leaves were made into garments in the Garden of Eden? Then why should a new-fangled machine be invented to supersede the ancient system? The machine was only in use a few days when Messrs. Walker & Hutchinson, finding it so objectionable, agreed to discontinue its use, and handed it over to their men to use it as they thought proper. A day was appointed for the display of their triumph over machinery, and the discarded machine was exhibited on King Street, in the centre of a procession of the workmen, after which it was returned to the manufacturers in New York. The firm, in order to remove every trace of dissatisfaction, treated the men to a banquet the same evening."[20]

The same writer gives an account of the characteristics of wholesale firms, of which Taylor & Stevenson was a prominent example, and of the difficulties attendant upon the introduction of commercial travelling in Canada in 1851:

"In 1850 the firm of Taylor & Stevenson was established, and their business was carried on at the corner of Yonge and Colborne Streets, in the building now occupied by Messrs. Buntin, Reid & Co. It was then newly built, and was one of the finest warehouses in the city. Mr. Stevenson having had extensive connections with all the straw goods manufacturers in London and Bedfordshire, that trade was made a leading branch. The first importations of these goods, in the spring of 1851, were the largest that had ever been made into Canada, and having sent out circulars, we had buyers from Windsor in the west to Brockville in the east. The whole importations were closed out in a few weeks, and such was the quantity to be entered and packed that all hands were obliged to work for several weeks every night except Saturday till 2 or 3 o'clock, so as to get the goods forwarded within a reasonable time. To

[20] Ibid., p. 75.

obviate this in future the idea of taking the orders beforehand and shipping the goods direct soon took shape, and in the fall of that year samples were got out from the leading manufacturers, and the writer undertook to travel for orders.

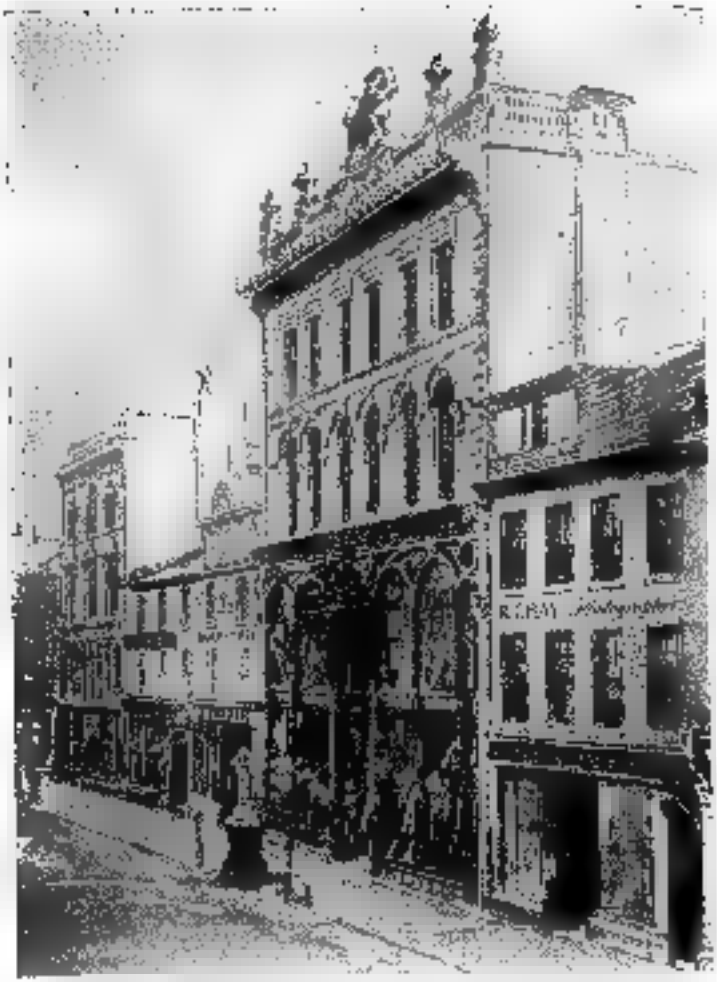
"After the close of navigation there was only one regular mode of travelling. Weller's Line of Mail Stages left daily for Montreal and Quebec, and in this way the writer, who was the first commercial traveller in Canada, started from Toronto. In these days of Pullman cars and commercial hotels to hear travellers complain of the discomforts and annoyances is rather amusing to those who have ploughed through mud and slush, sometimes carrying rails off the fences to pry the wheels of the stages out of the ruts, and again, in snow, carrying shovels to dig out the horses when large drifts were encountered; all which is known to the writer by actual experience.

"The accommodation for baggage for nine or ten passengers consisted of a 'rack' in the back of the stage, so that baggage trunks and 300 lbs. weight of samples were never even thought of up to the time of the opening of the railroads. To meet this difficulty the writer had his samples sent out in miniature models, so small that samples representing thousands of dozens, for which he actually took orders, could all be carried in a small valise. The experiment was a great success; the goods were all packed in England to the various marks, and in the spring of 1852 were shipped in bulk to the various merchants from Quebec to Windsor, or sent to Toronto for distribution. During that fall not a single traveller was met on the whole road, but the following season a gentleman appeared as a competitor from a New York house, and one or two others, amongst them Mr. Darling, of Montreal, in the hardware trade, and Mr. D. M. Macdonald in fancy dry goods.

"The summer trips by steamers were very pleasant, but in the winter there was nothing but hardships, and in crossing the ice at different points very great danger. My rule was that wherever the mail driver would venture I would go. On one occasion, in crossing from Belleville to Picton, the ice had melted, and in the whole distance across the Bay of Quinté no ice could be seen—the horses being

Adam's Toronto, Old and New.

QUEEN STREET FRONT OF THE ROBERT SIMPSON STORE, 1891



John Ross Robertson Collection.

THE GOLDEN LION DRY GOODS STORE

This famous establishment was situated on the site of the King Edward Hotel. Robert Walker & Sons were the proprietors, and the firm long held a high place among Toronto stores.

almost knee deep in water. Again, in crossing from Kingston to Cape Vincent in the Mail Stage with four horses and a heavy mail with a large number of passengers, where the ice was cracking, the horses had to 'jump the cracks'. Many rivers and canals were crossed in this way.

"One adventure on the road will give an idea of snow drifts. The town of Brockville was always to me, whether in summer or winter, a delightful resting-place, a sort of oasis in my travels from east to west or vice versa. Young men away from home in a new country will appreciate my feelings when I say that to find a sort of Canadian home, when a young traveller, was indeed a delightful feeling. Here I always rested for a few days amongst my friends—the Hon. George and Messrs. John and James Crawford and their connections, and especially Mr. Sheriff Sherwood and the late Hon. John Ross, whom I had the pleasure of meeting there frequently.

"In the winter of 1853 I arrived there from the east in a heavy snow storm; it was the 23rd of December, and I wished to get to Toronto by Christmas Day. On the 24th the Mail Stage came along, and having supplied ourselves with wooden shovels we started for Kingston. Having got on a few miles we found the drifts getting worse, and after repeated efforts in literally digging the horses out we were compelled to put up at a small tavern on the road side, and here, with bitter regrets at my folly in not remaining at Brockville where I might have spent a pleasant Christmas, we were compelled to remain all Christmas Day. In the meantime the pathmasters had been notified by passengers that the track must be opened at their peril to allow Her Majesty's Mails to proceed. On the 26th we again started, having much the same shovelling as before, when, having got a few miles, we heard the sound of the down stage's horn and knew the track had been broken, and arrived in Kingston in a reasonable time.

"The formation of the Commercial Travellers' Association followed soon after the opening of the railroads, and has grown to immense proportions, as the annual reports of the various associations now existing abundantly show."[11]

Until after the middle of the century there were no

[11] *Ibid.*, pp. 91-3.

elevators or hoists in use in Toronto. All goods, including the heaviest furniture, had to be laboriously carried to the upper floors of stores, and passengers walked up the stairways. In 1853, however, hoists of the old wheel-and-rope type were introduced in two buildings—a warehouse and the Bank of Commerce,—and others were installed later.

It was a time, too, when orders sent by mail were long being filled, two weeks usually being the time required to obtain a reply to a letter sent to Montreal. The arrival of the English mail once a fortnight was an outstanding event for many citizens. The following interesting details of the Toronto postal service of that period have been preserved:

"In 1847, and up till 1852, the whole business of the Toronto Post Office was transacted in a small building on Wellington Street, where the present Exchange now stands. The delivery office was a room about 20 x 40 feet, and the distributing room was an old cellar-kitchen some 20 feet square. The staff up to 1850 consisted of a postmaster, three clerks, and a letter carrier. The postmaster was Mr. Charles Berczy, and the clerks John Armstrong, Christopher Walsh, and W. H. Pearson. John McCloskey was letter-carrier, and a charge of one 'copper' was made on each letter delivered by him.

"At this time, and up till 1850, the English mails were only delivered fortnightly—by stage from Halifax in winter, and partly by steamboats in summer. The rate of postage on English letters was 1s. 2½d. sterling, or 1s. 4 d. Halifax currency (about 27 cents); the postage to Halifax was 2s. 9d.; Quebec, 1s. 6d.; Montreal, 1s. 2d.; Kingston, 9d.; Windsor, 10½d.; the lowest rate being 4½d.

"In 1850 there were only about 400 boxes in the Post Office. Postage stamps were at this time unknown, and the postage on paid letters was written in red ink, and on unpaid in black. The only visible representative of Her Majesty on ordinary occasions was either Mr. Walsh or Mr. Armstrong, who for the time being combined in themselves the office of receiving, delivery and inquiry clerks; and, as every letter must be taken to the Post Office, these gentlemen were known to every man, woman and child in Toronto and Yorkville who ever posted a letter."[22]

[22] *Ibid.*, pp. 66-7.

Returning to the retail merchants, some account of the chief establishments of the late fifties will further illustrate the business conditions of other days. The credit system was still in vogue, and many customers ran up bills of thousands of dollars before any attempt at payment. Some firms suggest, like the Pantechnetheca, "'Tis the ready money does it!", but they must have had a difficult time competing with the great majority of credit merchants. The Pantechnetheca, it may be explained, was a dry goods store at 55-59 King Street East, operated by T. Hutchinson, Nephew & Co. Soon after its opening in 1853 an advertising "dodge" was perpetrated upon the public—much to the disgust of rival dry goods firms, who were more honest:

"They secured the services of a gentleman of colour who, arrayed in gorgeous raiment, marched up and down in front of the Pantechnetheca premises and was announced by a obsequious page boy to be no less a personage than His Majesty the King of Delhi, who had revolted against the British during the great Indian Mutiny, and had, after fearful conflict, been captured by Her Britannic Majesty's victorious troops."[11]

Late in 1858 the Pantechnetheca passed out of Toronto's mercantile picture, but the mention of Hutchinson's "Pantec", as the young bloods of the day delighted to call it, recalls a more famous store—the Golden Lion, a few doors nearer Yonge Street. The business was founded in 1836 by Robert Walker and Thomas Hutchinson. In the late forties the name "Golden Lion" was adopted by this dry goods establishment, and a massive gilt figure of a lion was placed over the front door to provide the symbol. The business did not pass out of existence until the closing years of the century, and during its heyday in the fifties and sixties it was "the one store in Toronto where the country people outside of Toronto habitually went. . . . They had confidence in the place, and the firm never did anything to show that this confidence was misplaced."[12] The partnership of Walker and Hutchinson was dissolved in 1863, and the ill-feeling between the two led to the establishment of the Pantechnetheca, which became a bitter rival.

[11]Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. V, p. 13.
[12]*Ibid.*, p. 14.

The business centre long continued to be King Street, but while in earlier years it had been as far east as New (Jarvis) Street, it now extended to shops west of Yonge as well, and the street as a whole was the fashionable promenade of the city for several decades. On King Street West, opposite the old *Globe* office, was S. E. Coleman, "London Practical Hatter and Furrier", who advertised "Hats that R Hats". Michie & Co.'s grocery store was in its present location. Founded by Alexander Ogilvie on May 1, 1835, as a first class grocery and liquor store, the establishment was located on land formerly owned by Jordan Post, pioneer watchmaker, whose wife Melinda is commemorated by the street near by. George Michie, senior clerk, became a partner in 1840, and for nearly a century the family has operated the business through the many vicissitudes of changing conditions. For many years, until the nineties, the parade ground of Toronto's rank and fashion led past the door, and, though the shopping district has to a very considerable extent moved up Yonge, Michie's has survived nearly a century of competition and depressions, department stores and chain stores—the only old grocery store still in operation. Dack's, Ltd., Shoemakers since 1835, and R. Score & Son, Tailors, founded in England in 1787 and in Canada in 1837, have also been a century on King Street.

Another old firm—Rice Lewis & Son—commenced its long career in 1847 "at the sign of the padlock" on the north-east corner of King and Toronto Streets, H. S. Scott & Co. having established the business under the name "Wellington House" a few years earlier. As was customary in those days, Rice Lewis' family resided in the rooms above the store. In 1858 the firm, "across from the post office" of that day, advertises among other hardware "Joseph Rodgers & Sons' cutlery, James Dixon & Sons' Electro Plate, and the newest designs of Papier Maché trays".[11] The sign over the main door on King Street was a padlock, and a large padlock stood on the sidewalk near the entrance. In 1888 the firm removed to a new building a short distance westward, at the north-east corner of King and Victoria Streets, and there, until the autumn of 1939, Rice Lewis & Son, Ltd., remained in business.

[11] See *Descriptive Catalogue of the Provincial Exhibition*, 1858.

Continuing the enumeration of some of the main mercantile establishments of 1858 we note that Rutherford and Saunders were Tailors and Hosiers at 52-54 King Street West, and advertised 15% discount for cash. Just west of Bay Street on King was J. H. Swann's "Ladies' Outfitting, Juvenile Clothing, and Baby-Linen Establishment", and the owner announces himself "Importer of French and English Infant and Juvenile Clothing. Ladies' and Childrens' Under-clothing of every description". In the St. Lawrence Buildings was John Ritchey's Dry Goods Store, where customers were assured quality goods "at such prices as will defy competition". At 14 King Street West, "at the Sign of the Three-dialled Illuminated Clock", D. G. Carnegie sold watches, clocks and jewellery "at about cost prices!"

Confectioners and caterers who were famous long before Coles', and previous even to Nasmith's and Webb's, are recalled by the advertisements of George Coleman, [illegible] King Street West, and A. Clark, 171 King Street East. Coleman specialized upon pastry cooking, and gave particular attention to "weddings, private parties, public soirées, etc." Clarke announced himself as "manufacturer of all kinds of plain & fancy bread, crackers, biscuits, tarts, sugar sticks, comfits, lozenges, almonds, mottoes, and all kinds of candies", as well as confectionery, pastry and bread. "Temperance drinks of all kinds" were also dispensed at this store.

Of special interest to females was the Beauty Parlour of that day—the "Antitinpaeplies, Misses Bates (from London, England), proprietors". Announcing themselves as "Ladies' Ornamental Hair Manufacturers", at [illegible] King Street West, the sisters advertise their capabilities as follows:

"Ladies' hair cut, shampooed, dyed and dressed. Families and schools attended. Children's hair fashionably cut. Fronts, bangs, bunches, caps and wigs made at the shortest notice. Hair dye and depilatory kept. Sole agents for Professor Liebeg's Hair Wash."

A fireside amusement long of outstanding popularity and still persisting in less sophisticated homes is called to mind by the advertisement of the Toronto Stereoscope Depot. In addition to views of Niagara Falls and vicinity,

and of British and continental scenery, there was a series of "magnificent views of Egyptian ruins". The establishment, operated by Thomas Maclear in "the Masonic Buildings, 2 doors north of the Post Office, Toronto Street", also carried a line of "Ladies' reticules, bags, portmonais, and other fancy goods, British manufactured writing and other papers, and a general stock of stationery wholesale".

In the eighteen-fifties Yonge Street was beginning to develop as a merchandising district, though for many years it did not rival King Street. At the corner of Yonge and Temperance was Dodgson, Shields & Morton, "whose stock of teas, coffees, sugars, tobaccos, and general groceries is large and choice, and imported expressly for their extensive retail trade". Their advertisement is suggestive of the abuses which frequently characterised business dealings in the fifties, for they state as one of their main aims, "to make no misrepresentations in effecting sales".

On Yonge Street also was J. & W. Cowan's Dry Goods Store. This firm was located on the west side, three doors north of Adelaide, then numbered 126 Yonge Street; and the unique part of their advertisement lies in its being in verse—in fact in the rhyming couplet. The allusions to competitors were no doubt appreciated by the readers of the day—and especially those to the "Pantec" and Golden Lion:

FACTS, NOT FABLES

"Mongst American cities, in numbers a host,
Toronto, in puffing, of late rules the roast;
Such dodges as travelling circuses try
Are employed to entice the unwary to buy:
Coarse daubings of monsters, called Kings and Sepoys,
Adorn our shop fronts and amuse little boys,
While rival establishments rush to the fray,
With jolly old Lions and young cubs at play,
Fill our papers each morning with empty tirade,
Until lies are considered the staple of trade.
Must all Dry Goods Houses descend to pretence,
Nor dare advertise in the language of sense?
Not believing that clap-trap can carry much weight,
That our Fall Goods are here we beg plainly to state;
In Blankets and Flannels large stocks we now show,

Which will prove on inspection decidedly low.
White Shirtings at prices exceedingly rare;
Cloths, Ties, Shirts and Vestings for Gentlemen's wear;
New styles in Rich Dress Goods, too long to define,
From two to three dollars, and some eight and nine;
New Delaines and New Cashmeres, the cheapest in town,
The white spots on blue and the red spots on brown;
New Prints, in fast colours, of patterns quite killing,
Beginning at sixpence, up to a York shilling;
New Gloves and New Gauntlets and New Scotch Wool Hose,
The wearers we warrant will never be froze;
Shirt bosoms stitched neater than if made by hand,
From one and three upwards, attention command;
New Capes in Black Cloth which you've only to see
To acknowledge them cheap at eleven and three;
Felt Hats, Plumes and Flowers, the fair ones to grace,
Ribbons, Blondes, Veils, Sewed Collars, and Black and White Lace:
In short, every article known in the trade,
So low, no abatement in price can be made.
Then let all who are anxious good value to find
Bear Yonge Street and Cowan's Cheap Store in their mind."

Another Yonge Street establishment was that of J. T. Shapter, chemist and druggist, who announces himself as an "importer of English and Foreign Drugs, Chemicals, Patent Medicines, Surgical Instruments, Elastic Bandages and Stockings, Trusses, Enemas, Perfumery, and Druggists' Sundries". The patent medicines of the eighteen-fifties included the Castillian Hair Invigorator, Urquhart's Botanic Toothache Drops, and Dr. Buchan's Aperient & Digestive Bitters; of the last-named the ingredients "are exclusively from the vegetable kingdom", and the diseases cured included almost every complaint known to medicine (as well as many unknown)—from Lowness of Spirits, Heartburn and Flatulency, to "unpleasant sensation of fulness after eating", St. Vitus' Dance, and Marasmus, or "wasting of flesh in childhood and early youth".

For many years King Street remained the fashionable shopping district, and "doing King" appears to have been a major sport in the seventies and eighties. A contemporary

description outlines in an interesting ■ somewhat pompous and exaggerated style the social predominance of King Street:

"Between the two principal streets of the Western Capital is a great gulf, made by the inflexible laws of society and fashion—a gulf as great as separates the Bowery from Broadway, the Rue de Rivoli from Rue Montparnasse, or Regent Street and Rotten Row from the humble thoroughfares of Pentonville and the City Road.

"The buildings on King Street are greater and grander than their neighbors on Yonge; the shops are larger and dearer; and last but not least King Street is honoured by the daily presence of the aristocracy, while Yonge is given over to the business man, the middle-class and the beggar. Amid the upper classes there is a performance that goes on daily that is known among *habitués* as 'doing King'. It consists principally of marching up and down a certain part of that street at a certain hour, performing, as it were, *ko-tow* to the goddess of Fashion, and sacrificing to her sister divinity of Society.

"At three o'clock in the afternoon the first stragglers appear on the scene, which extends perhaps a quarter of a mile. These consists principally of young ladies, whose proper place should be at school, and young men attired in the height of fashion. By the time these ardent devotees have paraded a few times, the regular *habitués* make their appearance, and till six o'clock in the evening one side—for one side only is patronised—is crowded to excess.

"It is rather considered 'the thing' to patrol King Street in this manner; and of a fine evening every one who belongs to the *élite*, as well as many who do not, may be seen perseveringly trudging up and down, no doubt to their great comfort and to the intense discomfiture and dismay of others less smiled upon by nature or less favoured by their tailors or their dressmakers. King Street is in a way a great social 'Change, where everybody meets everybody and his wife; where the latest fashions are exhibited, and the last quotations of the matrimonial market are exchanged.

"Would you see the newest style in hats or panniers? They are to be seen on King Street. And would you know

Canadian Illustrated News G. Blackwell.

"Doing King" in the Seventies

Promenading the south side of King Street was long a major sport. "Where everybody meets everybody and his wife; where the latest fashions are exhibited, and the last quotations of the matrimonial market are exchanged."

Canadian Illustrated News.

King Street in 1870

In the foreground is the Rossin House, now the Prince George Hotel. The taxicabs of the day are lined up across the street. Horse-cars did not then operate on King West, but an omnibus may be seen.

JOURNAL

of the

COMMON COUNCIL

OF THE

City of Toronto,

Commencing on Thursday, the 5th Day of April 1834,

in the 4th Year of the Reign of King William IV.

William Lyon Mackenzie, Esquire,

Mayor;

SIR JOHN COLBORNE, K.C.B.

Lieutenant Governor.

FIRST MINUTE BOOK OF THE CITY COUNCIL, 1834

how many young swells are doing nothing for a living? You are sure to find them on King Street. Would you wish to hear the last imprudence of young Harum Scarum, or the progress of Miss Slowcome's engagement? You may be sure before you take half-a-dozen turns some conversant, intelligent busy-body of your acquaintance will have whispered the facts of the case in your ear, all of which he has 'On the best authority, sir'. It is on King Street that Cleitus makes his appointment with Clelia for their afternoon walk; that Therites, jealousy-stricken, scowls at Adonis; and that Pomponia depreciates the value of her dear friend Amaltheus' new silk and trimmings. There Cornelia, the careful mother, brings out her treasures and exhibits to the public gaze those desirable lots of which she is so anxious to dispose on advantageous terms. While far above all, Diogenes, in his garret, little more roomy or commodious than the ancient 'tub', looks down upon the motley throng, notices their petty follies and foibles, and thanks his lucky stars that he is not as other men."[20]

There are still many people living who have vivid memories of the Toronto of half a century ago, and who recall the King Street shopping district which has just been described. Fred Williams lists some of the business symbols which were in evidence at the time—and in some instances, notably in the case of barber shops, still persist:

"The Golden Lion of Robert Walker and Sons, the clothiers.

The padlock and key of Rice Lewis & Company.

The acorn of Oak Hall.

The mammoth of Thomas Thompson, the clothier.

The griffin of Petley & Hughes, the clothiers.

The Queen Victoria of Lawson's Victoria Tea House.

The book of Brown Brothers, the booksellers and stationers—all on King East.

And then on Yonge Street:

The golden boot of William West.

The bear of William Lugsden.

The Indian and the Highlander at two tobacconists.

The big hat at Perry's."[21]

[20] *Canadian Illustrated News*, September 3, 1870.

[21] Fred Williams: *In Toronto Fifty Years Ago.* (Toronto *Mail and Empire*, January 17, 1934.)

And there was, too, John Wanless' aluminum clock, and Ambrose Kent's "Indian clock" with two figures in the rear alternating in striking out the time on circular drums; both of these were on the site of the present Robert Simpson Company. James Scott's Golden Fleece store advertised woollens by a gilded lamb over the entrance, and Holt, Renfrew's establishment on King Street East sported its sign "Purveyor to the Queen"—which has more recently become "By Special Appointment of His Majesty King George the Fifth."

In spite, however, of the undoubted predominance of the south side of King Street, it appeared to Timothy Eaton in 1869 that Yonge Street was the place to establish business. With the previous experience of a general store in St. Mary's, he announced a striking departure from generally accepted rules of business—"One price to all, and spot cash". On December 8, 1869, he personally unlocked the door of his dry goods store at 178 Yonge Street, then the south-west corner of Yonge and Queen. Seven years later the small store was extended forty feet in the rear, and the stock increased by the addition of floor coverings and bedding. In 1877 a second floor was devoted to a show room for cloaks, millinery and similar apparel, and the sales staff had increased from two men, a woman, and a boy to 20 clerks and a pony delivery wagon! In 1883 the business was removed to its present site, and in 1884 the first catalogue—of 32 pages—was distributed at the Industrial Exhibition. The original mail-order staff comprised a woman to select the goods and a boy to tie up the parcels. Eaton's great success undoubtedly resulted in part from the policy of purchasing for cash in world markets, but there are many other factors in the great development signified by the 40,000 employees under the Eaton name, and the hundreds of millions of dollars of annual turnover. An interesting survival of other times when people adhered very strongly to their convictions is found in connection with the Eaton name. The founder of the business decided that he would sell neither playing cards nor tobacco, and this remained the policy of the firm long after his death; even today, though cards are sold and one may obtain cigarette-lighters and other smokers' accessories, tobacco

does not form part of Eaton's stock. Until 1933, in fact, smoking was prohibited in that delightful restaurant—the Georgian Room—, but in that year the demands of women smokers led to the removal of the restriction.

Following close upon Timothy Eaton, a 33-year old Scotchman, Robert Simpson, established a small dry goods store near Queen and Yonge Streets in 1872. Toronto had then a population of 56,000 and the streets were just beginning to be improved by cedar block paving. Like Eaton, Robert Simpson had previous experience, having become a clerk in a dry goods store in Newmarket eighteen years before. His appearance was rather impressive, and he possessed a thorough knowledge of dry goods and the requirements of the public and their taste and fancy. By 1881 the business had so grown that he moved to a larger store to the southward, where he required thirteen clerks, and inaugurated a horse-and-wagon delivery service. In the new store he introduced ready-to-wear goods, millinery and groceries, as well as corsets and other intimate feminine apparel the display and sale of which embarrassed many a lady and shocked the general public.[24] These developments laid the foundation of the department system. In 1895 a severe fire destroyed a large new store erected just three months earlier, as well as all other Simpson buildings from Richmond Street to Queen, the fire having started in the motor room which provided power for the up-to-the-minute "cash railway". The store was immediately rebuilt, and in 1897, when Simpson died and his business passed into the hands of the Robert Simpson Company, there were 500 employees and a seven-storey building. From that time the growth of Simpson's was similar to the development of Eaton's, the

[24]Those who are interested in the steps by which lingerie has progressed from the unknown to the commonplace—from something unheard-of to a pre-eminent position in advertising placard and billboard,— and who would follow the vagaries of fashion in women's apparel down through the centuries, are advised to read *Petticoats; From Fig Leaves to Scanties*, published late in 1939 from the pen of Robert Curtis Holliday, an American essayist of established reputation. While the book is written in a light and humorous vein, its pages are characterized by scholarly research worthy of any historian, and the result of the author's enthusiasm is a classic study of manners and customs as well as costume.

two great department stores having long since changed the Toronto shopping centre from King Street to Queen and Yonge.

Recent developments in merchandising are outside the scope of this chapter, but the facilities, conveniences and services provided by the modern department store show progress as great as in any other field of activity. In recent years chain stores have provided effective competition in many lines of business, and, with the department stores and their extensive mail order service, have made it increasingly difficult for the small independent shop—so characteristic of an earlier period—to operate successfully. We live in a day of big business—amalgamations, trusts and combines—but the small merchant with the personal touch has not yet followed the small tradesman into oblivion. Will the future see mass buying restricted and the "little fellow" protected by legislative enactment, or will the gradual disappearance of the smaller establishments be considered merely another evidence of economic evolution and progress?

CHAPTER XV

Tradesmen and Manufacturers of Other Days

Manufacturing in its early phases was in reality "making by hand"—as the word implies—and many of our Canadian pioneers were skilled mechanics as well as farmers. In the towns a citizen not infrequently engaged in several occupations—in fact he sometimes had to be a jack-of-all-trades if he was to support his family. In early days, too, relations between employer and employee more closely approximated the conditions which obtained under the mediaeval guild system than those of modern times. Apprentices were indentured for a period of seven years, and were to a considerable extent the property of the master. Several notices concerning escaped apprentices are to be found in the *Gazette*, and rewards of from 6d. to $10 are offered for their return.

There were a number of slaves in early York, largely personal servants of officials, for the Act of the first parliament, while providing for the gradual extinction of slavery, did not liberate those then in the province. Among notices concerning slaves is the following, offering a negro woman for sale in York in 1800:

"To Be Sold—A healthy, strong Negro Woman, about 30 years of age; understands cookery, laundry and the taking care of poultry. N.B.—She can dress ladies' hair. Enquire of the printers."[1]

The Hon. Peter Russell once advertised two slaves for sale, one of whom "perfectly understands making soap and candles":

"A Black Woman named Peggy, aged about forty years, and a black boy, her son, named Jupiter, aged about fifteen years, both of them the property of the subscriber. The woman is a tolerable cook and washer-woman and perfectly understands making soap and candles.

[1] *Upper Canada Gazette*, December 20, 1800.

"The boy is tall and strong of his age and has been employed in country business, but brought up principally as a house servant; they are each of them servants for life. The price for the woman is one hundred and fifty dollars, for the boy two hundred dollars, payable in three years with interest from the day of sale, and to be properly secured by bond, etc. But one-fourth less will be taken in ready money."[2]

In the days when many people were illiterate, trade symbols were commonly affixed to the entrance of shops, and in York customers were led inside not by a signboard indicating the name of the owner but by such old English emblems as the Pestle and Mortar, the Crowned Boot, the Tea-chest, the Axe, the Saw, the Fowling-piece, the Plough, the Golden Fleece, the Anvil and Sledge-hammer, and the Horse-shoe. There was one, too, which was not an English survival,—that of the Indian Trapper, which indicated the dealer in furs.

The first carpenters and builders in Upper Canada were the soldiers, and upon the arrival of settlers every man was his own builder. The construction of log houses did not call for much specialised skill, and there was in the earliest pioneer period but little variation in the architecture or appearance of home, workshop, store, church or mill. One of the first skilled tradesmen in York was Eliphalet Hale, who announces in the *Gazette* of March 30, 1799, that he will come from Newark (Niagara) to York "to receive proposals for, and commence bricklaying, lathing and plastering".[3] Hale was a very important and useful citizen of the early town, erecting many houses of improved construction, as well as receiving a number of contracts for the building of roads and bridges, the removing of stumps from the streets, and similar work. A few years later he advertises that he has become a shoemaker:

"Take notice: the subscriber takes this method to inform the public that he carries on the boot and shoe making business, the next door north of Alexander Wood's, Esq., where Suwarrow, common and half boots, fine and coarse shoes, slippers, etc., are made by Eliphalet Hale.

[2]*Ibid.*, February 15, 1806. [3]*Ibid.*, March 30, 1799.

"N.B.—Written or verbal orders from any gentlemen will be thankfully received and punctually attended to."[1]

Perhaps Daniel Tiers was the first chairmaker in York. Most manufactured articles were brought from Montreal by bateau, but Tiers announces that he is enlarging his business and can supply customers with "armed chairs, settees, and dining ditto; fan-back and brace-back chairs". The interesting fact is also mentioned that "he very shortly expects a quantity of different paints; it will then be in his power to finish his chairs in the best manner".[2] Paint, it may be explained, was not easily obtainable in early times.

Another famous early trade was that of the saddler and harness-maker. Calvin Banister, located on the north side of King Street, near George, was perhaps the first practical saddler in York. His announcement follows:

"The subscriber informs the inhabitants of York and its vicinity that he has taken the shop next door east of Mr. Mosley's dwelling house, and on the 1st of September next will commence the saddling business in all its different branches, and will be happy to supply all who favour him with their commands.

"Harness and all kinds of repairing will be done on the shortest notice, by the public's humble servant,

"Calvin Banister."[3]

Even a watchmaker was established in the diminutive capital of the province:

"Elisha Purdey—Watchmaker—begs leave to inform his friends and the public that he has taken a room in the house of Mr. Marther, where he repairs and cleans watches of all kinds in the best manner and on the most reasonable terms. All orders left for him at said house will be duly attended to. He has a small but elegant assortment of jewellery for sale."[4]

At least as early as 1799 York had a fashionable tailor, for one glorying in the unique name of Evean Evesns, with the added lustre of hailing from London, announces his business in a very neat note:

[1] *Ibid.*, March 16, 1808.
[2] *Ibid.*, January 30, 1802.
[3] *Ibid.*, August 22, 1807.
[4] *Ibid.*, April 19, 1800.

"Evean Eveans, taylor and habit maker, (From London), having taken a room in a small building belonging to Mr. Willcocks for the purpose of prosecuting the duties of his trade, begs leave to inform the ladies and gentlemen of York that he has commenced the above business, and to those who may honour him with their commands he flatters himself, from his experience, to afford satisfaction."[8]

A few years later we find a competitor, this time from New York:

"Samuel Bell, fashioner, lately arrived from New York, informs the public that he has commenced business at his shop, kept at the Widow Osborne's, facing Capt. Kendrick's, where he will carry on the fashionable tailoring business with the greatest despatch and on the most reasonable terms.—Ladies and gentlemen wishing to favour him with their custom may depend on the strictest punctuality.

"York, July 12th, 1805."[9]

Samuel Jackson commenced business as a hatter about the same time. He hopes to receive cash for his hats, will accept furs or produce, but will have none of credit:

"Samuel Jackson informs his friends and the public in general that he is commencing the hatting business opposite to Thos. Ridout, Esq., in the town of York, where he will take all kinds of furs, lamb's wool and country produce, or cash itself will [redacted] received for hats, but no credit need be asked."[10]

One Rock calls to our attention that there was at least one hair-dresser in York in 1800. In a day of wigs and beards, puffs and curls, the hairdresser had little of the barber about him, but his establishment was the beauty parlour of the day:

"Rock, Hair Dresser, from London, begs leave to inform the ladies and gentlemen of York and its vicinity that he will open shop on the 25th instant, in Mr. Cooper's house, next the Printing office. All orders left for him at said place will [redacted] punctually attended to. N.B.—Shop customers and others will [redacted] dressed on the most reasonable terms."[11]

York had bakers almost from its commencement, and

[8]*Ibid.*, June 9, 1798.
[9]*Ibid.*, July 20, 1805.
[10]*Ibid.*, February 5, 1806.
[11]*Ibid.*, April 5, 1800.

the early industry appears to have centred around Jordan's York Hotel, at one time the town's most important hostelry. In the rear of Jordan's, detached from the other buildings, there long stood a solid structure of brick, circular and dome-shaped without and vaulted within, and of considerable height and diameter. This was Paul Marian's public oven. Marian, or Morin, a Frenchman, was not the first baker in York, for he refers to a predecessor in his announcement of November, 1801:

"Paul Morin begs leave to inform his friends and the public that he has declined carrying on the baking business for Mr. Beaman and now carries it on in all its branches on his own account at the house formerly occupied by Mr. Beaman, where they may be supplied with bread at the rate of four lbs. for a shilling; biscuits, buns, cakes, etc. He hopes by assiduity and attention to his business to merit encouragement.

"N.B.—Any person sending flour to be baked by him will receive seven lbs. of bread for every six lbs. of flour."[12]

Morin was contemporary with another baker, François Belcour, who, though slightly outbid by Morin in the amount of bread given to those who brought flour to be baked (for he advertised only "pound for pound"), was yet, perhaps, a little ahead of him in service, for he delivered bread, cakes and buns, and also baked meat in his bake-oven for any who wished. For the convenience of small families Belcour made bread in loaves of two, three and four pounds' weight. In 1804 Morin advertised "nine loaves for a dollar, on paying ready money", but he does not state the size.[13] Many years after Jordan's ceased to function as a hotel, Morin's bake-oven, repaired and somewhat extended, rendered valuable service, for in it was baked by Messrs. Jackes and Reynolds a large supply of bread furnished in 1838-9 to the Regulars and militia in Toronto.

Imported wines were greatly favoured by the gentry of York, and breweries might consequently be expected to appear somewhat later than in other towns, particularly since there was a considerable manufacture of birch beer, a popular drink hardly to be classed with the regular prod-

[12]*Ibid.*, November 14, 1801. [13]*Ibid.*, May 19, 1804.

uct. The first advertisement relative to brewing is that of Robert Henderson in 1805, and it is probable that he had been in business for several years previous to that date:

"The subscriber informs his customers and the public in general that [redacted] has commenced brewing for the season; and is now ready to deliver strong and table beer in barrels and half barrels, of good quality, and intends to begin brewing his keeping ale for the ensuing summer, in the course of next month—and pledges himself that more attention than ever shall be paid the quality of his keeping beer. Robert Henderson. N.B.—Cash paid for barley, wheat and other country produce. An active boy wanted."[34]

In the *York Gazette* of November 18, 1811, appears an announcement by the Henderson estate, offering for rent for one year "a malt house, Brew House, etc. with all the implements and utensils for carrying on the brewing."[35] The site of this (probably the first) brewery is not given, but it was no doubt located on the south-east corner of Sherbourne and Duchess Streets. An authority describes the manufactory as consisting in 1820 of "a stone malt house and granary, a range of small frame buildings along Duchess Street, where the malt was ground in a handmill, and a row of arches dug in the bank, finished with masonry and covered with earth. These arches, which extended fifty feet along the south side of the lot, were used for storing the beer and fermenting tubs".[36] The malt house and granary was being used a century later [redacted] an automobile supply shop, but all the other buildings have long since disappeared. Thomas Stovell and John Doel were among the later proprietors of the establishment, Doel removing to a brewery at the north-west corner of Bay and Adelaide Streets, adjoining his home.

Among the most typical manufactures of the pioneer period were the making of candles by the chandler, and of soap and potash in a potashery, the two types of work being frequently carried on [redacted] one plant. Many people, even in towns, made their own candles and soap, while some

[34] *Ibid.*, September 28, 1805.
[35] *York Gazette*, November 12, 1811.
[36] John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Canada: What Art Has Done for Canadian History*, 1917, p. 141.

farmers engaged also in the more complicated potash manufacture. Other householders were content to accumulate grease and exchange it for soap and candles when the chandler called at their door. Among the earliest tallow chandlers in York was William Smith, who followed that occupation at least as early as 1810. There was a great trade with England in wood ashes and potash, which is recalled by the following advertisement:

"Ashes wanted. Seven pence, Halifax currency, per bushel for house ashes will be given delivered at the Potash Works (opposite the jail), and five pence, same currency, if taken from the houses; also eight pence, New York currency, for field ashes delivered at the works. It is recommended to those persons who have ashes to be careful in keeping them dry, otherwise they will not be taken. Any quantity will be received at a time by W. Allan, York."[11]

W. Allan held in the following year (1801) the offices of Collector of Duties and Inspector of Pot and Pearl Ashes and Flour, and in later years he was Postmaster; but he was not the only dealer in ashes, for Duke Kendrick erected a potashery on lot No. 7, west side of Yonge Street, in December, 1799. Under the heading "Ashes! Ashes! Ashes!" he advertises the price he is prepared to pay, with the explanation (which had often to be made in pioneer days) that "he conceives it his duty to inform those who may have ashes to dispose of, that it will not be in his power to pay cash, but merchandise at cash price".[12]

In later years, just before York became the city of Toronto, Peter Freeland's soap and candle factory was erected on the wharf at the foot of Yonge Street. Freeland was born in Glasgow, Scotland, and in 1819 emigrated to America. Soon afterwards he removed to Montreal and, with his brother William, carried on the soap and candle business until 1830, whereupon Peter removed to York.

[11] *Upper Canada Gazette*, November 22, 1800. "N. Y. C." (New York currency) was $2.50 to the £, or 12½ cents to the "York Shilling"; while in "Quebec", "Halifax" or "Provincial" currency the shilling was 20 cents and the £=$4.00. The £ Sterling had its traditional value of $4.86⅔, and there was in circulation a variety of miscellaneous coins which increased as the years passed. (See also pp. 238-9.)

[12] *Ibid.*, December 21, 1799.

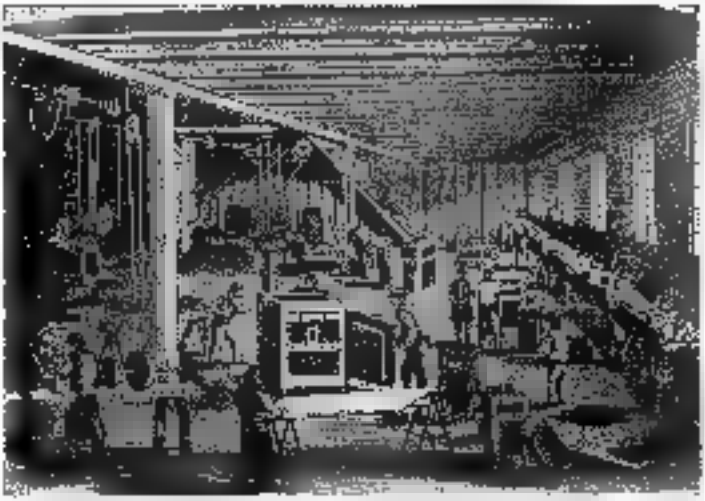
Concerning the factory which he opened here John Ross Robertson says:

"The land, and land covered by water, upon which the building was erected, was purchased, the west half from Judge Sherwood in 1832, and the east half in 1836 from Peter McDougall. The factory was frame and stood on the wharf at the foot of Yonge Street on the east side. The water lot extended from Scott to Yonge Street, and from the top of the bank to the Windmill Line, and, owing to the fact that almost the whole property was land covered with water, the soap works had to be built on cribs sunk with stone. The dimensions of the building were ninety feet by forty, and three storeys high, having large double doors in each end. Some of the iron soap-kettles and sections of kettles were imported from Scotland, as at that early date there were no facilities for making them in Canada. The balance of the machinery or plant was made in Canada, excepting the candle moulds, which had to be imported from the United States.

"The two large sheds shown in the foreground of the sketch, that is the long one to the right and that in the centre, were used for storing wood ashes; and alkali for converting the tallow, grease, rosin, etc., into soap was extracted. The lime was used for causticising the above-named alkali by mixing it in certain proportions with the ashes previous to leaching with water. The ice was used in warm weather for the purpose of hardening the candles in the moulds, so that they might be more easily extracted. The large shed to the left was a storehouse, where rendered tallow in barrels was stored, the supply being drawn from Canada, the United States and Russia. Other raw materials were used in large quantities, such as palm oil from the west coast of Africa, and rosin, principally from the Carolinas."[10]

The old factory recalls the merry days when Toronto Bay was full of wild ducks. It is said that they were "so plentiful around the wharf that Mr. Freeland used to shoot them from the factory door or windows. Mr. Richard Tinning was one day walking along the shore when some ducks

[10] John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*, 1894-1914. Vol. I, p. 182.



Canadian Illustrated News.

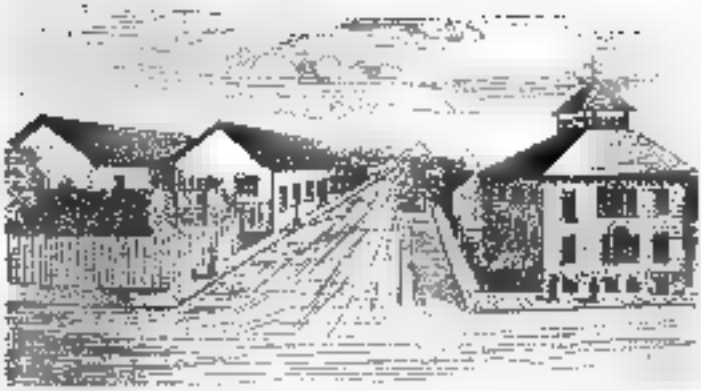
INTERIOR OF THE TAYLOR SAFE WORKS, 1862

The days of hand labour and primitive machines are well exemplified in this illustration.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

PETER FREELAND'S SOAP AND CANDLE FACTORY, 1862-66

This well-known establishment was located on a wharf at the foot of Yonge Street.



Reproduced by Courtesy of James Arlow, Esq.

Carrying Shed — Bark Mill — Office — James Ketchum's Home

Piles of Timber

Looking West at Yonge and Newgate (Adelaide) Streets in 1834.

This interesting sketch of the Ketchum establishment, which at one time furnished most of the Home District with leather, is based upon a description provided in 1859 by the 90-year old foreman.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

John Doel's Home and Brewery, Adelaide and Bay Streets

As the district was in the outskirts of early Toronto it was considered a secluded place for the meetings of William Lyon Mackenzie's "Patriots".

flew up from the water. He fired at them without looking where the shot was going, and it crashed into the windows of the factory. Mr. Freeland ran out with a number of men to repel the invaders. In the factory was a tame muskrat that used to dine on fish caught by the men. The fishermen dried their nets alongside of the factory, and one day the muskrat got into the net and was being hauled in. He swam around inside of the wooden floats trying to make his escape; finding that he could not dive under them, he suddenly sprang over and thus made his escape."[10]

Old inhabitants of Toronto remembered the days when the tallow for Freeland's factory used to be transported from Rochester in schooners. On one occasion "a schooner thus loaded was caught in a terrible storm off the Island, and the sailors threw the cargo of tallow into the lake. At the same time there was a considerable amount of salt on board, which might much better have been thrown overboard, instead of the more valuable tallow, the salt being in the hold and the tallow on deck. For weeks they were fishing up this tallow along the shore of the lake. Many tricks were practised by these 'Yankee' tallow merchants, as, for instance, on opening one of the barrels a large stone was found imbedded in it, weighing about one hundred pounds, which Mr. Freeland had paid for as tallow."[11]

During the Rebellion of 1837 there was a scarcity of labour, and Freeland was compelled to run the soap into boxes instead of cutting it into bars; it was then sold in large masses, just as the boxes had moulded it. After factory hours some of the men spent their time around the kitchen fire moulding bullets. But those who made soap at Freeland's would hardly recognise today's process of manufacture.

A number of York's early manufactories were located on the River Don, some of them outside the limits of the town. An editorial note, probably written by William Lyon Mackenzie, outlines the scope of enterprises in operation in 1827, and makes some suggestions for the expansion of industry in the Don Valley:

"About three miles out of town, in the bottom of a deep ravine, watered by the River Don and bounded also by

[10]*Ibid.*, p. 183. [11]*Ibid.*

beautiful and verdant flats, are situated the York paper mill, distillery, and Mr. Shepard's axe-grinding machinery, and Messrs. Helliwell's large and extensive brewery. I went out to view these improvements a few days ago and returned much gratified with witnessing the paper manufacture in active operation; as also the bold and pleasing scenery on the banks of the Don. The river might be made navigable, with small expense, up [illegible] the brewery; and, if the surrounding lands were laid out in five-acre lots [illegible] the way to town, they would sell [illegible] great advantage."[illegible]

Among old-time breweries Doel's—famous as the meeting-place of the organisers of the Rebellion of 1837—and Bloor's, from which the great east-west thoroughfare takes its name, stand out prominently in Toronto's history. Previous to 1830 Joseph Bloor, an Englishman, was proprietor of the Farmers' Arms Inn, conveniently situated near the market-place. In his time that section of the city was usually called The Devil's Half Acre. About 1830 he removed to the village of Yorkville, and soon afterward established a brewery in the ravine north of the first concession road, now Bloor Street. The building and its surroundings are well described by John Ross Robertson:

"It was a low red-brick building one hundred feet long and fifty or sixty feet wide. It stood at the bottom of the ravine, on the south side of the creek, a little [illegible] the east of the present iron bridge at the head of Huntley Street. It was in operation in 1835, and probably for four or five years previous to that date. The stream which was larger then than now was dammed up at this point to give water-power for grinding. A big pond several acres in extent was thus made, and in the spring the water would back up nearly to Yonge Street. The brewery was reached by a roadway running down the ravine from Bloor Street at the head of Huntley Street. Picturesque as the spot is even now, it was still more so at that time when the woods were thicker and nature in her primeval beauty. At the top of the hill on the northern side stood the cottage of Charles Jarvis, from which steps led down the steep declivity. There was an entrance to the brewery at the south side and also on the east side."[illegible]

[illegible] *Colonial Advocate*, August 9, 1827.
[illegible] Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 211.

The highway near which Bloor built his brewery was early known as the Sydenham Road, and for a time as St. Paul's Road. He and Sheriff Jarvis were prominent in laying out the village of Yorkville, which narrowly escaped the name Bloorville—as well as Rosedale and Cumberland, which were suggested. Bloor operated his brewery only a few years. On one occasion, when he was drawing sand from the Island, his team of horses broke through the ice and were drowned. At that time, it may be explained, all sand used for industrial purposes in Toronto was hauled from the Island—or, more accurately, the Peninsula.

In the same locality, but somewhat northward—beyond the Blue Hill Ravine—was once to be found "Rowland Burr's Folly". This large unfinished frame building, gable towards the street, long stood on the west side of Yonge, with all its windows boarded up. It was to have been a carding or fulling mill, worked by machinery driven by the stream in the valley below; but either the poor wool supply or deficiencies in the building and its location rendered Burr's scheme abortive.

Rowland Burr was one of those men who are ahead of their time. A born engineer and mechanic, his ideas and schemes were frequently too advanced for the circumstances in which he was placed. He was from Pennsylvania, and was full of the energy and enterprise characteristic of Americans; but he lacked the training which might frequently have saved him from errors of judgment. He was foremost among projectors of a canal between Lake Ontario and Georgian Bay via the valley of the Humber and Lake Simcoe, and personally surveyed the route and published a report upon it. He suggested a plank tramway on Yonge Street north of Lot (Queen), and a short plank road was at one time constructed over the worst part of the highway between that intersection and Yorkville. He was responsible also for the cutting down of the Blue Hill, long a terrible ordeal to travellers. Concerning his factory enterprises it may be said that he built, either for himself or others, a considerable number, and obtained and installed the complicated plant of each of them at a time when such undertakings were not easy to accomplish, owing to the backwardness of the country and the few facilities for importing and transporting heavy machinery inland.

A small manufactory of special interest because of its situation was Samuel Carr's Glue Factory, which stood until 1851 on the eastern side of Church Street between Gerrard and Carlton. Just beyond this establishment was a large patch of bush land, a popular rendezvous of the idle youths of Toronto. Church Street then terminated at Carlton Street, but a narrow sand road [redacted] to the edge of Molly Wood's Bush, as the district was long locally known.

Mention of an establishment for the manufacture of glue recalls that [redacted] June, 1846, the erection of factories was regulated by Council [redacted] prevent noisy or malodorous establishments from being built near any street line; to insist that all manufactories, blacksmith shops, etc., should [redacted] constructed of brick or stone with metal-covered roofs; and stipulating that factories "emitting any disagreeable effluvia" should have chimneys of sufficient height to carry them off. The occasion for these regulations appears to have been the application of Edwin Bell for permission to erect a soap and candle factory.

An industry early among the most important was that of the waggon-maker. As civilisation advanced, the making of various types of carriages and buggies developed; while in modern times most of such manufactories have passed out of existence, or—as in the case of the McLaughlin Carriage Factory, Oshawa,—entered the new field of motor-car construction. Between 1837 and 1849 John Bell operated a carriage and farm implement factory on Victoria Street north of Adelaide, where the Confederation Life building was later erected. His products were famous throughout the Home District and beyond as being constructed in the newest designs and furnished with the latest improvements. John Ross Robertson gives a good description of the life and times of John Bell:

"He made not only reaping machines but ploughs, harrows, cultivators, horse rakes, and seed drills. Besides this decidedly miscellaneous assortment of goods he built heavy waggons, and he also was able to make far more carriages, buggies and gigs than he could find purchasers for, those who were able in those days to indulge in the luxury of a carriage being very few and far between. That was the time when in early spring the old title of 'muddy', as ap-

plied to York, would do equally well for Toronto. At that season of the year waggons drawn by oxen might frequently be seen stuck fast in the mud on both Adelaide and Victoria Streets, requiring all the assistance that could be rendered them to extricate both the oxen and the vehicle they were attempting to draw from their very uncomfortable position.

"It is said by old residents in Toronto that Bell built the first reaping machines ever made in Canada. He was an exhibitor of these implements at the Provincial Exhibition held in Hamilton in 1847, and obtained a diploma for the same. This honorary distinction is still extant and in possession of one of the members of Mr. Bell's family. Bell only lived to complete about twenty reaping machines; he fell a victim to the cholera epidemic prevailing in Toronto in 1849.

"The late Mr. George Crookshank was one of Mr. Bell's earliest customers. He purchased one of the first, if not the very first machine built at the Victoria Street factory, and placed it on his Yonge Street farm ten miles north of Toronto. There was a great prejudice against these machines in the minds of the working classes of the day, as they were fearful that their introduction would affect the rate of wages. Threats to burn the barns and other farm buildings belonging to Mr. Crookshank were freely indulged in, but were, happily for all parties, never carried into effect. Bell claimed for his reaper that it would cut ten acres of wheat, oats or barley daily. Whether it was quite as great a success as this is not known, but at any rate Mr. Crookshank was fully satisfied with his bargain."[74]

Bell constructed also some of the first cabs used on Toronto streets. Like all ships, as well as the earliest locomotives, these pioneer vehicles of city transportation were named. The first that Bell made was called *General Wolfe*, while subsequent creations were dignified by the appellations *Wellington* and *General Brock*. Cabs soon became too numerous to bother naming, but in modern times the motor-car has displaced the horse-drawn vehicle to such an extent that cabs and carriages have become curiosities.

William Dixon's "Longacre Carriage Works", 53-55 Adelaide Street West, next door to Grand's Sale Stables, was

[74] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 773.

among the best known in Canada in the seventies and eighties. A contemporary description states that the building "is one of the most imposing and best-arranged carriage factories in the Province of Ontario. The style of architecture is Venetian, and the materials are red brick and cut stone with white brick dressings. The building contains four storeys and a basement.

"The basement is used as the blacksmith's shop and iron-working department. The ground and first floors are used as show rooms, and the stock on hand embraces some fine specimens of the carriage-builder's art in buggies, phaetons, landaus and family carriages, some of them being marvels of beautiful finish and perfect workmanship. The upper floors of the building are devoted to the various departments of the trade, and the repairing of all kinds of vehicles, sleighs, cutters, etc.

"Mr. Dixon first began business in this city in 1857, at that time doing all the work himself, and since then the business has developed until now (1877) he is the head of the largest carriage-building establishment in the Dominion. . . . . A large number of carriages are built by Mr. Dixon, his average build at present being from 300 to 400 *per annum*, and these are shipped to all parts of the Dominion, and occasionally to the States and Europe."[1]

Among the most important early foundries was Good's, located on the east side of Yonge Street, a short distance north of Queen. Ploughs, stoves, and other heavy hardware were turned out by this factory for many years, but it is chiefly remembered now as the place where Ontario's first locomotive, the *Toronto*, was constructed. There may be a few people still living who can recall the notable sight as the *Toronto* was slowly and laboriously urged through the streets from Good's Toronto Locomotive Works southward to its destination on the line of the old Northern Railway. In an issue of the *Canadian Journal* ■ a lithograph of the locomotive, and the following account:

"We have much pleasure in presenting our readers with a drawing of the first locomotive engine constructed in Canada, and indeed, we believe, in any British colony. The *Toronto* is certainly no beauty, nor is she distinguished for

[1] J. Timperlake: *Illustrated Toronto, Past and Present*, 1877, p. 305.

any peculiarity in construction, but she affords a very striking illustration of our progress in the mechanical arts, and of the growing wants of the country. The *Toronto* was built at the Toronto Locomotive Works, which were established by Mr. Good in October, 1852. The order for the *Toronto* was received in February, 1853, for the Ontario, Simcoe and Huron Union Railroad. The engine was completed on the 16th of April and put on the track the 26th of the same month. Her dimensions are as follows: cylinder [illegible] inches diameter, stroke 22 inches, driving wheel 5 feet 6 inches in diameter, length of internal fire box 4 feet 6 inches, weight of engine 25 tons, number of tubes 150, diameter of tubes 2 inches."[24]

In 1832 Charles Perry was the proprietor of a foundry in York, and, in addition to the regular products usually associated with such manufactories, he entered into the work of supplying the latest type of printing presses to the printers of York and elsewhere. In the same year Messrs. W. B. Sheldon, F. R. Dutcher, W. A. Dutcher, Samuel Andrus, J. and B. Vannorman advertised their foundry, which was long among the most prominent factories in Toronto. Their announcement is interesting not only because of its description of the plant but also owing to its products, many of which are now old-fashioned—if not in the realm of curiosities:

"They respectfully inform their friends and the public that they have lately made large additions to their establishments. They have enlarged their Furnace so as to enable them to make Castings of any size or weight used in this province, and erected Lathes for turning and finishing the same. They have also erected a Steam Engine of ten horse-power, of their own manufacture, for propelling their machinery, which is now in complete operation, and they are prepared to build Steam Engines of any size, either high or low pressure. Having a number of experienced engineers employed, whose capabilities cannot be doubted, they hope to share the patronage of a generous public. They always keep constantly on hand and for sale, either by wholesale or retail, Bark Mills, Cooking, Franklin, Plate and Box Stoves, also, a generous assortment of Hollow Ware, con-

[24]*Canadian Journal*, Vol. II, p. 76.

sisting of Kettles, from one to one hundred and twenty gallons; Bake-ovens, Bake-Basins, Belly-Pots, High Pans, Tea Kettles, Wash-Kettles, Portable Furnaces, &c. Also are constantly manufacturing Mill-Gearing of all kinds; Sleigh Shoes, 60, 50, 30, 28, 15, 14 and 7 pound Weights, Clock and Sash Weights, Cranes, Andirons, Cart and Waggon Boxes, Clothiers' Plates, Plough Castings, and Ploughs of all kinds."[27]

Concerning the stoves here mentioned it may be explained to the present generation that the square, unsightly box-stove was long the only type in use, and they varied from very small to very large. Coal, at first employed only by blacksmiths, was gradually introduced, and there was a coincident improvement in the shape and design of stoves. Those with open grates added greatly to the cheerfulness of living-rooms; while in general the heating of buildings gradually became a combination of scientific skill and ornamental art, developing health and comfort with adaptability and beauty in house furnishing. A writer in the eighteen-eighties outlines the progress of heating as follows:

"To witness the display at one of the annual exhibitions, or in one of the large manufacturing establishments, is to see in a most remarkable manner, as much as in any other branch of manufacture, the progress of taste and refinement, as well as in arrangements for comfort. The rarity and beauty of the designs, as well as the arrangements for promoting health, and the convenience of 'self-feeders', in which the fire need never go out the whole winter, are truly marvellous.

"The stoves of the present day are not only useful but highly ornamental, and other heating arrangements, whether from furnaces supplying hot air, or by steam, or hot water, all are made to appear as part of the furnishing of hall or drawing-room."[28]

Hot-air furnaces were being advertised in the eighteen-fifties, and by the eighties steam and hot water boilers were the specialties of many a stove and furnace manufacturer. Some of them used Bundy radiators, which could be "adapted to every building and to every part of any build-

[27]Quoted in Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old*. 1873. pp. 373-9.
[28]C. C. Taylor: *Toronto Called Back*. 1886. pp. 255-6.

John Ross Robertson Collection. R. Holgent.

BLOOR'S BREWERY IN 1866

John Ross Robertson Collection.

FIRST TORONTO MORGUE (DEAD-HOUSE)

At a meeting of the City Council on January 27, 1873, Mayor Alexander Manning recommended "that a new dead-house and fish market be erected without delay".

ARCH OF WELCOME TO SOUTH AFRICAN VETERANS

The return of the troops in 1901 was greeted in characteristic fashion. Here are evident some of the preparations on University Avenue.

THE RETURN OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTINGENT, 1901

The procession is shown near the corner of Yonge and Adelaide Streets. The Queen's Own Rifles may be seen carrying one of their heroes shoulder high.

ing; and these, when ornamented with the new coil screens, whether in hall or drawing-room, may be made to correspond with the most luxurious furniture, and become an attractive feature in the general effect."[30]

In the late fifties lower Yonge Street was the location of a number of factories, several of which have already been mentioned. An old trade is recalled by the advertisement of [redacted]. G. Booth, Coppersmith, [redacted] 181 Yonge. He was also a worker in tin plate, sheet iron, brass, lead and zinc, and advertises for sale brewing coppers, refrigerators, worms, stills, pipes for steam engines, metal roofing, cornice, guttering and conductor pipes, as well as a large assortment of "planished, japanned, stamped and common tinware".[31]

At 132 Yonge Street W. P. Marston manufactured guns, pistols, revolvers, target and hunting rifles, ammunition, etc. Among other products of interest he advertises hunting knives, walking stick guns, Colt's revolvers, powder flasks, shot belts, game bags, dram flasks, and dog calls.[32] Another Yonge Street manufactory of 1858, and one that calls to mind a well-known family and business, was the Leather Works of Beardmore & Co., which advertises "a varied assortment of Spanish and Slaughter Sole, French Calf, Upper, etc.", at the establishment then located at the corner of Queen and Yonge Streets.[33]

Perhaps the first dealer in pianos in York was T. Browning, whose announcement in 1832 advertises imported pianofortes for sale to "the nobility of York", a phrase which possibly portended an indication of their cost:

"T. Browning, pianoforte manager, begs to inform the nobility of York and its vicinity that he has brought from London a few superior instruments, grands, cabinets and squares, which will be sold at a very low price. N.B. Instruments repaired and tuned. Applications, if by letters postpaid, at Mr. Mills', No. 187 King Street, York, U.C., November 27th, 1832."[34]

Among the early piano manufacturers in Toronto was

[30] *Ibid.*, p. 267.
[31] *Descriptive Catalogue of the Provincial Exhibition, 1858*, p. 76.
[32] *Ibid.*, p. 70.
[33] *Ibid.*, p. 22.
[34] *Upper Canada Gazette*, December 6, 1832.

William Matthews, from London, England, who was the inventor and sole manufacturer of "the new patent cottage pianoforte". His establishment in 1853 was at 58 Elm Street, and he advertises that, after "many years in business both in Hamilton and Toronto, wherein his time and attention are devoted to the improvement and manufacture of Cottage Piano Fortes to suit the extremes of this climate, he has much satisfaction in announcing to his friends and the public generally that he has at length succeeded in making several most important improvements which he is confident will insure to this most useful and elegant of all musical Instruments a strength and durability heretofore unattainable, while for sweetness and brilliancy of tone and elasticty of touch, W. M. will challenge its being equalled by any Cottage Piano Forte of either foreign or home manufacture". Among other attractions his pianos had "Patent Metallic equal tension and string plates and iron bracing, elegant feet, octagon legs, carved trusses and elegant fret work",[34] and the price varied from £45 to £85.

The occupation of blacksmith has almost passed away, but so recently that most people can remember when every village had several, and all rural highways a representative of the trade every few miles. William Richmond, wheelwright, and Robert Richmond, blacksmith, were long located in a shop at the north-east corner of Queen and William (now Simcoe) Streets. The locality was long remembered because the notorious Brown-Cameron election riot of 1857 took place near by. The Richmonds were as good workmen as could be found in the city, and were fondly recalled by Upper Canada College old boys of 1845-60, for the little plot of ground in front of the shop was a favourite resort for marble-playing and other sporting activities. "Old man Richmond" was popular with the boys, and with good reason, for "when they wanted their sleighs fixed they always brought them to Richmond, and if the boys had been out cutting shinnies near the White bridge, or in the neighbourhood of Rosedale, or Ridout's Bush, now Sherbourne Street, they always had the shinnies trimmed by one of the Richmond boys, who were not very heavy in their charges; in fact they were so good-natured that unfortunately their

[34] *Descriptive Catalogue of the Provincial Exhibition, 1853*, p. 80.

good nature was frequently imposed upon. The old shop disappeared when Jones' Hotel was put up some years ago."[28]

Mention of a blacksmith recalls a trade which flourished in the days when every farmer was a shoemaker, and frequently a harness-maker as well. Among Toronto tanners Jesse Ketchum stands out prominently—not only because he once supplied most of the Home District with leather, but also for his strength of character. Where his evil-smelling tannery stood in the outskirts of the early city, at Yonge and Newgate (Adelaide) Streets, a Honey Dew now dispenses delicious food; and facing Yonge Street were then high piles of hides and tanbark in front of the tanning sheds. In 1889 James Acton obtained interesting reminiscences[29] from the 90-year old foreman of the tannery, who recalled an occasion when Mr. Ketchum, finding the men in his employ with a keg of beer (Doel's Brewery was near by, and it was election week), poured the liquor into a tanning-vat, and forthwith delivered an exhortation on Total Abstinence!

Before factories began to supplant the small tradesman there were large numbers of tanners, cabinet-makers, saddlers, shoemakers, wheel-wrights, coopers and similar manufacturers in Toronto. The city directories from the eighteen-thirties onward enumerate hundreds of men engaged in these trades. There were, too, numerous blacksmiths in the city; while among women's trades may be found a considerable number of milliners, dressmakers and "stay-makers" (referring to corsets). From an analysis of William Brown's *City Directory for 1856-7* we learn the numbers engaged in the chief trades and professions: Accountants, 18; architects, 11; artists, 13; bakers, 37; bankers, 11; barristers and solicitors, 108; blacksmiths, 96; boot and shoe makers, 240; builders, 65; brewers, 15; bricklayers, 91; brickmakers, 55; cabinetmakers, 82; cabmen and proprietors, 33; carpenters, 496; carters, 137; clerks, 119; clergymen of all denominations, 57; dressmakers and milliners, 62; dry goods merchants and importers, 103; grocers and provision dealers, 255; labourers, 892; painters, 84; printers, 73; tailors, 203; tinsmiths, 37. This list does not include all the avocations followed in the city, but it

[28]Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 46.

[29]See the *Canadian Shoe and Leather Journal*, June, 1889.

is sufficiently explicit for our present purpose. When classified it shows of professional persons, 427; of mechanical, 1,681; and of industrial other than mechanical, 2,001. Among tradesmen of more highly specialised occupations listed a few years earlier are many which have long since disappeared: portrait, landscape, historical, animal, house, and coach painters; wood, seal, and bank-note engravers; farriers, curriers, and wood-turners; wheel-wrights, carpet and fringe weavers, brush and broom makers, sail-makers, gilders and map-mounters; maltsters, well-sinkers, and sausage-makers; as well as one each of the trades of making bellows, nails, scales, whips, fanning-mills, blacking, mathematical instruments and lucifer matches.[31]

Workmen were gradually concentrated in larger plants. Among the prominent manufacturers of sixty years ago may be mentioned J. & J. Taylor, Safe Manufacturers; Gooderham & Worts' Distillery; Robert Hay & Co., Furniture Manufacturers; Christie, Brown & Co.'s Biscuit Factory; Lyman Brothers & Co., Manufacturing Chemists; Booth & Sons, Brassfounders; J. D. Nasmith, Biscuit Manufacturer, (the firm was established by his father in 1844); the Phoenix Coffee and Spice Mills; the Don Paper Mills; G. D. Morse & Co.'s Soap and Candle Works; Messrs. Davis & Co.'s Toronto Packing House; H. E. Clarke & Co.'s Trunk and Bag Factory; Lamb's Blacking and Glue Factory (established in 1837); Todhunter, Black & Co., Manufacturers of Chocolate and Cocoa; Wilson's Brush Factory; Heintzman & Co.'s Piano Manufactory; Copp, Clark & Co., Printers, Stationers and Booksellers (established in 1842 by Hugh Scobie); Charles Boeckh's Brush Factory; Messrs. Northrop & Lyman's Patent Medicine Warehouse; and Wilson's Vinegar Manufactory. A considerable number of these are names which still have a very familiar ring.[32]

A few of the more enterprising and successful tradesmen, many of whom were in those days "real Old-country men", gradually accumulated a little capital and rose above their fellows, becoming the proprietors of small factories; while the many met changing conditions by seeking em-

[31] See *Henry Rowsell's City of Toronto and County of York Directory, 1850-1. 1850.* p. xx.

[32] See Tinseelake, op. cit., pp. 267-310, for valuable material concerning these factories, and, in many cases, flattering illustrations.

ployment therein, either at their own trade or as skilled or unskilled labourers in any occupation that offered. To close this account of trades and industries in Toronto it is appropriate to illustrate the development by showing how Harvey Shepard's skill as an axe-maker gradually led, in characteristic fashion, to the establishment of an axe factory which was in successful operation long after his death. Sheppard Street, connecting Adelaide and Richmond, commemorates this famous worker in iron, whose imprint on axe, broad-axe or adze was a guarantee of its temper and quality. Dr. Scadding[11] outlines the progress of this interesting industry:

"Harvey Shepard's axe factory was on the west side of this short street. Before his establishment here he worked in a smithy of the customary village type on King Street, on the property of Jordan Post. Like Jordan Post himself, Harvey Shepard was of the old-fashioned New England mould, elongated and wiry. After a brief suspension of business, a placard hung up in the country inns characteristically announced to his friends and the public that he had resumed his former occupation and that he would, 'by the aid of Divine Providence', undertake to turn out as good axes as any that he had ever made; which acknowledgement of the source of his skill is commendable surely, if unusual. So, also, there is no one who will refuse to applaud an epigrammatic observation of his, when responding to an appeal of charity. 'Though dealing usually in iron only, I keep', he said, 'a little stock of silver and gold for such a call as this.' The factory on Shepard Street was afterwards worked by Mr. J. Armstrong, and subsequently by Mr. Thomas Champion, formerly of Sheffield, who in 1838 advertised that he had 'a large stock of Champion's warranted cast-steel axes, made at the factory originally built by the late Harvey Shepard, and afterwards occupied by John Armstrong. As Shepard's and Armstrong's axes have been decidedly preferred before any others in the Province', the advertisement continues, 'it is only necessary to state that Champion's are made by the the same workmen, and from the very best material, to ensure for them the same continued preference'."

[11]Scadding, op. cit., p. 211.

CHAPTER XVI

Fairs and Exhibitions

Though Governor Simcoe supported the establishment of an Agricultural Society at Niagara in 1793, early government encouragement of agriculture in Upper Canada was largely restricted to the growth of hemp, which it was hoped this province would supply in quantities sufficient for the use of the British navy. Legislation in 1830 and later years aided the establishment of Agricultural Societies, and this broader recognition of the importance of the industry was the chief impetus leading to the development of fairs.

Some exhibitions had been held in the Niagara district previous to 1800, but if any occurred in York before 1820 they received no mention in the *Upper Canada Gazette*. There was, however, an Upper Canada Agricultural and Commercial Society holding meetings in York previous to 1808 when it was dissolved from lack of support, and some small fairs may have been held under its auspices; but the American occupation of the town in 1813 had a very depressing effect for several years, and it is unlikely that any initiative was exerted in that direction prior to 1818, when the Agricultural Society was formed. In any case the first agricultural exhibitions in the capital passed almost unrecorded, and we have no details concerning them. From references in early publications we learn, however, that a Cattle Show was held in the town on May 7, 1820, and in following years semi-annual fairs. Fothergill's *York Almanack* states that they were held "the third Monday in May, and the first Monday in October, for six days each period." Prizes and premiums were usually awarded the first day, and, during the balance of the fair, days were assigned to live stock, vegetables and fruits, the sale of horses and other stock, and similar departments of agricultural enterprise. The old Fair Green was located near the shore of the Bay immediately west of Berkeley Street. According to Fothergill the only other regular fairs in

Upper Canada in the early twenties were four-day exhibitions in Cobourg and Port Hope.[2]

Among the many associations formed as a result of legislative encouragement in 1830 was the Home District Agricultural Society, with headquarters at York, and it was this organisation that in May, 1846, passed a resolution favouring a province-wide association. Three years of discussion had preceded this move, and public opinion had been aroused in its favour; and, as other local and district societies were equally enthusiastic, a meeting of delegates convened at the Toronto Court House on July 15th, to be followed by an organisation meeting in Hamilton on August 16th, when "The Provincial Agricultural Association and Board of Agriculture for Canada West" came into being. Its membership was to be composed of persons subscribing annually 5s. or more, and the first yearly show was arranged to take place in Toronto on the 21st and 22nd of October of the same year.

The first fair may be considered the real progenitor of the Canadian National Exhibition, though, since it was for thirty-three years an itinerant show held in the more important towns of the province in turn, it is not generally considered to be the origin of Toronto's modern exposition; and, of course, the fact remains that the 1879 show was the first of the series of annual exhibitions under Toronto management exclusively. The Exhibition of 1846 was originally advertised to be held at the Cuer Howell Grounds, just west of College (now University) Avenue, but handbills distributed a day or two prior to the fair announced a change of location to the Government House Grounds, at the Corner of King and Graves (now Simcoe) Streets. The cattle show was held in a meadow in the rear of Upper Canada College, then located near the north-west corner of King and Simcoe, across from Government House.

The first prizes were in cash and totalled £278, while agricultural books were offered for second place in the various classes, and the Association's diploma for third. The best aged bull was awarded £7 10s., the best ram £5, and the best stallion £10. Entries to the number of 1,150

[2]Charles Fothergill: *The York Almanack and Royal Calendar of Upper Canada for 1836*, p. 168.

were received, and all but £50 of the prize money expended. £69 13s. 1½d. (about $280) was received from tickets sold at the gates, and £200 was contributed by district societies, so that there remained a balance of £102 1s. after providing for prizes and general expenses.

Many hundreds of Toronto's citizens patronised the first fair, and the numbers were swelled by a good representation from other parts of the province, who made their way thither by steamship, stage coach or in their own conveyances. They were regaled by exhibits of wagons, carriages, "light and chaste" one-horse vehicles, stump-raisers, chaff-cutters and self-opening gates; "beautiful, ornamental and fantastic productions of the needle", including representations of King David playing upon his harp, and "Joseph's dream surrounded by sheaves of wheat nodding obeisance". Concerning the latter a reporter considered that "the face of Joseph was too feminine"; but he found fruit and flowers of wax "almost the very perfection of imitation". There were, of course, plenty of horses, cattle and sheep; "specimens of Stilton Cheese such as to make one fancy, had there been a little Burton Ale, that we were 'at Home' again"; tweeds, felled cloths, cadet and gold mixed cloths, and blankets equalling the finest importations; and among the manufactures were cooking stoves and furnaces described as having attained "a greater degree of perfection than is to be found in any branch of manufactures in Canada".[2]

In suggesting that perhaps the fair could hardly be compared to those long established in the United States and Europe, the *Globe* noted that "the exhibition of stock, of the farm and of the dairy, was highly creditable to the yeomanry of the Province". The account in this newspaper mentioned that the exhibits of manufactures included woollen goods, stoves, tinware and carriages. Portraits executed by local artists were among the items of a small Fine Arts display; there was also "a map of Peterborough, by Mr. Fleming, a young and promising artist from Scotland. . . . It is a beautiful piece of workmanship, giving a very interesting view of that rising town and neighbourhood. It was lithographed by Messrs. Scoble and Balfour".

[2] V. M. Roberts: *The Fruit of the C.N.E.* 1925, p. 15.

(Mr. Fleming later became Sir Sandford Fleming, one of Canada's greatest civil engineers). Embroidery, collars and veils, and numerous other articles were found in the exhibit of Ladies' Work; and "the wax flowers of Miss Elliott, Yonge Street, Toronto, gained much admiration". The rooms in which the exhibits were placed are described as "in general too small; and the crowds so great as to make it uncomfortable". But the efforts made by the Committee had made it possible to stage an exhibition "which must have gladdened the heart of every true friend of Canada".[2]

Altogether the first Provincial Exhibition was a great success, and the 200 notables who sat down to a public dinner at Government House at the close of the first day of the fair were enthusiastic in their praise of Canada and its prospective development. Chief Justice John Beverley Robinson enumerated Upper Canada's advantages, and noted that "even with London and other towns far removed, the inhabitants had the advantage of good plank roads by which the produce reached the great waters, on whose surface it was borne to Europe."

Some of the references in the addresses were by no means complimentary to many Reformers present, for those were the days of bitter political opinions; and the Liberal press was vehement in expressing that when it came to the dinner "the arrangements were too Tory. Sixteen speeches were delivered before the Hon. Robert Baldwin was called on to say a word, and the meeting seemed electrified when his name was mentioned, for he was the only speaker who received cheers at the commencement of his address". The *Globe*, too,—nobly democratic—would like to have heard some of those worthy pioneers speak—"the grey heads in that assembly, with the furrows of many winters and of much hard toil marked in their countenances. It would have been interesting to all to have heard of the difficulties which they encountered in their settlement, and how they had by patient and persevering industry been enabled to overcome them all".[3]

The next five exhibitions were held at Hamilton, Co-

[2]The *Globe*, October 27, 1845, quoted in the *Banner* of October 30th.
[3]*Ibid.*

bourg, Kingston, Niagara and Brockville, respectively, but in 1852 it was again Toronto's turn. Upon this occasion the show lasted four days, September 21-24, and was held in the Exhibition Grounds on the west side of College (University) Avenue. Mrs. D'Arcy Boulton, of The Grange, loaned some of her estate touching upon the west side of the grounds in order to provide the Horse Park. The grounds are described as "oblong in shape, comprising, exclusive of the horse parade, about seventeen acres. They were divided almost equally into two parts by a winding, shallow ravine, through a portion of which a stream ran. The southern half was clear of trees, and the northern prettily wooded. . . . The entrance was at the 'office', about the site of the old Erskine Presbyterian Church. The grounds were bounded on the east by College (now University) Avenue; the western boundary was a short distance west of Dummer (now William) Street. The northern boundary was the Toronto Cricket Grounds, College Street, and the Caer Howell Pleasure Grounds, just north of the present Hydro building in the avenue".[2] During the four days thousands of people, including many from a considerable distance, visited the fair; though "but few of them," says the *Canadian Journal*, "permitted their thoughts to wander back to the time when the spot so densely occupied by the 'palefaces', and crowded with their works of patient industry and skilful art, was a wild and marshy forest, tenanted only by a few wandering Mississaugas; or, at a later date, and in the memory of numbers present, the forest suburbs of a village which numbered but a few hundred enterprising settlers".[3]

The number of entries in the various exhibits was 2,048, or more than double those of the previous year. It was estimated that 30,000 people were in attendance on Thursday, the principal day of the fair. The prizes offered had increased to £1,479 9s. 0d., and the exhibition was considered much more successful than any of those which had preceded it. A contemporary description of the fair names the buildings which had been erected to house the exhibits, and informs us of the "grave fears" that the

[2]J. Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Canada*, 1917, pp. 533 and 536.
[3]*Canadian Journal*, October, 1852.

Reproduced by courtesy of A. M. Roberts, Esq. Canadian Journal.

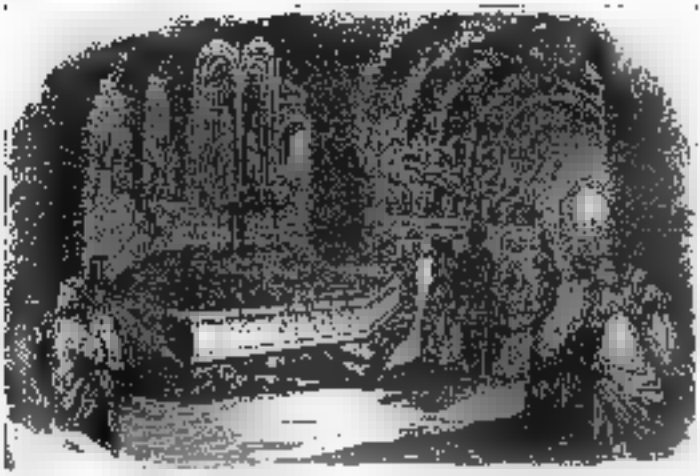
THE PROVINCIAL EXHIBITION OF 1852

The exhibition grounds were on the west side of College (University) Avenue. Nearly 30,000 people were in attendance on the principal day of the Fair, and "grave fears" were entertained that the crowd would break down the fences as they were entering the grounds.

Reproduced by courtesy of A. M. Roberts, Esq. Canadian Journal.

THE AGRICULTURAL HALL, EXHIBITION OF 1852

It is evident from these illustrations that the seventh Provincial Exhibition was but little different from the rural fairs of half a century later.



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FLORAL HALL AT THE EXHIBITION OF 1852

The florists of the city and the private greenhouses of wealthy inhabitants provided flowers and plants in profusion, and the fountain greatly enhanced the effectiveness of the display.

Reproduced from an old Woodcut by Courtesy of V. H. Roberts, Esq.

A TIMBER RAFT LEAVING THE HARBOUR, 1848

Large quantities of timber hauled to the harbour on sleighs or transported on the Northern Railway were rafted at the foot of Bathurst Street.

fence would give way under the pressure of the crowds attempting to enter:

"The buildings erected by the local committee for the display of those articles which would have been injured by exposure were five in number: the Fine Arts hall, the Floral hall, the Agricultural hall, the Mechanics' hall, and a small building attached to the Fine Arts hall for the display of school apparatus. Grave fears were entertained that the fence would not have been able to sustain the pressure of the vast body of people anxious to obtain admission, and delayed by the necessity of giving up their tickets to the constables in charge of the narrow entrance doorways, of which there were but two. Eighteen thousand single tickets were sold on Thursday, besides upwards of 2,000 member's badges which admitted the member and his family."[1]

From the *Globe* we obtain many other interesting details. Most of the stock and other exhibits arrived by boat in very stormy weather Monday night; but conditions improved on Tuesday, and every boat that entered the harbour had its complement of visitors to the Fair. At 8 a.m. on Wednesday, with late exhibits still streaming into the grounds, "the proceedings of the day were commenced by the judges, members of the Committee, and others sitting down to a substantial breakfast prepared by Mr. Beard, in a great tent erected on the Bowling Green at Carr Howell." This forerunner of the Canadian National Exhibition Directors' Luncheon inaugurated the buildings, and the general public flocked into the grounds, when soon afterwards the prize list was read to the assemblage.

Each side of the Agricultural Hall was divided into compartments, in which were the exhibits of wheat, flour and vegetables. In the centre of the building dairy products were tastefully arranged on a large table, fifty feet by six. Simple and effective decorations characterised the interior of the Floral Hall, and a fountain added greatly to the pleasing appearance of the exhibits. The florists of the city, and many private greenhouses and gardens, provided plants and flowers in considerable profusion. Many exhibits of interest were described in the *Globe*:

"Mr. Palmer's Daguerrotypes excited much attention,

[1] *Ibid.*

from their perfect style of execution and the well-known faces which they exhibited. . . . Mr. Paul Kane had some of his best paintings exhibited, but in a miserable light, the common fate in such cases. . . . Mr. Hugh Miller of King Street showed some of Kelly's first-rate cod-liver oil, all the way from Gaspé. . . . Mr. Morrison, Silversmith and Jeweller, had some very pretty silver work, including the spade belonging to Mr. Capreol, with which the first sod of the Northern Railway was not turned."[1]

The itinerant system of holding Exhibitions was beginning to meet with considerable criticism. In describing the fair of 1852 "a member of the Press" pointed out the numerous disadvantages. He noted that the temporary buildings erected annually at considerable expense "have always been exceedingly inconvenient. At the last exhibits in Toronto the halls were altogether too small to accommodate a crowd. . . . The exhibitors, too, were often grievously disappointed, some of them at having their productions disposed beyond the line of vision, others with having their more delicate handiwork destroyed by the rain pouring through the leaking structure".[2] There were no steam railways in Canada West at that time, however, and difficulties of transportation almost excluded some sections of the province from participation in any remote exhibitions; so that, in spite of the fact that Toronto attracted most exhibitors and visitors, the rotary system long continued to appeal to many who thought it preferable to have some of the fairs near home rather than all of them at a central point.

In 1847 and subsequent years the City Council of Toronto carried on negotiations with the Imperial Government in an effort to obtain part of the old Garrison Reserve for park purposes. After a long-term lease at a nominal rental had been obtained in 1848 there arose a dispute with the Ordnance Department, but a compromise was finally effected by which the city obtained a grant of 55 acres in two properties. The first of these became Stanley Park, the second, to consist largely of a park for the holding of the

[1] A full account of the Fair may be found in the *Globe*, September 23rd and 25th, 1852.

[2] Roberts, op. cit., p. 21.

Provincial Exhibition, was located immediately south of the Provincial Lunatic Asylum. In the original lease the condition attached to the agreement stipulated that the land was "for the purposes of pleasure, recreation and amusement to the inhabitants of the City of Toronto, and with a view to the ornament and salubrity of the City", and the same condition was applied to the grant in more definite wording.

Hamilton, London, Cobourg, Kingston and Brantford were the respective locations of the fairs of 1853-57, but in 1858 Toronto had an opportunity to use her new grounds. The first permanent exhibition building, the Palace of Industry—more commonly called the Crystal Palace—was erected for the occasion, and was quite an imposing structure of cast iron and glass, with a circular tin roof. Built in the form of a cross, it was 256 feet long by 96 feet wide and enclosed an area of some 44,000 square feet. A contemporary description of the building states that it "looks very low, and as if crushed down by the superincumbent mass of roof. It would have been greatly improved in effect had the glass walls been carried up by the line of the gallery floor some three or four feet, or had the roof been broken by perpendicular lights to relieve it from that heavy dome appearance".[10]

The interior of the Crystal Palace was divided by columns reaching to the roof and forming a nave with northern and southern transepts and two extended aisles. A central parallelogram 80 feet by 32 was flanked by two side ones 80 feet by 16, and the nave was 64 feet square within the columns. One can readily imagine the pride of Torontonians in a new building which contained the following up-to-the-minute features:

"In the eastern corner of the northern transept there is a saloon 16 feet square fitted up for the accommodation of the ladies in attendance at the exhibition; in the western corner there is an office of similar dimensions for the Secretary; and in the centre of this same transept an

[10]A good description of the Crystal Palace and its construction may be found in [G. P. Ure]: *The Handbook of Toronto*. 1858. pp. 192-204. A considerable portion of it is quoted in the *Descriptive Catalogue of the Provincial Exhibition, 1858*. pp. 1-3.

orchestra 32 feet by 20 is erected, having a semi-circular front of plain truss railing, supported by a row of wooden columns. It contains four rows of seats, also semi-circular, for the accommodation of the performers, and immediately behind these there is a platform seven feet square for the reception of an organ. In the centre of the nave and immediately in front of the orchestra a fountain is erected to play during the exhibition."

The same writer notes further that Smith, Burke & Co. completed the building in slightly over three months, and "it is, in fact, one of the few public works constructed in Toronto to the spirit and letter of the contract, without the slightest scope for even the suspicion of a *job*".[11]

The Exhibition of 1853 was inaugurated with elaborate ceremony.[12] An address was presented to the Governor-General, Sir Edmund Head, a prayer was offered by the Bishop of Toronto, and the Metropolitan Choral Society, composed of 250 vocalists and instrumentalists, performed with great success. A descriptive catalogue of the exhibits and exhibitors reached two editions, and it gives in great detail all information of interest concerning the show. Among the exhibits which attracted attention was Parson Brothers' Coal Oil Lamps, claimed to be "superior to those of English or American manufacture in the diffusion of light"; W. H. Rice's "ingenious rat-trap, well-calculated to deceive the most wary of those very troublesome customers"; Joseph Archer's "anti-friction grease, which neither freezes on the machinery in winter nor drops off it during the hottest days of summer—a rare combination of qualities"; and the new sewing machine of Messrs. Butler & Co., of Newmarket, "an improvement on the many improvements made on stitching machinery since the 'song of the shirt' saw the light".

There was, too, Thomson, Keith & Co.'s "gasometer", which manufactured gas at [illegible] per 1,000 feet, and "might be used with advantage and profit in some of the imperfectly lighted hotels with which the province abounds". Reflecting religious conditions of other times was "an in-

[11] *Ibid.*

[12] The description which follows is based upon the *Descriptive Catalogue*.

genious portable stool, exhibited by G. C. Campbell of Niagara, who specially recommended it to Methodist Camp Meeting devotees". The prisoners of Kingston Penitentiary sent examples of their handicraft in both wood and steel. Several gentlemen exhibited "self-acting car-couplers, by the employment of which it would seem to be a matter of the utmost difficulty for railway carriages to play truant to the engine". The electric telegraph, introduced into the province in 1846 and still something of a wonder, was exhibited by Messrs. Wimun & Co., King Street news agents, who had instruments in operation "communicating with their store in the city, and then with 45,000 miles of wire in America and 55,000 in Europe—that is, presuming that the Atlantic Cable is in working order".

It would hardly be appreciated at the present day that it was remarkable for a confectioner to show "no less than ten kinds of biscuit and thirty-five kinds of sweetmeats". Ale and porter were exhibited by S. Gray, Toronto, while Messrs. Hall & Clark displayed "the teetotal drinks, or 'double-aerated summer beverages', as it is more respectful to call them". There were, of course, plenty of exhibits of maple sugar, as well as almost every other farm product and domestic manufacture. Ladies' fancy sewing, wax flowers, paintings and other artistic creations occupied a prominent position; while the horticultural department provided an extensive collection of the best flowers, fruits and vegetables. In the prize list appears the name of Mrs. Catharine Parr Traill of Rice Lake, well-known author and naturalist and a pioneer settler in the "backwoods" of the old Newcastle District. Upon this occasion she was awarded the prize for "the best collection of native plants dried and named".

Cabinet-makers exhibited large numbers of choice pieces of work which would now be highly-prized antiques. In fact the great number of exhibits unrelated to farming exemplify the connection early made between the arts, manufacturers and commerce on the one hand and agriculture on the other. The showing of farm implements at the 1853 exhibition is described as "not unusually large, but exceedingly creditable". Iron ploughs, as well as many

of wood, horse rakes and hoes, fanning mills and cultivators, many of them from the establishment of H. A. Massey, Newcastle, forerunner of the Massey-Harris Co., divided the interest of farmers with root-cutting and stamping machines, and new types of churns, threshers and separators.

It would appear from all accounts that more pickpockets were at work at this exhibition than ever before. Many serious robberies were reported, one farmer being relieved of over $500. Such activities were no doubt encouraged by the large attendance, some 20,000 being present on the second day. A newspaper, commenting on the success of the fair, said:

"Not only was the Crystal Palace itself crammed [illegible] overflowing, but the entire city presented a scene of animation which in all probability has never before been equalled. King Street especially, from the number of pedestrians who paraded it all day, wore an appearance which reminded one strongly of Cheapside or Broadway at the busiest hour of the day".[13]

Horse-races at Gates' course, yacht races on the Bay, a bazaar in the Romain Building, a torchlight parade at night, and a notable firemen's procession in which visiting brigades from London, Hamilton and Cobourg participated, combined to increase the attractions of Exhibition week. As for the bazaar we are told that "young ladies in the daintiest of costumes acted as amateur saleswomen, dispensing coffee at 25 cents a cup and cakes at 10 cents each, with the most praiseworthy perseverance. There was no charge to go in, or, if so, it was a very small one, but there was a great deal to pay before one could get out. But the public liked the fun, the young ladies enjoyed the work, and the funds of the church were benefited".[14] An interesting account of the city as it would appear to exhibition visitors is given by a contemporary writer:

"Toronto presents a somewhat straggling aspect, only a few of the principal streets being as yet fully built. The earlier erections were of wood, and present a striking

[13]Quoted in John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*. 1894-1914. Vol. II, p. 1094.

[14]*Ibid.*

contrast to the tall and stately rows of houses or the beautiful villas of more recent date. During last year not many short of 1,000 new houses, stores, hotels, and churches have been erected, a large proportion of which are of white brick and present a very elegant appearance. The public buildings are very fine, and upon a scale which shows that their projectors anticipated for the city a greater expansion than it has yet obtained. It boasts the largest Church of England cathedral in the province, a handsome Romish cathedral, and some forty other churches, chiefly Protestant. It has also the finest pile of school buildings in Canada, two magnificent and richly endowed colleges, a university, a lunatic asylum, two splendid courthouses, and various other institutions and charities, betokening a population appreciating the benefits of moral and intellectual culture."[18]

At that time the population of Toronto was nearly 60,000. The Parliament Buildings on Front Street west of Simcoe, erected in 1830, were still in use, though greatly renovated in 1855. The old Hospital on King Street, the Mechanics' Institute at the corner of Adelaide and Church Streets, and a building on York Street opposite the Rossin House, housed various government offices in the absence of better accommodation. The new University buildings (now University College) were in process of construction, and old Trinity College, old Knox College, St. Michael's College, "recently erected on Clover Hill, between the city and Yorkville", Upper Canada College on King Street west of Simcoe, and the Normal School on Gould Street, were the other principal educational institutions, as well as among the chief "sights" of the city. The old City Hall on Front Street south of the Market was no particular credit to the city, but St. Lawrence Hall was considered a handsome edifice and was the social centre of Toronto. The Lunatic Asylum, the old Post Office on Toronto Street, Osgoode Hall, the new Hospital on the Don and Danforth Road, the Toronto Exchange on Wellington Street, and the four banks (Upper Canada, Montreal, Commercial and British North America), made up the chief other buildings which would be pointed out to visitors in 1858.[19]

[18]Rollo Campbell: *Two Lectures on Canada*. 1857. pp. 27-8.
[19]See *Descriptive Catalogue*, p. 49.

In enumerating the chief Toronto hotels and saloons the *Descriptive Catalogue* of the Exhibition observes that "we believe there is no city of its size on the continent which is pestered with so many saloons and taverns". The best hotels at the time were the Rossin House and the American House, while the Wellington Hotel and the Robinson House were "comfortable, quiet houses" of a less ambitious nature.

The regular amusements available in Toronto at that period were neither numerous nor of very high order. Visitors to the Exhibition are advised that two of the more pretentious saloons are the Terrapin and the Apollo, both on King Street. In addition to the eating, drinking and smoking usually associated with such resorts, the Apollo put on a cheap show each evening. For 12½ cents patrons were entitled to "a smoke or a drink", as well as to witness some negro minstrelsy, etc., as performed by two "inimitable" actors; and altogether the place is recommended as "well worthy of a visit". There was, too, the Royal Lyceum Theatre, which "although small, is an exceedingly pleasant resort". There, under Manager Nickinson, a half dozen "first-rate actors" presented the "general run of pieces" in a manner "always characterised by morality and good breeding".[1] Otherwise, unless some entertainment of a higher type chanced to be sojourning at St. Lawrence Hall, visitors to town would have to depend upon the private parties arranged by their friends.

Again in 1862 the Provincial Exhibition was held in Toronto, the course of its perambulations having been restricted to Toronto, Kingston, Hamilton and London. The area of twenty acres had proved too small for the show, so the entire 32½ acres of the government grant was now devoted to the exposition. Visits to the other three centres of population followed in succeeding years, but the cramped accommodations available at London in 1865 caused great dissatisfaction and led to suggestions of permanent quarters for the Provincial Fair.

In 1866 it was Toronto's turn for the fifth time since the inauguration of the Association in 1846. Those who could recall the very limited scope of the first show were able to make remarkable comparisons. Numerous smaller build-

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 78.

ings now supplemented the Crystal Palace, and over thirty acres of ground was devoted to the housing of exhibits and the accommodation of visitors. The evil characteristics of modern fairs were becoming more prominent, too, for a contemporary account describes the fakirs and hangers-on to be found in every Midway:

"In the immediate vicinity of the main gates, booths and tents are being put up with amazing rapidity in order that no opportunity may be lost in turning an honest penny—and, it is to be feared, many dishonest pennies also. In this booth will be sold intoxicating liquors, and in that jugglers and thimbleriggers will doubtless ply their nefarious trades. In fact 'wide-awakes' who infest every city during exhibition times may be expected in large numbers on the present occasion also. Thieves, pickpockets, gamblers, swindlers, and vagabonds generally, may be expected to hold forth in the neighbourhood of the main gate, and consequently it is to be hoped a large number of detectives will be kept in that quarter to look after them and protect the unwary citizen or credulous countryman from being fleeced by those who live by picking and stealing."[19]

On October 8, 1870, the 25th Provincial Exhibition was held in Toronto, and $14,000 in prizes was offered for the best among the seven or eight thousand entries which the fair attracted. English and Canadian turnstiles were for the first time used to register attendance, and of these the English proved the more accurate. Four years later the fair was once more in Toronto, but before the perambulation was again completed a discussion arose in the city over the comparative suitability of the grounds. In 1877 Toronto did not extend into regions now thickly populated, and among the alternative sites suggested was a large sandy tract of land north of Bloor near St. George Street, High Park, Woodbine Park, and several locations on Carlton Street and the Kingston Road. All of these were rejected, however, and instead the City Council memorialized the Dominion Government to set apart as an Exhibition Park at least fifty acres "of the vacant land not at present required by, or under lease to the Ontario Rifle Association, and known as the Ordnance Reserve, immediately west of

[19]Quoted in Roberts, op. cit., p. 28.

the New Garrison, and south of the Great Western Railway track."

A deputation to Ottawa finally secured a lease of the desired land, the frontage on Lake Ontario being 460 feet, and the Great Western Railway and Dufferin Street being the other boundaries of the triangular-shaped grounds. Guelph and Ottawa attempted to obtain the 1878 exhibition of the Agricultural and Arts Association, but Toronto had been successful in securing it with the understanding that the old grounds and buildings would not be used. The elaborate plans for the development of the new location called for an expenditure of $150,000, and, in spite of the continued opposition of the electors, the City Council proceeded with the work. After three months' activity the finest fair ground in Canada was created. There were only four actual days of the fair, but the attendance was from 30,000 to 45,000 a day. It is interesting to know that the chief means of reaching the grounds was in the special trains run every hour by the Great Western Railway, or by the excursion steamers which left Yonge Street wharf from time to time. The exhibition was in many respects the most successful of the thirty-three held since 1846, but the Association chose Ottawa for the next fair, and disappointed the hopes entertained in Toronto that at least two or three consecutive shows would be held in the new grounds.

Meanwhile, however, the Toronto Electoral District Society and other groups were advocating a permanent annual exhibition in the city, and the Industrial Exhibition Association of Toronto was formed by representatives of the Mechanics' Institute, the Horticultural Society, the Manufacturers' Association, the Poultry Association, the Ontario Society of Artists, and the Toronto Electoral District Society. The first annual fair was to take place during the first three weeks of September, 1879. Grants and subscriptions were made by the city and county councils and numerous other corporations and persons who benefited by the influx of large numbers of visitors, and the enterprise was immediately placed on a strong financial basis.

The first Exhibition comprised twenty-three buildings, of which the Main Building, opened the previous year, was

of a style of architecture similar to that of the old Crystal Palace, and had, in fact, the upper part of the old building. Manufactures, arts, implements and machinery were on exhibit for the entire three weeks; agricultural and dairy products, flowers, fruits and vegetables were to be seen during the second and third weeks; and the show of live stock, poultry, dogs, etc., took place in the third week. Twenty-five cents admission was charged, and the following notice appeared in the newspapers: "Visitors will provide themselves with twenty-five cent pieces, as no change is given at the gates." The exhibition was a great success. Over $19,000 was awarded for the best of the 8,234 exhibits, and about 80,000 people paid admission.

During the course of the Exhibition of 1879 the Princess Louise, wife of the Governor-General, the Marquis of Lorne, visited Toronto, and a ball was given in her honour in the Pavilion in the Allan Gardens. Over 500 guests were present, and the Princess danced quadrilles with Lieut.-Governor the Hon. D. A. Macdonald, Commander A. [illegible]. Boswell, R.C.Y.C., and Senator Macpherson. Before leaving the ball she also took part in a polka "played in fast time", Captain Harbord, A.D.C., being her partner. Among the nineteen dances on the program the waltz was prominent.

In 1880 the length of the show was reduced to two weeks. Two years later it was no longer necessary to close up at dusk, for the electric lights supplied by the Fuller Electric Light Company of New York and the Ball Company of London enabled the show to remain open until 10 p.m., and kept the buildings and grounds in a state of unprecedented illumination. Many unable to attend in the daytime could now do so in the evening. For several years afterward the bright appearance of the grounds at night remained something of a novelty, and particularly to visitors from rural communities. At this period of the Exhibition's history an attendance of 30,000 was considered "a big day".

In 1882 the program of the Exhibition included the inauguration of an electric railway, the first in Canada. This is described in detail elsewhere,[1] but it may be said

[1] See Chapter VIII, pp. 136-8.

here that the undertaking was largely a failure in that year. Those who were attempting it had merely examined one in operation in Chicago, but a few people enjoyed the novelty of a ride on the small locomotive before its use was discontinued from lack of sufficient power to enable the hauling of a car. In 1884, however, the inventor, C. J. Van Depoele of Chicago, supervised the construction and operation of the line, and it was described as "one of the principal attractions of the Exhibition; . . . . nothing could [redacted] more satisfactory." Until 1892 it supplemented the horse-car line half a mile away, and for a fare of five cents carried passengers from the entrance at Strachan Avenue through the grounds to the vicinity of Dufferin Street. The extension, [redacted] 1892, of the King Street line down Dufferin made the little railway unnecessary, and at the same time remedied the inconvenience which had long characterised the approach of visitors [redacted] the Exhibition.

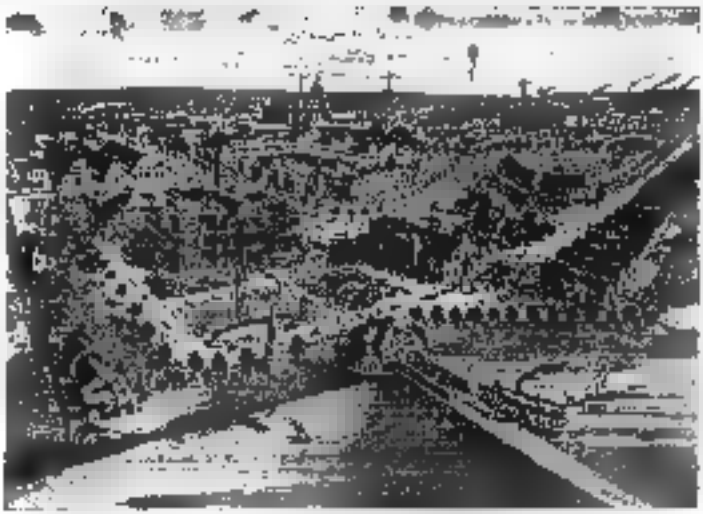
For many years it had been easy to obtain intoxicating liquor at the grounds, for one or more special licenses rendered it legally available. In 1883 the *Globe*, true to its temperance principles, commented editorially on the abuses which had resulted:

"The Exhibition Association cannot afford longer to run counter to public feeling in the matter of liquor licenses; still less can it afford to put itself in the position of actually evading the law by converting one liquor license into sixteen licenses. It is a question whether public opinion is not ripe for a legislative enactment entirely prohibiting the sale of intoxicating liquors at fairs."[20]

The seventeenth Exhibition, 1895, may be taken as typical of the middle period of its history. The buildings and other equipment were then valued at $600,000 and the total attendance was approaching a third of a million people. It was then advertised[21] as "the largest annual exhibition in the world", and "the people's great annual carnival of instruction, business and amusement". In front of the grandstand was a characteristic presentation—"The Relief of Lucknow"; while among the other items in the grandstand performance was Mons. Ernesto Baldanza,

[20] *Globe*, September 24, 1883.

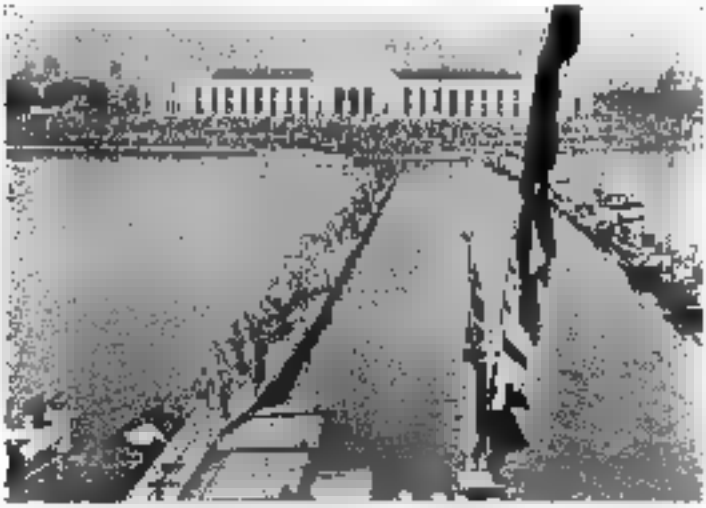
[21] See *Official Programme for Canada's Great Industrial Fair, 1895.*



Reproduced from an old Print by Courtesy of T. M. Roberts, Esq.

View of the Exhibition Grounds, 1891

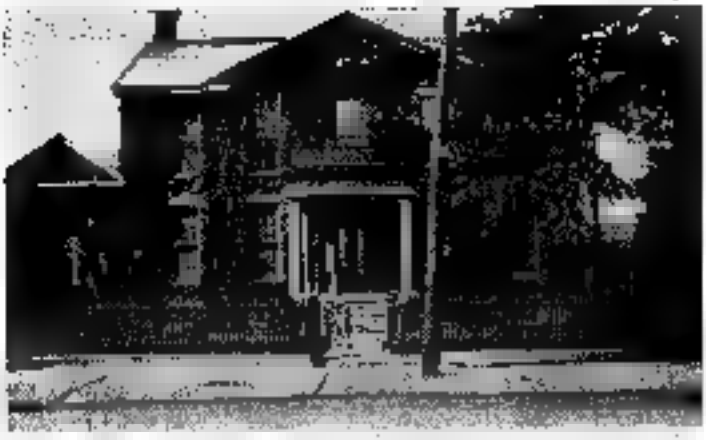
In the foreground is the Dufferin Street Wharf, an important feature when many citizens reached the Exhibition via excursion steamships.



Reproduced by Courtesy of the Toronto Harbour Commissioners.

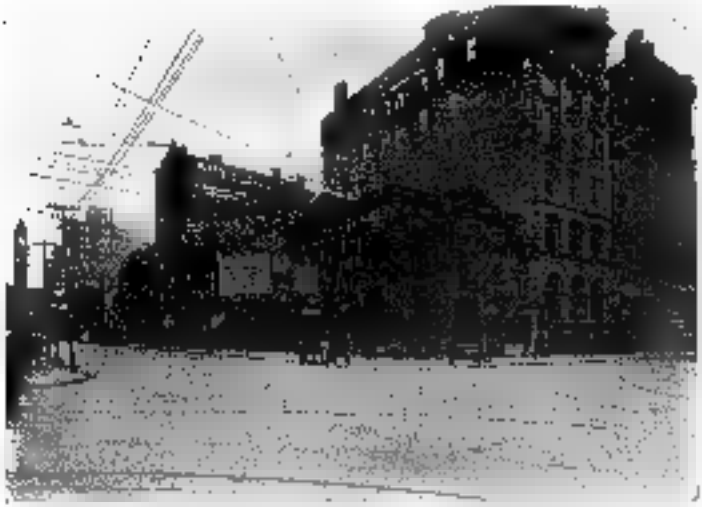
The Start of the Marathon Swim, Canadian National Exhibition

The magnificent Automotive Building may be seen in the background.



HOME OF CHIEF JUSTICE SIR WILLIAM CAMPBELL, 1822-34

This interesting house still stands at the head of Frederick Street. It has for many years been occupied by the Capewell Horse-Nail Company, but its original appearance has not been altered.



THE CAWTHRA HOME, KING AND BAY STREETS

An excellent piece of architecture, this old home recalls the days when Bay Street was a residential district. Its neighbour, the Canada Life building, shared with the present *Mail and Empire* building the distinction of being the chief skyscrapers of the "gay nineties".

"phenomenal Robusto Tenor, of Bologna, Italy", a troupe of Japanese acrobats and entertainers, and a considerable number of divers, singers, dancers and comedians. The Royal Dragoons' Musical Ride and Lance Drill was also to be seen in front of the grandstand.

Among other features at this exhibition was "Society Row"—the headquarters "of all the principal fraternal societies on this continent". This popular section was to be found on the lawn in front of the Main Building. Another somewhat ephemeral feature was the International Bicycle Exhibit which occupied 6,000 square feet of space in the Carriage Building; and there was also a great bicycle tournament. "Exciting single, double and triple" balloon ascensions formed the counterpart of the aeroplane flights of some fifteen or twenty years later. The twelve bands which performed from time to time during the show were entirely from Ontario, and included the best military and civilian organisations.

The section denominated "Exhibition Pointers for the Guidance of Visitors" gives us some interesting information relative to the times. It is announced with great pride that "many of Toronto's main streets and private thoroughfares are asphalted", and that a person may ride on the electric street car for five cents, but "be sure you get a transfer ticket if you want to go from one car line to another". It was the heyday of bicycles, and those who arrived by pedalling themselves along could check their vehicles "just inside the Western Entrance". Private boarding houses were to be had in abundance at from $3 to $5 per week; while under the head "Some of the Hotels of Toronto" the Queen's and the Rossin House top the list at from $3 to $4.50 per day. Thirty-five others are named, including such survivals as the Black Bull and the Bay Horse. Bringing up the rear is the "Y. W. C. Association, 34 Elm Street (ladies only)". The passing of the open bar wrote finis to the activities of many of these inns, though a considerable number of the buildings may still be identified, and a few of the hostelries remain in business.

Among the places of interest which visitors were recommended to see in 1895 were the Lieut.-Governor's Residence, King and Simcoe Streets, and "the New City Hall and

Court House, at the head of Bay Street"; the latter, however, was still some years from completion. The Provincial Lunatic Asylum, Queen Street, had been a building of prominence since its erection in 1846, and the educational and religious buildings, together with the Ontario Parliament Buildings, Osgoode Hall, and St. Lawrence Hall and Market, comprised the chief other places of note. The skyscrapers of that day were the *Mail* Building and the Canada Life Building, at King and Bay Streets, and a view of the city might be obtained from their towers. The places of public entertainment were mainly Massey Hall, Toronto Opera House, Grand Opera House, Princess Theatre and Moore's Musée. Times have greatly changed even in forty years!

In 1904 it was recognised that the Toronto Industrial Exhibition was distinctly national in character, and the name was consequently changed to Canadian National Exhibition. After negotiations lasting three years over 200 acres of the Garrison Common was purchased from the government for $200,000, and this made possible the great modern development of the Fair since 1906, the year of a disastrous and spectacular fire on the grounds. The exhibitions of today are consequently held in a beautiful 350-acre park which, with its buildings, represents an investment of $21,000,000. Almost 2,000,000 visitors annually visit Exhibition City, a self-contained community with its own police force, fire and street-cleaning departments, hospital, post office, bank and telegraph offices, ten miles of paved boulevards, and a mile and a half of waterfront where world-famous aquatic events are held. The entire show has become almost international in scope, and affords a remarkable contrast with the early fairs from which it developed.

CHAPTER XVII

Inns and Taverns

In early days the wayside tavern and the town inn were centres of the social life of settlements to an extent which is hard to realise in modern times. The inn, like the mill, formed the nucleus around which developed many a village; and not infrequently the tavern-keeper, a man of high status in the community, was the best-known and most popular inhabitant. The first church services, elections and circuses were conducted at taverns; while dances, banquets, and the meetings and festivals of Agricultural Societies, lodges and the National Societies of St. George, St. Andrew and St. Patrick were seldom held elsewhere. The conviviality of the general run of innkeepers, together with the pleasures of eating, drinking and smoking, made the hotel an attractive place to many people, and those who, like Sir John Falstaff, enjoyed taking their ease at their inn had plenty of choice in a day of taverns. Though the drinking habits of the period frequently rendered inns anything but pleasant resorts, yet if one avoided the bar-room and centred his attention upon the living-room he might at times find that the roaring logs of the winter fireplace created an attractive atmosphere for the discussion of the questions of the day as well as the gossip of the neighbourhood.

Abner Miles' Inn was for some time the most important, if not also the first hotel in York. His diary and day-book for 1795-98 has survived to give us many interesting details of early life in the town.[1] Whether his establishment was at first more than saloon and store is uncertain, for the entries in his day-book for 1796 note chiefly the sale of goods and liquors. In fact in her memoirs[2] Mrs. Breakenridge stated that York had no inn in 1798, but there are

[1]This interesting relic of early times is in the Toronto Public Library, and may be found in print in John Ross Robertson's *Landmarks of Toronto*, 1894-1914, Vol. I, pp. 445-53.

[2]Quoted in William Canniff: *History of the Settlement of Upper Canada*, 1869, pp. 530-1.

numerous references in the day-book for that year which make certain that the establishment was then a hotel.

Some of the gentry were accustomed to give little dinners at Miles', and the charges for these and for liquor were frequently left unpaid for many months. Messrs. Büby and Hamilton and Commodore Grant are jointly billed in July, 1798, for "twenty-two dinners at Eight shillings, £8 16s. Sixteen to Coffee, £1 12s. Eight Suppers, 16s. Twenty-three quarts and one pint of wine, £10 11s. 6d. Eight bottles of porter, £2 8s. Two bottles of syrup-punch, £1 4s. One bottle of brandy and one bottle of rum, 18s. Altogether amounting to £25 5s. 6d."

Among other events in Miles' Hotel was a "St. John's Dinner", for which Thomas Ridout, Jonathan Scott, Colonel Fortune, Surveyor Jones, Samuel Heron, Mr. Secretary Jarvis, Adjutant McGill and Mr. Crawford are each charged 16s. Chief Justice Elmsley was a prominent patron of the establishment, as was also Judge Powell. A reverend traveller's call at the inn is entered: "Priest from River La Tranche, 8 quarts corn and half-pint wine. Breakfast, 2s. 6d."—a notably frugal order in comparison with the others. Characteristic of the times is an item denoting the giving to "Major Small's soldiers" of a quart of rum "towards digging cellar". A sad entry is that noting the supply to one Hunter of a "small coffin for his child, 8s." The innkeeper was somewhat careless in his spelling, items being frequent for "flower", "nales", "bred" and "chees"; while carrying "frate" to the "skooner" is another example which calls to mind the fact that education was not widely diffused at that period.

Those interested in the names of the drinks of other days will find charges entered in the day-book for "gin slings", "rum slings", "sour punch" and "syrup-punch". The genial landlord occasionally advanced cash to his customers, and carried on in his inn a general store from which butter, eggs, beef, leather, buttons, "cassimere", lumber and other commodities were supplied at the prevailing high prices. His tavern was also the rendezvous for auction sales, town-meetings and club dinners. Miles' Hotel was located on the north side of King Street, between Berkeley and Ontario Streets. He is not mentioned among the

tavern-keeper in 1801, but on December 28, 1805, he was licensed to conduct a tavern on Yonge Street, Thomas Stoyell having taken over the management of Miles' old establishment on King Street. Abner Miles died in the autumn of 1806, an announcement concerning the settling of his estate appearing in the *Gazette* of November 29th.

The issuance of tavern licenses was a matter usually controlled by the Court of Quarter Sessions rather than by the town-meeting, though the records show that it was not done annually but every few years. On March 30, 1801, it was decided that "six persons are a sufficient number for Keeping Tavern in the Town of York", and Hannah McBride, James and Eli Playter, John McDougall, William Cooper, Joseph Hunt and Elisha Beman were approved for the purpose, the applications of John Horton (who had a shop license) and Titus Simons being at the same time rejected. The right to sell wines and liquors was, of course, included, and, "in order that the persons who have been recommended for Tavern Licenses might keep good rule and order in their respective houses, they are appointed Constables in and for the Town of York for the ensuing year," (Hannah McBride excepted).[1]

William Cooper, who was wheelinger, auctioneer and one of York's first schoolmasters, improved the accommodation at his tavern late in the same year, and on December 12, 1801, advertises his "Toronto Coffee House" as ready for business. This combined inn and general store was probably located on Wellington Street. Customers were promised "genteel board and lodging", and "the best liquors, viands, etc."[2] In November, 1802, Cooper inserted the following advertisement in the *Gazette*:

"Toronto Coffee House—William Cooper begs leave to acquaint his friends and the public that he has erected a

[1] Minutes of the Court of General Quarter Sessions, March 30, 1801. See *Report of the Archives of Ontario*, 1932, pp. 16-17. The tavern-keeper of early days was almost always highly respected in the community. As an illustration of the point it may be mentioned that Elisha Beman's wife was a clergyman's daughter whose first husband was Christopher Robinson, and one of whose sons was to become Sir John Beverley Robinson. The status of innkeeper was such that it was no doubt considered that Mrs. Robinson was marrying at least a social equal in accepting Mr. Beman as her second husband.

[2] *Upper Canada Gazette*, December 12, 1801.

large and convenient stable on his own lot opposite the Toronto Coffee House, and stored it well with hay and oats of the very best quality. Travellers will meet with genteel and comfortable accommodation at the above house, and their horses will be carefully attended to.

"He has just received from New York a large supply of the best wines, brandy, Hollands, shrub, fresh lime juice, London porter, oysters, anchovies, red herrings, Devonshire, Navy and Cavia sauces, segars, pipes and tobacco. He has also received a very general assortment of groceries and dry goods, which he will sell cheap for cash or exchange for country produce."[5]

Hotel accommodation in the town was considerably improved at this time by the opening of the York City Hotel. For many years Jordan's was the most fashionable inn in Upper Canada; and in it was held a session of parliament in 1824, after the destruction of the Government Buildings during the American occupation of the previous year. The hotel was located on the south side of King Street, between Berkeley and Ontario Streets, and among its many uses we find that the town's first Sunday School was held there under the direction of a Methodist, the Rev. John Lever.

Another of York's early public houses was that of Daniel Tiers. His establishment was quite distinguished, for he had a billiard table as well as an extra fireplace! His announcement of January 13, 1808, has an English ring:

BEEF-STEAK & BEER HOUSE.

"The subscriber informs his friends and the public that he has opened a House of Entertainment next door east of Mr. Hunt's, where his friends will be served with victualling in good order, on the shortest notice, and at a cheap rate. He will furnish the best strong beer at 8d. N.Y. currency per quart if drunk in his house, and 2s. 6d. N.Y. currency per gallon taken out. As he intends to keep a constant supply of racked beer, with a view not to injure the health of his customers, and for which he will have to pay cash, the very small profits at which he offers to sell will put it out of his power to give credit, and he hopes none will be asked. N.B.—He will immediately have entertainment for man and horse. Daniel Tiers. York, 12th January, 1808."[6]

[5] *Ibid.*, November 27, 1802. [6] *Ibid.*, January 13, 1808.

By 1812 the licensed tavern keepers in the town had increased to nine, as follows: William Smith, Jr., John Evens, Joseph B. Abbott, Seth Cook, Andrew O'Keiffee, John Jordan, Joseph Hunt, Osborn Cox, Thomas Hamilton. The Court of Quarter Sessions at the same time refused the applications of Thadeus Gilbert, John Dicriver and Haynes Bennett.[1] As will be recognised in connection with certain of these names, spelling was in early times seldom consistent, and many a person knew but little and cared less how his name was spelled. The classic example is to be found in the same record, under date of May 16, 1809, and is worthy of a short digression:

"John Hart, otherwise John Hait, who was appointed Constable for Pickering, appeared in Person and said that his name is John Hait and that he was Constable for Gwillimbury the last Year under the name of John Heath, but whose real name is JOHN ALLAN HAIGHT, and therefore prayed to be discharged from his present appointment; and he is discharged accordingly."[2]

A number of early Toronto hotels were located close to the waterfront. In the winter of 1829-30 one Pinder took over from F. T. Billings the house and premises "facing the York Bay", and advertised that he was making extensive additions and intended opening therein the British Coffee House as a hotel and boarding house. He announced in the *Gazette* of December 17, 1829, that "the house is well fitted up, and furnished in a very superior style, and will be ready for the reception of company by the opening of Parliament. Mr. P. feels confident that ladies and gentlemen and families who honour him with their patronage will find every comfort and accommodation. Among the attractions which he intends to add to the establishment will be a reading-room, which will be furnished with the principal English and provincial papers, periodical works, maps, charts, etc., etc. Boarders can be accommodated with or without lodging, by the day, week, month or year, on reasonable terms".[3]

Farther west there was in later years a well-known hotel on the Esplanade, at the foot of Simcoe Street. Erected in 1861, it was kept by a German, John Betz, until 1872,

[1]*Ontario Archives Report*, 1932, p. 204. [2]*Ibid.*, p. 183.
[3]*Upper Canada Gazette*, December 17, 1829.

when it had to be moved to make way for the second Union Station. Like many an inn, Betz's may be assumed to have attracted more thirsty than hungry men; and another tavern on Front Street of which the same might be said was the Rescue, located a little to the east of Bathurst Street. In the fifties it was in charge of Mrs. Hickman, and was a favourite resort for soldiers from the Garrison in the vicinity. The most conspicuous feature of the Rescue was its signboard, "noticeable not only for its great size but for the wonderful and sensational style of its drawing. The subject was the rescue of her infant by a mother from the nest of some enormous eagles in a rocky pass at the head of some apparently inaccessible mountains. How the woman had climbed the mountains was a mystery, and how she was going to descend them was even more mysterious still. But the sign served one good purpose at any rate, and that, as far as the proprietor was concerned, was the chief one —it drew attention to the house and custom to its proprietor. . . . It was always the first place a picquet made for when soldiers were reported as being absent from tattoo."[19]

Another small hotel, which had much in common with the Rescue, was the Halfway House, midway between the Garrison and the old City Hall. The sign of this tavern carried the legend:

"Within this hive we're all alive—
Good liquor makes us funny;
If you be dry, step in and try
The flavour of our honey."

Needless to say, many stepped in and steeped themselves in the "honey", particularly soldiers passing to and from the Garrison—many of whom consequently spent their nights in the guardhouse.

Along the waterfront also, but at an earlier period, was the Steamboat Hotel, at the present site of 64 Front Street East. It was a two-storey building, remarkable for the spirited delineation of a steam packet of vast dimensions extending the whole length of the building just above the upper verandah. In October, 1828, Ulick Howard adver-

[19]Robertson, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 25.

tises for rent his "elegant establishment, unrivalled in this part of the country".[1] Some months later he was successful in letting the hotel, for John Bradley announces on June 11, 1829, that he has taken it over from Ulick Howard, "and begs leave to acquaint the public that he has engaged Mr. Dixon as cook, and his other servants are of the best description. His house will be found at all times supplied with the best provisions, wines and all other sorts of liquors, and neither pains nor expense will be spared to render his establishment worthy the patronage it has so long enjoyed". In a foot-note it is further explained that Mr. Dixon "is well known to be a first-rate cook, having lived with the Governor for three years, and also with other gentlemen of the first respectability in the province". In fact the reputation of the house for "elegant and extensive accommodations" will evidently be more than maintained by John Bradley.[2] The sign of the steamboat was soon after removed, and the inn became known as the City Hotel.

Near by, at the north-west corner of Wellington and Church Streets, was the Ontario House—the Royal York of the eighteen-thirties. David Botsford, late of the Promenade Tavern, Niagara, announces on May 27, 1830, that he has taken over the establishment and fitted it up in a superior style "for the reception of genteel company". In addition to the proximity of the steamboat wharf and public buildings Botsford advertises as an inducement "the extensive view from the galleries, which overlook the town and bay" and render his hotel "particularly delightful". Further, "he has taken care that every department is filled with active and faithful servants, and nothing shall be wanting on his part to render it a fashionable place of resort". He invites visitors to Niagara Falls to make the short and comfortable trip across the lake on the steamer *Canada* and visit his hotel in "the capital of the province, the headquarters for the military, who have a superior band of music attached", the voyage over being attended by "every facility that is necessary for comfort".[3]

There were other special inducements to guests in the

[1] *Upper Canada Gazette*, October 8, 1828.
[2] *Ibid.*, June 11, 1829.
[3] *Ibid.*, May 27, 1830.

Ontario House. In the *Patriot* of May 23, 1837, Botsford advertises that "the parlours are spacious and elegantly furnished with bedrooms attached, airy and pleasant. The beds are large and double, well suited for summer and winter, and it may not be amiss to state that they are warranted free from vermin or insects of any kind, and will be kept so. . . . A splendid pianoforte with a choice selection of music for the use of ladies or gentlemen. . . . For the accommodation of the country gentry wishing to dine before leaving town the dinner hour through the summer season will be at 2 p.m."[14]

The proprietors up to the time that the hotel changed its name from the Ontario House to the Wellington Hotel were Messrs. Campbell, Deering, Pearson, Bernard, Hutchinson and Botsford. In 1845 Russell Inglis refurnished the building and opened it as the Wellington Hotel, and it was patronised by members of the Legislature as well as by frequent visitors from such neighbouring towns as Cobourg, Whitby and Hamilton. The dining arrangements are described by John Ross Robertson as follows:

"On the ground floor at the corner of the main building was the dining-room, a large hall with one great table running down its length where all the guests sat, each, as was the custom of the day, with a bottle of sherry or port before him, for claret was but little drunk, and champagne had not reached its subsequent popularity. Unlike the custom of the present time all the dishes were placed on the table at once and everyone helped himself. The meals were breakfast, lunch, dinner and tea. The price for transient guests was a dollar a day, or for permanent from four and a half to five dollars a week."[15]

A private sitting-room in the Wellington Hotel is notable from the fact that there William Lyon Mackenzie was first received by several members of his family on his return from exile. He proceeded to McIntosh's house on Yonge Street, where a reception of another kind—a riot which the police made no effort to stop—awaited him.

For many years, since it was located close to Weller's Stage Office in the Coffin Block, the Wellington was of great

[14]The *Patriot*, May 23, 1837.
[15]Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 276.

importance to travellers as the leading stage coach hostelry, and stages from all directions brought from eighty to one hundred visitors daily to the establishment. The manager consequently rented the two upper floors of the Coffin House Block as extra accommodation for his guests. The hotel's extensive stables were on Colborne Street, near Church.

Mr. Inglis was still proprietor of the Wellington Hotel in 1858, when it was described as "a comfortable, quiet house, where the charges are moderate and the accommodations good".[14] The establishment gradually sank to the level of a tenement house, however, and in 1861 its demolition to make way for the Bank of Toronto prompted the *Globe* to recall that the "Old Wellington" had been "twenty-five years ago the most popular hotel in Toronto, but it had in time to give place to the three first-class establishments we now possess—the Rossin, American and Revere Hotels".[15]

A hotel of considerable importance at the middle of the century—and earlier—was the North American, on Front Street near Scott. William Campbell was the proprietor in 1836, Thomas Pearson between 1839-1845, and G. C. Horwood in 1846. Evidence that it was a hostelry of prominence is afforded by the fact that on August 8, 1850, when some 200 leading citizens of Buffalo were entertained by the City Council, the dinner which followed the procession of welcome was held there, and the North American was the headquarters of the visitors during their two-day visit to Toronto. W. [illegible]. Pearson, whose father was proprietor of the hotel in the early forties, recalled some interesting information about the North American:

"I used to go up to the flat roof, where a view of the whole city could be obtained, and on a clear day the opposite shore of the lake was quite visible. It was a large four-storey building and the principal hostelry in the city. Connected with the hotel, at the corner of Scott and Front Streets, was a one-storey building which was used for ball and assembly rooms and occasionally as a theatre. . . . On the North American a bell was fixed in a frame on the top

[14] *Descriptive Catalogue of the Provincial Exhibition, 1858*, p. 77.
[15] *Globe*, November 25, 1861. The Revere was renamed the Queen's in 1862, the name Revere later passing to the present Iroquois Hotel.

of the roof, which was rung half an hour before dinner-time in order to notify the guests".[14]

A number of important hostelries were early established on the great route of travel—Yonge Street. The northwest corner of Queen and Yonge Streets, now the business centre of Toronto, was in early times the site of the Sun Tavern, where county meetings and elections were frequently held. It was erected about 1825 by John McIntosh, one of three brothers all of whom were captains of Great Lakes sailing vessels. The building was a large, square, white frame structure, and Charles Thompson and one Wilson were later proprietors. Thomas Elliott, the builder's brother-in-law, took over the hotel about 1830, and under his management business greatly improved. The Sun became headquarters of the Reform party, for McIntosh was a brother-in-law of William Lyon Mackenzie; and Mackenzie, speaking from an upper window of the hotel, frequently addressed crowds of supporters in the street below. In later years the inn was known as the Falcon, and then as the Craven Heifer. In 1855, while conducted by Henry Fulljames, it was destroyed by fire. A large open space to the north of this tavern was well-known in the twenties and thirties as the stopping-place of itinerant menageries and circuses.

Another "house of entertainment" on Yonge Street was the Green Bush Tavern, some distance north of the Sun Hotel. The name had originally applied to a hostelry far northward on Yonge, where its proprietor, Mr. Abrahams, had formerly kept tavern at the sign of the pine or spruce tree, a formal painting of that nature occupying a prominent place near the inn. Nearly a mile above the Green Bush Tavern—just below Charles Street, on the east side of Yonge—was the Gardeners' Arms. Its sign exhibited an

[14] W. H. Pearson: *Recollections and Records of Toronto of Old*, 1914, pp. 32-4 and 44. Probably the North American is the hotel described by "An English Visitor" in December, 1834, as "newly erected . . . and equal in size, elegance and convenience to the Commercial Hotel in Kingston". In general he found the Toronto hotels "numerous and clean; and their prices are by no means extravagant, at least if we judge by the bill rendered at the one we staid at". His very interesting description of Toronto as it was a few months after the city's incorporation was printed in the *Christian Guardian* in December, 1834, and is reprinted in the Toronto Centenary Number of the *New Outlook*, March 14, 1934, p. 168.

heraldic arrangement of horticultural implements, and the building itself was a two-storey frame structure, with a narrow one-storey extension in front and a small wing at the north end. It was described as an unpretentious house of good repute, and troughs and a pump for watering horses and cattle rendered it, in Dr. Scadding's words, "a sylvan halting-place for weary teams".[9] John Ross Robertson gives us a word-picture of the locality as it appeared in 1894:

"For some years the Gardeners' Arms has not been a place of public entertainment. The building has been utilised for various trades and occupations. It is still standing, the second building below Charles Street on the east side of Yonge, but wearing an air of dilapidation in the weather-stained framework, the broken windows and the rickety roof. Waggons of all kinds by the dozen, old and broken, litter up the yard. At one end is a cobbler's little shop. In the wing is a rag shop with piles of rags heaped about, which women and children are assorting.

"Just north of the Gardeners' Arms was the Vauxhall Gardens, a resort conducted in connection with the tavern and deriving its name from the celebrated London gardens, where readers of Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* will remember Joseph Sedley drank too much arrack punch. The garden, with an orchard in its rear, was surrounded by an ordinary fence. The entrance was on Yonge Street, through an archway on which was painted 'Vauxhall Gardens'. Nothing remains of orchard or garden but a reminiscence, as it is flashed into momentary existence by the magic wand of memory."[10]

A directory issued in 1850 mentions this place of amusement with the comment that "the city has also her Vauxhall Gardens (Yonge Street) which have been lately opened to the public, and on the evenings of Monday and Thursday they are tastefully lighted with variegated lamps, and musical entertainments are given."[11] It is of interest to know that the tavern in connection with which the

[9] Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old*, 1873, p. 408.
[10] Robertson, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 19-21.
[11] *Henry Rowsell's City of Toronto and County of York Directory, 1850-1*, p. xx.

Gardens operated—the Gardeners' Arms—was still standing in 1924, when it was being used as a blacksmith shop, the only one within a radius of several miles. The building was then in an advanced state of dilapidation, and was soon afterwards demolished.

A short digression to the westward brings us to the site of a notorious tavern. On the north-west corner of Bloor Street and Avenue Road, where for several years a "depression skyscraper" has stood in a half-finished state, was once the Tecumseh Wigwam, a small low one-storey log cabin with a verandah or "stoop". Erected about 1829, this tavern continued to be a drinking-place for over half a century, and it was a favourite resort, especially on Sundays, of numerous young men of York and vicinity. In the fifties its keeper was David King. His son George joined a band of robbers called the Townsend Gang, at one time the terror of the country, and a few years later he was hanged at Cayuga for the murder of a stage-driver. In 1874 the Tecumseh Wigwam was torn down, and we may safely state that no one was the loser by its demolition.

Proceeding northward from the Gardeners' Arms, the early traveller was almost immediately opposite the Red Lion Tavern. This, the most notable of Yonge Street inns, was located on the northeast corner of Yonge and Bloor Streets and was originally operated by Daniel Tiers, who removed thither from the Beef-steak & Beer House, in York; subsequently it was known as Price's, and it became a very important halting-place for teams which had survived the tremendous struggle involved in hauling loads through the Blue Hill Ravine. Dr. Scadding comments thus upon villages and inns, with special reference to the location of the Red Lion:

"In old European lands, in times by-gone, the cell of a hermit, a monastery, a castle, became often the nucleus of a village or town. With us on the American continent a convenient watering or halting place in the forest for the wearied horses of a farmer's waggon or a stage-coach is the less romantic *punctum saliens* for a similar issue. Thus Tiers', at which we have paused, may be regarded as the germ of the flourishing incorporation of Yorkville. Many a now solitary way-station on our railroads will probably

John Ross Robertson Collection.

THE CRAVEN HEIFER, FORMERLY THE SUN TAVERN, QUEEN AND YONGE STREETS, 1855

The site is now occupied by Woolworth's, and an open space where the Eaton store is situated was an early stopping-place for itinerant menageries.

John Ross Robertson Collection. F. V. Poole.

THE GARDENERS' ARMS TAVERN

Located on the east side of Yonge just below Charles Street, the old building, last used as a blacksmith shop, stood until recent years.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

THE BAR-ROOM OF THE RED LION HOTEL, YORKVILLE

Reproduced by Courtesy of the King Edward Hotel.

A SUPPER DANCE IN THE OAK ROOM, KING EDWARD HOTEL

The rhythm of a good orchestra, a floor show, excellent food, soft lights and beautiful girls combine to make the supper dance one of the most enjoyable of modern social activities. In this instance Luigi Romanelli is providing the music, which is being broadcast—there is even a torch singer at the microphone!

in like manner hereafter prove a centre round which will be seen a cluster of human habitations."[21]

There were numerous reasons for the importance of the Red Lion Tavern:

"By staying at the Red Lion instead of going at once to town the farmers evaded double toll at the Bloor Street gate, as they could go to market and return the same day. Thus it happened as the Home District grew in population the patronage of the Red Lion increased, and nightly it was crowded with farmers, who over their glasses discussed the future prospects of the country, the political questions of the day and the personnel of the officials of the time, while frequently no doubt 'news much older than their ale went round'. These nightly assemblages made the Red Lion the most important political centre in the district when party feeling ran high. The Red Lion was one of the polling-places for the election of representatives for the Home District, and in these days, the balloting being prolonged for a week at a time, the wayside inn was an animated and excited place."[22]

In the early seventies Dr. Scadding found that the Red Lion, "the *Hotel de Ville* of Yorkville", had a Flemish appearance:

"It might have strayed hither from Ghent. Nevertheless, as seen from numerous points of view, it cannot be characterised as picturesque or in harmony with its surroundings. The shield of arms sculptured in stone and set in the wall above the circular window in the front gable presents the following charges arranged quarterly: a Beer-barrel, with an S below; a Brick-mould, with an A below; an Anvil, with a W below; and a Jackplane, with a D below. In the centre, in a shield of pretence, is a Sheep's head, with an H below. These symbols commemorate the first five Councillors or Aldermen of Yorkville at the time of its incorporation in 1853, and their trades or callings; the initials being those, respectively, of the surnames of Mr. John Severn, Mr. Thomas Atkinson, Mr. James Wallis, Mr. James Dobson, and Mr. Peter Hutty. Over the whole, as a crest, is the Canadian Beaver."[23]

[21]Scadding, op. cit., pp. 408-9.
[22]Robertson, op. cit., Vol. 1, p. 92.
[23]Scadding, op. cit., pp. 409-10.

But the memories of the old hotel are best described by John Ross Robertson, writing only two years after it lost its tavern license in 1892:

"The famous old Red Lion Hotel was the first place for the accommodation of travellers to the district subsequently known as Yorkville, and a hostelry which for nearly eighty years kept its doors and gates open for the accommodation of man and beast. Deprived of its license two years ago, the old building now stands silent and mournful, thronged with the ghosts of bearded, bronzed farmers, patriotic Reformers, intriguing politicians, bright-eyed girls, and spruce young men—all classes that made up the society of York and its environs. Its walls echo with strains of music and the merry flick-flack of dancing feet, with fierce political harangues, noisy disputes and wine-provoked laughter. The façade of the building" (See illustration p. 128) "stretches along Yonge Street over one hundred feet. At first it consisted of the central or main buildings; afterward wings and extensions were added. Originally this famous old tavern was clap-boarded and painted white, but, as is so frequent with old Toronto buildings, its walls were stuccoed. In the windows are the antique little square panes of glass as they were put in the black sashes at the beginning of the century, before anyone now living can remember. Only a small portion of the ground floor is now utilised, a little part as a fruit store, and the northern part, which once was the bar-room with its heavy oak beams, as a flour and feed store.

"Perhaps to-day the most interesting feature of the old inn is the ballroom in the second storey. This is an apartment about 40 x 20 feet in dimensions, and 18 feet high, with a ceiling arching from the sides. At each end is a large old-fashioned chimney and fireplace. The walls are covered with panels of wallpaper with narrow blue borders. At the basis of the arch is a painted flaming red border. From the centre of the arch depends hooks for sconces, for the old hostelry was in its prime before the days of oil, when candles were in universal use. This ballroom attracted the devotees of the dance, who drove out or walked in pairs from York to attend the entertainments given there. How many times through those antique windows have floated out the sounds of revelry! How many a couple whose voices are

now hushed in the tombs have whispered soft words in this room! Perhaps here many a maiden has breathed that wonderful 'Yes'. Many an officer from the garrison, or half-pay officers settled in the neighbourhood, frequented these social gatherings and lent to them an air of aristocracy."[15]

A concession farther north, on the south-west corner of St. Clair and Yonge, was located a tavern which was in its heyday in the eighties and nineties, when the Red Lion's existence was drawing to a close. Mike O'Halloran's was in a strategic situation, for it was the last drinking-place before the city was reached; but there was another reason for the extensive patronage enjoyed by "Little Mike". Just south of the tavern was St. Michael's Cemetery, and just north was Mount Pleasant, and the presence of the two burying-grounds greatly increased business. It was a standing joke in Toronto that the driving-shed was always full of hacks after funerals, for the attendants—not to say the mourners—were accustomed to adjourn thither and drown some of their sorrow for the departed. Mike's tavern was also a great rendezvous for sleighing parties from the city, and many a "hoe-down" took place in the ball-room over the driving-shed.

Returning again to the town, we may notice a few more well-known hostelries. In 1831, on the north-east corner of York and King Streets, was erected a two-storey frame building which, until 1843, was known as the Mechanics' Boarding House. In that year James Mirfield, an Englishman, established therein the Shakspeare Hotel. In later years Thomas Kerr was landlord. The house was patronized particularly by theatrical companies which visited Toronto, and for a time there was a large frame theatre at the rear of the hotel, the entrance to which was by a lane from King Street. In 1876 the Shakespere was rebuilt and refurnished (even the name was re-spelled!), and James Powell conducted therein a hostelry of somewhat higher reputation. The Imperial, by which name it is now known, is still in business on the corner with two other old-timers—the Prince George and the Iroquois.

A hotel known as the Beauchamp House stood until 1902 on the northwest corner of Front and John Streets, the

[15]Robertson, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 88.

site now being part of the railway freight yards. It was a plain two-storey frame building, and had been an inn from the time of its erection in 1825. Edward Wright was the original proprietor, and the place soon took the name Greenland Fishery owing to the chance visit of a sailor. The seaman, in need of money and possessed of some artistic ability, was engaged to paint a signboard for the inn. Being familiar with whaling voyages he accordingly painted an arctic or Greenland landscape on one side, while on the reverse was a representation of vessels engaged in the capture of a whale. The name of the proprietor and the words "Greenland Fishery" were inscribed near by. The whole work, considered to be both spirited and well executed, attracted considerable attention, and added not a little to the landlord's revenue. Mr. Wright, the proprietor, was elected alderman during 1834, the year in which the town of York became the city of Toronto.

Still standing on the north-east corner of York and Richmond Streets is a frame building of a reddish brown hue, in recent years Abiscot's second-hand bookstore. Built about a century ago, it was for many years Crispin's Tavern, a popular resort among gentlemen's servants, butlers and the like, for Richard Crispin —or "Coachman Dick" as he was familiarly known to his patrons—had come out with Lieutenant-Governor Sir John Colborne in 1828, and had served some years as driver of the official coach. He was a big sandy-haired jolly Englishman, and his wife had formerly been employed in Sir John's household. Originally a bright yellow, the dingy building is now largely hidden by signboards, but has not otherwise been altered materially since its erection; and when it was built the York-Richmond-Bay-Queen block was chiefly vacant land owned by two men—a negro named John Long and one Crowther, a carpenter,—the former being in possession of the western portion. To Helliwell's Brewery on the Don, which supplied the tavern with beer, the proprietor was known and entered in the books merely as "Coachman" Crispin. Soon after his death the corner portion of the building became a shop, and its present tenant dispenses soft drinks—as close as possible, under modern laws, to the tavern's traditional activities. To the northward on York Street, as one approaches Os-

goods Hall, have long been located at the sign of the three gilt balls (though the symbol may be missing), numerous small but interesting pawnshops, characteristically overloaded with a conglomeration of second-hand goods which would defy classification.

In 1833, when York had a population of 8,731, the taverns and inns numbered forty, two of which had bowling alleys. There were also, we are informed in George Walton's *Directory*,[28] seven "respectable" boarding houses, and no doubt a considerable number of the other variety! A complete list of the taverns during the early years of the city will be of particular interest to those who appreciate the quaint in names, though but little of romance was inherent in most of the establishments themselves. The following list, totalling twice as many as existed four years earlier, has been compiled from Walton's *City of Toronto and Home District Directory for 1837*:

Albion Inn, Church Street; Anchor Inn, Church Lane; Antrim Inn, near the Catholic Church; William Atkins' Eating House, Market Square; Auld Lang Syne Tavern, Church Street; Argyle Inn, Newgate Street; Black Swan Tavern, 211 King Street; King Alfred Tavern, 197 King Street; Bay Horse Tavern, Yonge Street; Belfast Tavern, Market Lane; Black Bull Tavern, Lot Street; Blue Bonnet Tavern, Yonge Street; Blue Bell Inn, Lot Street West; Ontario House Inn, Market and Church Streets; Bull's Head Inn, 129 King Street; Red Lion Tavern, Yonge Street Road; Queen's Head Tavern, Sandford's Corner, Lot Street; North American Hotel, Front Street; Cavan Arms Tavern, King Street East; Alex. Chisholm's Tavern, 127 King Street; City Hotel, Front Street; Stag Tavern, Market Square; Cotter's (New) British Coffee House, Front Street; Grantham's (Old) British Coffee House, King Street; Cross Keys Inn, York Street; Crown Inn, King and New Streets; Dog and Duck Tavern, Market Square; Edinburgh Castle Tavern, Church Street; Farmers' Hotel, Market Square; Farmers' Arms Inn, 88-90 King Street; City of Toronto Tavern, Front Street; Peacock Inn, Church Street; Burns' Tavern, 8 King Street East; Ship Tavern, Market Street; Greenland Fishery

[28] *George Walton's York Commercial Directory for 1833*. 1833. Facing p. 125.

Tavern, near Parliament Buildings, Front Street; Half Moon Inn, 2 New Street; Camelion Tavern, Church Street; Mansion House Hotel, Newgate Street; William the Fourth Tavern, Market Square; Three Loggerheads Inn, Yonge Street; Four Alls (Awls?) Tavern, March Street; White Swan Tavern, 26 Lot Street; Michael Keatley's Tavern and Chop House, King Street West; G. Kendrick's Tavern, Lot Street; John Kerr's Tavern, Palace Street; York Hotel, King Street East; Toronto Inn, Yonge Street, Teamsters' Inn, Market Lane; John McDonald's Inn, Market Lane; Rob Roy Tavern, 70 Yonge Street; Neptune Inn, New Street; White Horse Tavern, King Street West; Michael O'Connor's Inn, Market Lane; Harp and Crown Tavern, Newgate Street; Old Countryman Inn, 127 King Street; Joseph Palin's Hotel, on the Peninsula; All Nations' Tavern, 92 King Street; Harp Tavern, Church Street; Race Horse Inn, Church Street; Raye's Tavern, Yonge Street Road; Red Lion Inn, Market Lane; Rising Sun Inn, Newgate Street; Carpenters' Arms Inn, 210 King Street; Rockingham Arms Tavern, March Street; Union Hotel, Market Square; S. T. Smith's Inn, 14 King Street; Steamboat Inn, Bay Shore; Royal Saloon, Church Street; City Arms Tavern, Market Lane; St. Lawrence Hotel, Market Square; St. George and the Dragon Inn, Church Street; Sun Tavern, Lot and Yonge Streets; Crown and Anchor Tavern, Yonge Street; Yorkshire Arms Tavern, Newgate Street; Toronto Inn, Yonge Street; Toronto and Trafalgar Inn, Church Street; White Lion Inn, March Street; and Golden Ball Inn, Yonge Street.

These establishments, many of which were no more than bar-rooms, total seventy-eight, and the population of the city in 1836 was only 9,652, exclusive of the military, those confined in the jail, and such transient persons as immigrants *en route* to other parts of the province. Included in the list is Joseph Palin's Hotel, on the Peninsula. The mention of this inn recalls that it was first called The Retreat on the Peninsula and had an interesting manager. Early press announcements are usually exceedingly entertaining, and not infrequently contribute much to the delineation of the character of "the subscriber", as he commonly called himself. Reflect upon this neat advertisement of Michael O'Connor, proprietor of the first hostelry on the

Island, and operator of that grandiloquently-named horse-boat, the *Sir John of the Peninsula*:

"Michael O'Connor, formerly Steward of the Steam Packet *Canada*, begs leave respectfully to announce to the Inhabitants of York, and to strangers visiting the capital of Upper Canada, that he has opened a Hotel on the Peninsula, opposite the town; where he will be ready to accommodate Sportsmen, Parties of pleasure, and individuals who may wish to inhale the Lake breeze, with every kind of refreshments. His Wines and Liquors are particularly selected and will be found equal, if not superior, to any in the country. He trusts that from long experience, and strict attention to business, he merit a share of public favour, and that the Retreat on the Peninsula will be patronized especially by those whose recollection of the Spanish Peninsula will ever be dear to their memory, as recorded in the pages of British History.

"N.B. As the proprietor has established a Horse Boat to run regularly between York and this place, ladies and gentlemen can make certain of returning to suit their own convenience.

"Peninsula, Sept. 7, 1833.

"The York Papers, *Montreal Herald*, *Kingston Chronicle*, *Gore Mercury* and *Niagara Gleaner* are requested to give the above three insertions, and send their accounts to the proprietor."[13]

On the north-west corner of Church and Colborne Streets, (the latter formerly known as Market Lane), there once stood a frame hotel, the landlord of which was a negro with the somewhat inappropriate name of Snow. In 1848 Joshua Heard erected a brick hostelry on the site, and its upper floors were for a time occupied by the Masonic and Orange Lodges. Among the later proprietors of this Inn was John Montgomery, formerly associated with the tavern on north Yonge Street which was the rendezvous of the rebels of '37.

The mention of Snow's Inn recalls the fact that negroes were not infrequently successful tavern-keepers in early Toronto. Another well-patronised tavern of which the landlord was a negro was that at the head of Toronto Street,

[13]The *Courier of Upper Canada*, October 5, 1833.

where the Post Office now stands. In the early forties the frame hotel on that location was run by James Mink, and adjoining it were extensive stables. Mink retired from business with quite a fortune, and appropriated $10,000 of it to attract a respectable white man as husband for his daughter. One was found and the pair set out on their wedding trip in the Southern States, where the man (as John Ross Robertson tells the story), "with a villainy that we are pleased to say characterises few white men, sold his bride into slavery and abandoned her. Through the efforts of Mink's friends in Canada, and the payment of a large sum of money, Miss Mink was freed and brought back to Toronto, and lived for years with her father in the old home on the hill, on the east side of the Don and Danforth Road."[22]

The Chewett Buildings, structures of red brick at the corner of King and York Streets, first housed John Cotter's New British Coffee House. Commenced in 1833, the building was opened for business in the following year. During the Rebellion of 1837 the Coffee House was closed, and in later years it was used as a barracks, and then as officers' quarters. In 1842 John Ellah carried on a boarding house, private hotel and club-house in the building, the club-rooms later developing into the home of the Toronto Club; and in 1852 a dancing academy occupied part of the old Coffee House. Three years later the Rossin brothers purchased the property with the intention of erecting a hotel, and the Rossin House, opened in 1857, was the result of their enterprise.

A publication almost contemporary with the opening of the Rossin House gives an enthusiastic description of its merits; it says, in fact, that "from its capacity, and the completeness of its arrangements for accommodating travellers and permanent boarders in the most perfect style of modern hotel-keeping, it has superseded and shut up nearly the whole of the other first-class hotels of the city". Referring to it as "among the chief architectural ornaments of the city", the account states that the land and building cost £55,000, the hotel being "five stories in height, faced with white pressed brick, with substantial dressings of Ohio freestone, handsome iron pillars, cornices and balconies".

[22]Robertson, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 50.

The frontage on King Street was 202 feet 5 inches, and on York 151 feet 10 inches. We are further informed that "the ground floor comprises a number of handsome shops, varying from 14 to 23 feet in width, and 50 to 60 feet in depth, each elegantly furnished with large plate-glass windows, and having a cellar attached. The offices of the hotel are also on the ground floor. The main entrance, 20 feet wide, is on York Street. The whole number of rooms for the reception of boarders, exclusive of reading-rooms and the principal parlours, is about 220, and during the Exhibition the proprietors will be able to accommodate as many as 500 guests. Fare $2.50 per day."[29]

The enthusiasm of one man for the Rossin House carried him away into intricacies of extravagant language seldom equalled:

"Within its walls is congregated every appliance which affluence can desire, every pleasure which luxury can crave. Here are alluring condiments to tempt the most fastidious taste, vinous acidities to lubricate, and gastronomic ponderosities to titilate the palate! The prandial morceau here ceases from troubling, and the sated stomach is at rest. What magical transformations here await human deglutition!"[30]

In a somewhat more conservative tone the same writer notes the elaborate equipment of the hostelry: the two commodious private entrances . . . . an extensive reading room, lighted by a large and handsome glass dome . . . . fifteen elegantly furnished stores on the ground floor . . . . a long row of parlours and reception rooms, the principal of which is a ladies' parlour. . . . a dining-room 100 feet by 38, and 18 feet high, adjoining which is the carving room, dish room, dessert room, and a glazed gallery connecting these with the kitchen and china pantry . . . . three staircases, two for the use of guests and the third for servants . . . . 220 rooms for the reception of boarders . . . . a very ex-

[29] *Descriptive Catalogue of the Provincial Exhibition, 1858*, p. 77. For an account of the charges and living conditions—even to washing clothes—in Toronto hotels prior to the Rossin House, see the Rev. Henry Christmas' description in his *Canada in 1848: Pictures of Canadian Life, or the Emigrant Churchman*, 1850. Vol. I, pp. 68-70.

[30] Alfred Sylvester: *Sketches of Toronto*. 1858. pp. 18-19.

tensive bar-room, with billiard table underneath . . . . a barber's shop and gentlemen's bathing-room containing ten baths . . . . and a Book and News Depot where one may obtain local or European journals, or handsomely bound volumes "which address alike the students of light or abstruse literature".[11] Such advantages in the eighteen-fifties placed the Rossin House far in advance of the general run of inns and taverns—it was, in fact, for some years considered the best hotel west of New York.

The disastrous fire of November, 1862, destroyed the building, and the Rossins, disheartened, left the reconstruction of the hostelry to Dr. Chewett. The Rossin House was rebuilt in 1863 and continued to operate under that name until 1909, when it was re-named the Prince George Hotel. During the century since the British Coffee House was established on the corner the site has been a centre of the social life of the city. Early a fashionable resort, the Coffee House was noted as a gathering place of the St. Andrew's and St. George's Societies and of the Toronto Club; indeed it is said that each of these organisations was inaugurated in 1835-36 in the rooms of the establishment. The Rossin House was for many years the headquarters of the Liberal party, and the scene of many historic political meetings, banquets and balls. Among the proprietors after Marcus and Samuel Rossin were G. P. Shears, the Nelson brothers and the Thompsons, father and son, Samuel Thompson having earlier been closely associated with Henry Winnett of the old Queen's, the famous contemporary hostelry. The Prince of Wales' suite were quartered at the Rossin House in 1860, the Prince himself being entertained at Government House. Nine years later Prince Arthur of Connaught was a distinguished guest at the same hostelry.

The only hotel in Toronto in the late fifties which could be considered a competitor of the Rossin House was the American House, at the corner of Yonge and Front Streets. In the *Descriptive Catalogue of the Provincial Exhibition* (1868) it is referred to as a hotel of great "intrinsic merit".[12] It was a brick building erected about 1840 by Mr. Rennie, who was succeeded as proprietor by A. F. Pearson in 1853. After five years under his management it passed into the

[11] *Ibid.*, pp. 19-20. [12] *Descriptive Catalogue*, p. 77.

hands of Messrs. David Walker (later of the Walker House) and Paterson, "who have refitted and refurnished it in all those details which add so much to the comfort and pleasure of its inmates". Ninety rooms, many of them quite spacious, and a dining-room 60 feet by 30, and capable of seating 200 persons, placed this hotel in the first class. Its situation near the docks and railways, as well as its comfortable and home-like atmosphere, rendered it popular. Board was $2 per day, and the American could accommodate 150 guests. It remained a well-known hostelry until 1869, when it was demolished. During his visit to Toronto in 1842 Charles Dickens was a guest at this house.

Among private hotels and boarding houses in 1858 probably the Robinson House, near the corner of King and Bay Streets, was outstanding. Those who wished to avoid the formality and bustle of the regular hotels were assured of every comfort in the Robinson House, which contained forty-eight bedrooms. It was "presided over by Mr. John Montgomery, whose experience and well-known urbanity are a sufficient guarantee of the comfort of his guests".[33]

The regular amusements available in Toronto in the late fifties were closely associated with saloons, two of the more pretentious of which were the Terrapin, (formerly the St. Nicholas, and situated on King Street near the site of the present King Edward Hotel), and the Apollo Saloon and Concert Room on the same street. In describing the attractions of these places of entertainment a contemporary publication introduces the subject by noting that "we believe there is no city of its size on the continent which is pestered with so many saloons and taverns; and, if the morals and habits of our people were to be judged by this criterion, the stranger would form a very unfavourable and unjust opinion".[34]

The Apollo Saloon appears to have staged nightly a show which may be called the forerunner of the night club, though it was available upon much more reasonable terms. The price of admission was only twelve and one-half cents, and from his modest investment the patron was entitled to "a smoke or a drink", as well as to witness a "performance of negro minstrelsy, comic and sentimental singing, etc". The

[33] *Ibid.* [34] *Ibid.*, p. 79.

actors, Mr. Burgess and Mr. Den Thompson, are described as "inimitable in their way . . . . the one as a negro performer, and the other as a 'broth of a boy' from the Emerald Isle".[28]

Eastward and westward of the town were numerous well-known inns. To the west, where the roadway along Lot (Queen) Street turned northward, was early located Sandford's Inn, a watering-place on the east side of the bend which was particularly welcome to teams on their way to town. A conspicuous pump was available to fill the large trough—a long section of a huge pine tree dug out like a canoe. A little to the eastward, opposite the Garrison Common, was a rival of Sandford's known as the Blue Bell Tavern. This notable inn carried at the top of a strong and lofty pole in front of its door a sign appropriate to its name, which swung to and fro within a frame. Both of these inns were long familiar to travellers along the Lake Shore Road, as well as to those who entered York from the north and west old Dundas Street. At the middle of the century, in fact, the Blue Bell gave the name Blue Bell Village to the locality. Of similar importance to travellers was the Black Bull Hotel, at the corner of Queen and Maria (Soho) Streets.

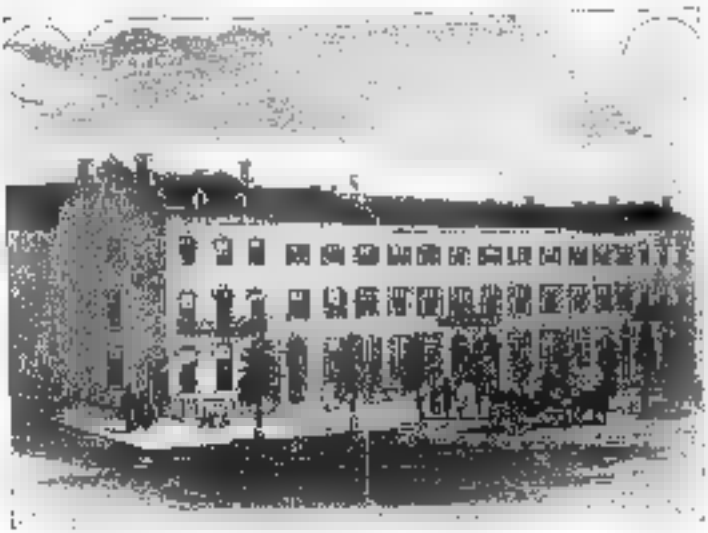
A short distance to the west of the Blue Bell, at the junction with Dundas Street (now Ossington Avenue), stood the Queen's Head Tavern, kept by Lewis Bate, and famous as a resort for city people on summer evenings. Like so many other taverns it was an unpretentious structure of frame, with a verandah facing both Queen and Dundas Streets, and a capacious horse-trough and small driving-shed on the Dundas Street side. After turning westward again from the Ossington Avenue section of old Dundas Street and proceeding beyond Dufferin Street, travellers of other days reached a locality known as the "Appii Forum" or "The Three Taverns", the hostelries being frame buildings much alike in appearance—Collard's Hotel, Joseph Church's Brown Bear Tavern and the Queen Street Hotel, "Bob" James, proprietor. Here, both in summer and winter, racing men were wont to try out their horses and arrange contests. About one hundred yards farther on was the Brockton Toll-bar, kept for many years

[28] *Ibid.*

John Ross Robertson Collection.

The Blue Bell Tavern

The nucleus of Blue Bell Village, this inn opposite the Garrison Common was long well-known to travellers entering Toronto from the north-west and west.



Canadian Illustrated News.

The Queen's Hotel of 1865

This shows the first Queen's, earlier called Sword's Hotel and the Revere House. As may be seen from the illustration, a number of separate buildings were combined to form the hotel. In the vicinity at that time were "several comely mansions within their garden walls shaded with trees"—among them Holland House and Bishop Strachan's residence.

LOOKING NORTHWARD FROM THE INTERSECTION OF YORK AND RICHMOND STREETS, 1934

Hardly to be distinguished under the modern billboard decorations is "Coachman" Crispin's Tavern, 1836, a clapboard structure erected a few years earlier and used as a grocery store. An even dozen second-hand stores occupy the other ancient buildings leading to Osgoode Hall.

THE TAVERN TYRONE, 125-127 QUEEN STREET WEST

Among many other dilapidated buildings a hundred yards west of the City Hall stands the old Tavern Tyrone. The cows of its proprietor, John Trowman, were responsible for those unique stock-yard gateways by which the Bench and Bar still approach Osgoode Hall.

by James Kerr. Near the gate was a small general store in charge of Mrs. Larkin, who was also postmistress of Brockton.

In 1850 there was a well-known tavern in what is now the east end of the city, but the entire district was then a rural locality. The Butchers' Arms was located on the east side of Mill Lane (now Broadview Avenue), between the present Sparkhall and Hogarth Avenues. About 1845 Thomas Smith built the house, selling it a few years later to William Vine. The tavern was well patronised by the sporting fraternity, for there was a race-course on the south side of the Kingston Road where the Sunlight Soap Works was later erected; and there were, too, numerous devotees of cock-fighting in the vicinity, that so-called sport not then being illegal. There were other customers who, entirely undesired by the keeper, frequented the Butchers' Arms and made it notorious; these were members of the Brooks' Bush Gang, a group of hardened criminals whose headquarters were a short distance eastward. At least one of the gang was hanged, but others equally guilty escaped conviction. When the Butchers' Arms was at its height there were few buildings in the neighbourhood. One or two were located across the road, and to the north were the brickyards of Whitemore and Stotesbury, while there was a large expanse of vacant land to the southward. The tavern was discontinued in 1877, and William Vine died two years later; but the old building was standing in 1907, and the innkeeper's widow, aged ninety, was still living. The whole district, however, was then vastly changed, wayside taverns were fast disappearing, and the rough and tough days of heavy drinking were slowly but surely approaching their end.

About a mile to the southward, near the south-east corner of Queen Street and Broadview Avenue (formerly the Kingston Road and Scadding Street, respectively,) was located the Tam O' Shanter Inn. A swinging sign depicting a white horse with Tam astride lent character to the place, and in the rear a towering elm was a noted landmark. The location should with more reason be remembered, however, because in the next house lived Alexander Muir, well-known Toronto school teacher, and famous as the author of *The Maple Leaf Forever*.

In the same vicinity was the Rising Sun Inn, opened about 1844 by William Knight. Immediately behind it was a race-course, and the followers of that sport formed the greater part of the tavern's patrons. It was for some years the only inn between the Don River and Leslie's nursery, but in the early fifties other taverns were opened. In 1857 the old race-course ceased to be used, and the Rising Sun, its business greatly diminished, was closed soon afterwards.

During the same period, about seventy years ago, there stood one mile to the eastward, on the Kingston Road, the hub of the village of Leslieville—Uncle Tom's Cabin. This hotel was kept by two typical Englishmen, George Smith and William Cook, and it was a centre of the social life of the district. Brick-making and tree-growing were the principal occupations of the inhabitants round about, and as these industries were inactive in the winter months Uncle Tom's was the rendezvous for cards, dominoes and drinking. Although beer and whisky sold for two-pence a glass, it is said that there was but little drunkenness at this hotel. About 1874 "Codder" Smith and his partner sold out to a son-in-law of "Bill" Vine, proprietor of the Butchers' Arms, and he in turn disposed of the house to Henry ("Hank") Callendar, who remodelled the tavern and operated it under the name Callendar's Hotel until the license was taken away many years later.

In 1897, when John Ross Robertson was making his notable collection of Toronto *Landmarks*, there was a two-storey red brick building at 1010 Queen Street East. The structure itself, however, was neither old nor unusual, but at its western end was a well of fresh water. This well provided a link with the past, and we cannot do better than let John Ross Robertson tell the tale:

"Fifty years ago that well and clumsy home-made pump formed part of the equipment of a roadside tavern yard. The tavern itself was a long low building, always painted a dazzling white, with a cottage roof and green shutters on its four front windows, which, two on either side, flanked a door, also painted green, in the centre.

"A few yards distant from the western end of the tavern was a low red building used as a driving-shed. Between the hotel and shed was the well referred to. At the eastern end

of the hotel and somewhat to the south of it stood two substantial uprights between which hung a heavy wooden signboard, explaining to the world at large and teamsters in particular the purposes for which the building was intended. The hostelry stood about fifty feet back from the roadway then called the Kingston Road, and now known as Queen Street East. In front of it were three heavy posts, that the aforesaid teamsters might there secure their horses while they themselves partook of liquid comfort at the bar, which was at the western extremity of the hostelry in convenient proximity to the pump.

"The tavern, and much of the land surrounding it, was owned by a pioneer settler named Charles Watkins, who came out from England early in the thirties. The hotel was built in 1835 or the year previous. Watkins liked farming better than hotel-keeping, and followed the former pursuit while he rented the tavern. The first landlord was known as Sandy Watson. He kept hotel there for a dozen years, and then James Shaw rented the place.

"Tavern-keeping in that locality was then in its palmiest days. There was an almost continuous stream of traffic passing by during the winter,—great, comfortable farmers' sleighs bringing in loads of produce to the rising young city; rough, heavy wood-sleighs, piled high with sweet-scented pine and rough cordwood; besides vehicles conveying passengers and the mails, for in those days the Kingston Road was one of the mail routes. All year round, but particularly during the winter, the many taverns in this locality —Shaw's was the most easterly one at the time—did a roaring trade. Mr. Shaw was very fond of horses, and it was one of the sights of the neighbourhood to see the black hostler, an old escaped slave known as 'Doc', trot out Mr. Shaw's team to water every morning."[28]

The large number of taverns in early times, and the excessive drinking that was typical of the period, made some regulation of bar-rooms essential, though it was exceedingly elementary. As early as 1818 the Magistrates ordered that "bars are to be closed on the whole of the Lord's Day, and on no account, except in cases of extreme necessity or to give refreshments to persons lawfully travelling, to be

[28] Robertson, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 310.

opened; nor is any spirituous liquor to be sold or suffered to be drunk otherwise in the premises on the Sabbath Day; In the winter, i.e., from 20th September to 20th March, bars to be closed at 9 p.m., and in summer at 10 p.m., and after these hours not to be opened except to afford accommodation to travellers". Innkeepers were warned likewise that they must not "permit any person to remain drinking or tippling" in their taverns—except travellers or "such as shall be invited by any traveller and shall accompany him only during his abode there, and other than labouring and handycraftsmen".[27]

In the year the city of Toronto was created, the Grand Jury, in commenting upon inns and taverns, included them all under the name "Tippling Houses". In 1836 it was enacted that bars should remain shut every Sunday and on Christmas and Good Friday, and that each inn must have at least three beds and stabling accommodation for two horses; while in 1841 certain games came into disfavour, for we find that no license would be given to any tavern-keeper who kept a "bowling alley, ten-pin alley, Fives Court, or other gaming resort", or who kept shop in the same building. The demand for tavern and shop licenses increased greatly as time passed, and as early as the forties there was some public feeling against bars, though an increased license fee was the chief result. In 1836 and 1837 Grand Juries were particularly outspoken about the "great increase of crime and pauperism due to the large number of taverns", which not only affected the victims of intemperance but also "the unfortunate children of such parents, who, whilst they are trained in every species of falsehood or deception, become inured to crime and wickedness, ... and cannot fail to grow up a pest and a nuisance to society". Little, however, appears to have resulted from these attacks on the liquor evil.

That many a so-called hotel was little more than a barroom is obvious to those who can remember the days prior to the Ontario Temperance Act. At least as early as 1841 it was found that many licensed inns in Toronto had no

[27] See J. Edmund Jones: *Pioneer Crimes and Punishments in Toronto and the Home District*, 1924, pp. 163-173, for a résumé of the Court records upon which the material in this and the following paragraph is based.

accommodation for travellers. A special committee of the Council reported as follows on January 4, 1841:

"Your committee have examined every licensed inn in the city and liberties. In all cases where there could exist a doubt of the existence of the accommodation required by the statute your committee have proceeded through the entire premises, and have ascertained that twenty-two licensed innkeepers are entirely destitute of stables, that eleven are destitute of a single spare room for the accommodation of travellers, that fifteen have not a spare bed over those required for their families, and that six of the above number possess none of the accommodations of an inn except a bar."[28]

In 1846 the Toronto Magistrates were curiously optimistic, for it was considered that, if bar-rooms contained a copy of the Lord's Day Act, drinking on Sundays would be curbed; and it was accordingly ordered that one be hung in every such room. Two years later a committee of the Magistrates of the Home District passed a resolution suggesting that the Legislature adopt the principle "that no houses should be licensed as inns where intoxicating liquors are sold".[29] Nothing came of the suggestion, however, and, though in later years the principle of local option enabled many districts to abolish the bar, conditions in Toronto steadily became worse. Police statistics for 1857 show that approximately one-ninth of the inhabitants of the city were haled before the magistrate for crimes or misdemeanours arising from the drinking customs of the day. In the one year 4,996 persons, of whom 1,025 were women, were drunk or disorderly or were accused of one or another of the crimes usually associated with heavy drinking; and at the same time vagrancy was becoming so common that contemporary writers refer to beggars as everywhere a nuisance, pestering people outside stores, churches and homes with a tenacity of purpose that brooked no denial.

As the city increased in size, so, for many years, did the taverns and beer-shops in number, and in 1874 there were 633 licensed places to get liquor—and, in addition, Toronto had plenty of bootleggers. Two years later the

[28] Minutes of the City Council, January 4, 1841.
[29] Jones, *ibid.*

Women's Christian Temperance Union requested the City Council to limit the taverns to one per 1,000 population. As a result of their petition licenses were restricted to 215 taverns and 100 shops, and the license fee was increased to $200—a sum which suggests the profitable nature of the business. By 1911, though the 1874 population of 68,000 had been multiplied more than six times, public sentiment had restricted the licenses to 110 tavern, 50 shop and [illegible] wholesale. The lucrative nature of the hotel business in the days of the open bar is best shown by the fact that $25,000 could easily be obtained for the license of a small establishment; and it was well-known, too, that the control of many licenses had passed to the owners of breweries and distilleries. In 1914 still higher prices were paid, for a newspaper informs us that "a shop license was transferred recently in this city at the price of $38,000, and a hotel license at the price of $52,000. The bar should be abolished, and the shop with it",[40]—a wish that was soon [illegible] become an established fact; but we have gone too far ahead.

A roll-call of the chief hotels of Toronto in the nineties will be of interest. Visitors to the Exhibition in 1895 were promised the best accommodations at the Queen's Hotel and the Rossin House, which lead the list at $3 to $4.50 a day. Among the others will be noticed the Black Bull and the Bay Horse, names reminiscent of an earlier period:

"Walker House, Palmer House, Albion Hotel, Clancy's Hotel, Richardson House, Black Horse Hotel, Grand Union Hotel, Hotel Metropole, Arlington, Elliott House, Kensington Hotel, Russell House, Commercial, Daly House, Power House, Robinson House, Clyde Hotel, Grosvenor House, Somerset House, O'Connor House, Schiller House, Black Bull Hotel, Carleton House, Bay Horse Hotel, Empress, Crystal Palace, Imperial Hotel, Armory Hotel, York Hotel, Nealon House, Union House, Gladstone House, Lake View Hotel, Brown's Avonmore."[41]

The gradual development of temperance sentiment, as a result of which liquor-drinking in public places was restricted and finally prohibited, put many of these inns and taverns—and many others of less merit which were never

[40] *The Globe*, February 7, 1914.
[41] *Official Programme for Canada's Great Industrial Fair, 1895.*

more than saloons—out of existence, and left the hotel business proper to a few *bona fide* establishments, in which category several of the above still remain; and of those of the primitive type not a few may yet be seen among the tumbledown shacks which, in spite of the ravages of time, still contrive to remain propped up, sometimes between incongruous neighbours of recent construction. After nearly a century, for example, the frame of the Tavern Tyrone still remains at 125-127 Queen Street West; and it is quite likely that, if one could trace their history, a good half hundred public houses of other days might be discovered still standing in the older portions of the city. But—to return to the larger hotels—the importance of "houses of public entertainment", lessened somewhat by the coming of the railway, was still further diminished by the speedy travel made possible by the motor-car, and the intimate touch between host and guest has largely departed; while at the same time the legitimate hotel business has been greatly decreased by the competition of the road-houses, tourist camps and refreshment booths which dot every highway. The signs of the times, however, suggest that there has been a notable weakening in temperance sentiment, and we may see a new era of tavern days on a grand—even if not glorious—scale.

Among Toronto's hotels of the past, none surpasses the Queen's in glory and reputation. The old building which was demolished in 1927-28 to make way for the Royal York covered a site which has had a variety of occupants. About 1843 a row of four three-storey dwelling-houses called Ontario Terrace was constructed there, and in 1846 they were joined to form the first Knox College. When in 1853 the College was removed to Elmsley Villa, St. Vincent and Grosvenor Streets, the building became Sword's Hotel. In 1859 the property passed into the hands of B. J. Riley, and the name was changed to the Revere House. Three years later Captain Thomas Dick took charge and named his establishment the Queen's Hotel. During the next few years four additions were made to the hostelry, which had, by 1869, its characteristic appearance. T. McGaw, Mark Irish and Henry Winnett were variously associated in its management for some years, and after Mr. McGaw's death his widow and Mr. Winnett were joint proprietors.

The Queen's was unique among early hotels in many particulars. The enterprising managers introduced the most modern conveniences as they became available. It was the first hotel in Canada to use a hot-air furnace—wood stoves and fireplaces usually providing heat in those days; it first had a passenger elevator and electric bells, led the way in providing running water in the rooms, and installed the first business telephone in Toronto; while the introduction by the Queen's of bedrooms with bath provided the origin of that well-known joke on the back-countryman, who, arriving at the hotel on a Thursday, remarked to his wife: "What a pity it is not Saturday night!" In 1885, when C. C. Taylor published his *Toronto Called Back*, the Queen's was, perhaps, at the height of its glory:

"This popular hotel has recently been renovated and changed in many respects from the first to the third story. A year ago its elegant and commodious dining-room was very handsomely frescoed. During the last three months many of the parlours, corridors and halls have been tastefully decorated and painted. New private staircases have been fitted up in the Queen Anne style. Each landing has a magnificent stained glass window, and as one ascends these unique windings the idea must flash upon him that he has mistaken the Queen's Hotel, and is ensconced in some baronial hall. The halls and corridors have been relaid with costly and luxurious carpets. When all these changes are added to the previous commodious and handsomely furnished drawing-rooms and bedrooms with bathrooms,—to say nothing of the fine suites of rooms which were fitted up for the Princess Louise and the Marquis of Lorne on the occasion of their first visit to Toronto, as well as other suites that were prepared several years ago in a magnificent style for the reception of the Grand Duke Alexis, then heir-apparent to the crown of Russia—the Queen's stands unrivalled in this respect by any hotel in the Dominion, and as regards the 'cuisinerie' and the daily 'menu', nothing is left to be desired."[11]

The grounds surrounding the Queen's have been put to a variety of uses. In the sixties the field west of the hotel grew oats for Captain Dick's horses; in the mid-seventies

[11] C. C. Taylor: *Toronto Called Back*, 1886, pp. 208-9.

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JORDAN'S YORK HOTEL, 1801, AND THE ROYAL YORK, 1929

A famous pioneer inn contrasted with a magnificent hostelry, the largest in the Empire, and whose cost—$18,000,000,—is thirty-five times the total value of property in the city in 1836.

John Hare Robertson Collection — Thomas Young.

THE PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS IN 1835

Erected about 1830 and used until 1893, the third Parliament Buildings were demolished in 1902.

Illustrated London News.

THE ALL-ENGLAND CROQUET CHAMPIONSHIPS AT WIMBLEDON, 1870

When it was a major sport the Queen's Hotel had a croquet lawn.

the travelling circus was frequently to be found there; while in the early eighties Alderman Harry Piper's Zoo—Toronto's first Zoological Gardens—occupied the spot. In 1896 the grounds of the hotel were described by C. C. Taylor as "both spacious and airy, and, with croquet and chevalier lawns, nothing more pleasant could be desired by business men, pleasure-seekers or tourists".[10]

Many notable visitors honoured the Queen's with their presence. Sir John A. Macdonald and other prominent parliamentarians found it most convenient in a day when the Provincial Parliament Buildings were less than two blocks away. Many a Conservative caucus took place in the famous Red Parlour, while the banquets—political and otherwise—which were held in the Queen's are almost innumerable. T. A. Reed, well-known authority on Toronto of old, has this to say of the hotel's distinguished guests:

"Nearly every Governor-General, at one time or another, stopped at the Queen's. His Majesty King George V, when a Lieutenant with the North Atlantic Squadron, visited this city and stayed at the hotel in September, 1883, in company with his uncle and aunt, the Marquis of Lorne and the Princess Louise, who were then making their farewell visit as Her Majesty's representatives in Canada. H.R.H. Prince Leopold—Duke of Albany—the Duke and Duchess of Connaught, the Grand Duke Alexis of Russia, the Earl and Countess of Dufferin, Lord and Lady Aberdeen, President Taft, General Sherman of the U.S. Army, Jefferson Davis, President of the Southern Confederacy, Sir Henry Irving, Ellen Terry, Sara Bernhardt, Adelina Patti and Jenny Lind are but a few of the distinguished names on the old registers."[11]

When the King Edward Hotel opened on May 10, 1903, the Queen's became noticeably old-fashioned. Described in the press as "the new palace hotel", the King Edward cost some $2,000,000 to build and equip, and for twenty-seven years had the high-class hotel field largely to itself. W. C. Bailey of Chicago was the first manager, but the changes in ownership since that time have been numerous. In 1921 an extensive "skyscraper" addition altered the hotel materially

[10] Ibid.

[11] MacMurchy, A., and Reed, T. A.: *Our Royal Town of York*. 1929, p. 26.

and added greatly to its accommodations. During its history the roll of famous guests has been similar to that of the Queen's in other times. J. Pierpont Morgan, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Prince of Wales are representative personages who have distinguished the hotel by their presence; while of the theatrical world Sir Henry Irving, Sir John Forbes-Robertson, Lillian Russell, Anna Held and Julia Arthur may be mentioned—not to forget the supper dance and the official reception accorded by the City Fathers to the platinum-blonde beauty of Hollywood, Jean Harlow, while a guest at the hotel in 1932.

The Royal York Hotel, the Queen's successor on the site, was erected when economic conditions were at the height of post-war prosperity. The hotel, beautifully designed and tastefully appointed to every particular, was constructed and equipped at a cost of $15,000,000 (some thirty-five times the total value of property within the confines of Toronto in the first year of the city), and the elaborate service maintained not only for transient guests but for large conventions, service clubs and private entertainments, has placed modern hotel-keeping on a plane which—like many another development—would have astonished the pioneer residents of the town of York.

CHAPTER XVIII

Old-Time Elections

Democratic institutions are based upon the political rights of citizens, but conditions at the polls during the exercise of the franchise in early times were very different from the quiet proceedings usual today. People then took their politics very seriously, and election week was not infrequently a period of turmoil, fighting, and other disturbances and disorders: in fact a whole season was sometimes characterised by confusion resulting from the preparations for, and the effects of an election. A few examples will illustrate conditions which, while not always present, were not at all unusual, and may be considered in keeping with other characteristics of the times.

Among notable provincial elections was that of 1836, when representative government was in force only partially, and responsible government not at all. The Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Francis Bond Head, became, for all practical purposes, the leader of the Family Compact party, and he was, to put it mildly, most unpopular with Reformers. Strained relations between him and the Reform party in power grew still more tense, and it is not too much to say that either he or the legislature had to go. The prorogation of the Assembly on April 30th was the signal for a concerted agitation throughout the province for responsible government. Sir Francis dissolved the Legislature in May, and stumped the country himself in the hope of defeating the Reformers in the ensuing election. He and his advisers misrepresented the issue at stake to be "the maintenance of British connection", and as a result there was a political landslide which returned a large majority of Tories.

In the Second Riding of York the opposing candidates were William Lyon Mackenzie and Edward William Thomson. The latter was a rather mild Tory, and he was returned over Mackenzie by about 100 votes. Among the means used to obtain his election were, according to the Reformers, direct and indirect bribery, the manufacture

and use by voters of bogus qualifications, and various types of dishonest influence. A petition for investigation was dismissed owing to a technical error in procedure, but the usual electoral practices of the times suggest that many of the complaints were well founded.

The chief variation in descriptions of elections arises merely from the source of the information, and it is quite evident that no party had a monopoly of the abuses of open voting. On the opposite side of the political fence from Mackenzie was Sheriff William Jarvis, who describes in a letter to his brother George his experiences as a candidate at the polls:

"After six days' hard fighting against as an 'unholy alliance' as was ever formed against an individual or government, I have been left on the 'poll book' in the minority of 8, and James E. Small, Esquire, has been declared 'duly elected'. Now I intend to contest the matter to the last extremity, knowing as I do that I have a majority of eight votes—and that I have been thrown out by perjury. I do not suppose that there ever was an occasion upon which the nature of an oath seemed to be held so lightly as during the election for this City, and with its usual effect—the temporary triumph of the party resorting to that means, which must eventually recoil upon their own heads. Notwithstanding all their villainy I was within two or three of beating them when they thrust upon some perjured rascals, and those two or three in attendance being lukewarm, thinking all was over, refused to vote."[1]

Much enthusiasm and excitement characterised the early political career of William Lyon Mackenzie. When he was expelled from the House by resolution of the Legislative Assembly on December 12, 1831, a new election was ordered. What followed at the Red Lion Inn, Bloor and Yonge Streets, is described by John Ross Robertson, quoting largely from a contemporary source:

"The election was held at the Red Lion, January 2, 1832. Although the election was held on the same day that town-meetings were in progress throughout the country, over two thousand persons were present. The morning was clear

[1] William Jarvis to George Jarvis, October 12, 1834. See Aldan Meredith: *Mary's Rosalinde and Gossip of Little York*, 1928, pp. 94-5.

and pleasant, the weather mild and agreeable, and the sleighing excellent. By ten o'clock the farmers had assembled in great numbers around the hustings, and soon afterward the Yonge Street triumphal car carrying the ensign of the United Kingdom and several Highland pipers passed down toward the town followed by farmers in sleighs. Forty sleighs came down into York and escorted their champion to the polls. It was generally believed that Colonel Washburn would stand up against Mackenzie, but he withdrew his name and gave his support to Mr. Street, who was introduced to the electors by Col. E. W. Thomson. Mr. Mackenzie was proposed for his third candidature by Joseph Shepard of York, seconded by Jogart of Whitchurch. Mackenzie made a speech, and the names of the candidates were submitted. A forest of hands went up when Mackenzie's name was proposed. But one hand was raised when Mr. Street's name was presented. Mr. Street demanded a ballot. At 1:20 o'clock the polls opened. At 3 o'clock Mackenzie had polled one hundred and nineteen votes and his opponent one. The latter then withdrew from the unequal contest.

"Over one thousand voters stood around the polls, and for twenty-four hours after the election closed they continued to pour in. It was estimated that five thousand votes would have been cast for Mackenzie had the polls been kept open for a week. The assemblage was the largest ever witnessed up to that time in the Home District on any occasion. Upon the closing of the poll the committee appointed to present the medal and address, followed by as many as could get in, proceeded to the ballroom. A great shout went up for Mackenzie. At this there entered at the eastern end of the ballroom a slight-built man of scarcely medium height, five feet six inches, with a massive head, quite bald, high and broad in the frontal region, well rounded, a long broad chin, lips firmly compressed, deep dimpled cheeks set in a framework of whiskers, massive brow over arching, deepset, keen, restless, piercing blue eyes that seemed to read one's very thoughts, and ceaselessly and expressively active fingers that kept opening and closing nervously; this was William Lyon Mackenzie. After the tumult had subsided, Charles McIntosh, in behalf of the

committee, presented Mr. Mackenzie with a gold medal and chain and read an address to which Mr. Mackenzie made a brief reply. The heavy cable chain attached to the medal contained forty links each about one inch in length. The medal was of fine workmanship and cost $250. On one side were the rose, thistle and shamrock with the words, 'His Majesty King William, the People's Friend'. On the other side was the inscription, 'Presented to William Lyon Mackenzie, Esq., by his Constituents of the County of York, U.C., as a Token of their Approbation of his Political Career, January 2nd, 1832'.

"A procession was then formed in front of the Red Lion, which wended its way to town. It was led by a large sleigh belonging to Mr. Montgomery, drawn by four horses and filled with a score of men and the Highland pipers playing vigorously. Following it came one hundred and thirty-four sleighs, carrying from five to fifteen persons. It was estimated that two thousand men were in the line. The march was past the Government House, Parliament House, Mr. Cawthra's and Mr. Mackenzie's houses, at each of which cheers were given. A little printing press kept warm by a furnace beneath it stood on one of the sleighs. As the procession moved through the streets boys struck off New Year's addresses and threw them to the people. Over the press floated a crimson flag with the motto 'The Liberty of the Press'. Other flags carried aloft bore such legends as 'King William IV and Reform', 'Bidwell and the Glorious Minority', '1832, a Good Beginning', 'A Free Press the Terror of Sycophants'.

"Much spirit was manifested in the proceedings, but generally order and sobriety were maintained. There was no treating of any kind either at the polls or afterwards. Many soldiers and non-commissioned officers of the 78th Highland Regiment, then stationed here, took a great interest in the election. Quite a number went to the polls and joined the triumphal procession on its entry into the town, cheering while the bagpipers played and the farmers rejoiced in their victory. But they paid dear for their enthusiasm. Governor Colborne ordered the articles of war to be read at the head of the regiment for several days, and directed that the soldiers should be confined in the fort dur-

ing the great public meeting of January 19th, and also during the whole week of the February election. Upon the cessation of the public demonstrations in the streets of the town Mr. Mackenzie was carried into his home on the shoulders of his exultant admirers."[2]

A few weeks later, on March 23, 1832, a notable meeting, called to discuss the grievances of the people, was to take place in the Court House. The following account well describes what ensued:

"Dr. Dunlop of the Canada Land Company, and Mr. J. Ketchum, member for York County, were respectively proposed as chairman. As usual in most cases of political excitement, both parties claimed the victory; but Dr. Dunlop took the chair, when the Reform section withdrew and organised an open meeting in front of the Court House, making use of a farmer's waggon for a platform, Mr. Ketchum being made chairman. Mr. Mackenzie began to address the meeting, when stones and other missiles were thrown at the speaker by the opposing party. The disturbance soon assumed a serious aspect; one person in the crowd drew a knife, with which he threatened the speaker. The waggon on which the chairman and speaker were standing was drawn for some distance, amidst threats and imprecations, along King Street, and thrown into a deep and muddy ditch. The Sheriff told Mr. Ketchum that he was unable to preserve the peace, and begged him to bring the meeting to a close. Someone hit upon the expedient of advising the 'friends of the Governor' to go up to the Government House and cheer His Excellency. This being done, peace was restored, a new chairman appointed, and an address to the King resolved upon.

"Immediately afterwards the crowd which had been to cheer the Governor returned bearing an effigy of Mackenzie, which they burned, and then made an attack upon the office of the *Colonial Advocate*. They broke the windows and destroyed some of the type, and were only prevented doing further mischief by the exertions of a few individuals, among whom was an apprentice in the printing office named Falls, who fired a gun loaded with type, overawing the

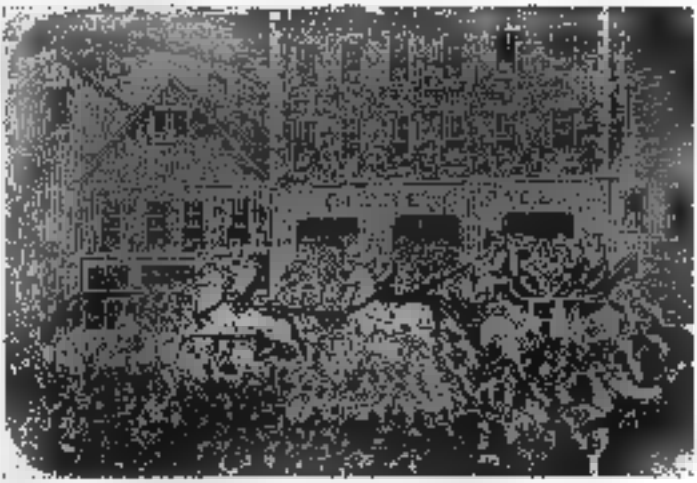
[2] John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*, 1894-1914. Vol. I, pp. 94-5.

rioters. Captain Fitzgibbon did everything in his power to restore peace, and the Lieutenant-Governor gave orders for seventy-five soldiers to be ready at a moment's notice, if required. Three or four magistrates remained at the police office all night, swearing in special constables, and a guard of citizens volunteered to protect Mr. Mackenzie's house and printing office. At midnight a mob surrounded the office, when Captain Fitzgerald ordered them to disperse, and threatened if they did not obey to call out the troops, which were kept under arms all night. This admonition had the desired effect, and the crowd, which was led by a son of one of the executive councillors, moved off without effecting any further violence. The house had to be guarded for three weeks, during which time Mr. Mackenzie remained in the country for safety, and the young man who fired on the rioters had to leave the city in consequence of his life being threatened. It is affirmed that in this disturbance the Roman Catholics were very prominent by their bitter demonstrations against Mackenzie. On this occasion, contrary to their usual habit, they were found in alliance with the Family Compact."[2]

On December 16, 1833, Mackenzie was once more re-elected without opposition. The proceedings resulting from his entrance into the House were as exciting as the events at the polls in 1832:

"A large body of the electors made known their intention to accompany him to the House of Assembly, which place they reached soon after mid-day. The galleries were soon filled; some were admitted below the bar, and others remained in the lobbies for want of room inside. The result was waited with great anxiety by the great body of electors, who were becoming indignant at being thus disfranchised. Considerable uneasiness existed among the members of the House. Mr. Perry rose to present a petition against a repetition of the proceedings by which the County of York had been deprived of half of its legal representatives. Several members spoke against receiving it. Mr. MacNab, in opposing its reception, was hissed from the gallery, and an order at once given by the Speaker to clear it; and, when this operation was partially completed, the Sergeant-at-

[2] J. Timperlake: *Illustrated Toronto, Past and Present*. 1877. pp. 81-2.



Canadian Illustrated News.

TORCHLIGHT PARADE IN HONOUR OF GEORGE BROWN, 1862

From a Painting in the Ontario Par ament Buildings. H. H. Ingersoll.

"OLD UNION JACK"

Sir John A. Macdonald addressing a night gathering during his last campaign. He was exceedingly proud of the title "Old Union Jack".

Yours Truly
W. L. Mackenzie

William Lyon Mackenzie was the first Mayor of Toronto, and under his leadership the newly-created city received its initial impetus.

Arms went up to Mr. Mackenzie, who was waiting below the bar to [redacted] sworn in, and ordered him to leave. He replied that, as had been stated by Mr. Perry, he had been unanimously elected for the County of York, and that the writ had been duly returned. The Sergeant-at-Arms, Mr. MacNab (father of the member), then seized him by the collar and tried to drag him towards the door to put him out. A brawny Highlander, one of a few friends who were near Mr. Mackenzie, interposed, either with a blow at the officer of the House, or held him back. As soon as the door was opened the crowd, who had descended from the gallery to the lobby, rushed forward; but, before they could get in, the door was bolted and barricaded with benches, members and officers pressing towards the door [redacted] prevent its being forced. The galleries, which had only been partially cleared, were the scene of great confusion. The excitement was extreme, and the business of the House was brought to a stand. Several of the members, fearing that the excitement of the people might lead to serious acts of violence, went out and harangued the people. The question of sending to prison the stalwart Highlander who had interfered with the Sergeant-at-Arms was raised, but a bystander remarked that 'he feared it would be no easy matter to find the jail on such an errand'."[4]

A comparatively small number of citizens possessed the franchise in early days, but if votes were few the deficiency was more than made up by the fierceness with which elections were contested, and the tenacity of purpose which characterised everyone's attitude. Political processions were often to be found in the immediate vicinity of the polls, and it can hardly be contended that an Orange band playing *Boyne Water*, *Protestant Boys*, or *Croppies Lie Down* was in any sense conducive to the free exercise of the franchise. The municipal elections in January, 1841, resulted in a Tory sweep except in three instances, and this was the prelude of a very bitter provincial contest in the spring of the same year.

On May 3rd the election began, and, as was not unusual in the good old days of open voting, each party employed men with cudgels to overawe those who found any difficulty

[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 86-7.

in voting the right way. The violent language used on this occasion by both candidates and press has probably never been surpassed. In the First Riding of York James Hervey Price, Reformer, defeated John Gamble, "dyed-in-the-wool" Tory, and the Toronto *Examiner* had this to say of the candidates, and of Mr. Gamble's supporters in particular:

"The voters were the most rabble whisky-drinking fellows that could be collected. . . . Who were the candidates? One was the former member, a rich man—the head of all the magistrates—the licenser of the tavern. The other a plain private gentleman, known till the Rebellion only as an honest lawyer and the mild intelligent friend; yet the former is rejected and the latter chosen."[4]

Still more excitement, however, was provided in Toronto by the contest between J. H. Dunn and Isaac Buchanan, Reformers, and Henry Sherwood and J. Monro, Tories. The Reformers won the very close contest of that stirring week, and their organ, the *Examiner*, gleefully commented upon the victory in "this hitherto Compact-ridden, corporation-ridden, Orange-ridden city". The victors arranged a triumphal procession for Monday, May 10th. The events of the day are well described by J. E. Middleton:

"At 1 o'clock in the afternoon the successful candidates, escorted by so many citizens that the parade was over a mile long, set out from the Ontario House on the Market Square, proceeded by way of Market Street to Yonge, along King Street to Simcoe, up Simcoe to Lot (Queen), eastward to Yonge, then south to King and east past the City Hall and the Market. All along the route there were indications that supporters of the other party medicated some measure of violence. Too many bully-boys with knobby sticks were on the streets, and particularly on the grounds of St. James' Church. Mayor Monro was warned that police protection might be necessary, but he is reported to have

[4]Quoted in Robertson, *Ibid.* The editors of the newspapers of a century ago had no scruples about saying just what they thought. The following item appeared in the editorial columns of a local paper in the first year of the city: "Mr. John Foore, son-in-law of Mr. James Sheard, has just come forward from Halton. His advertisement occupies one and a half columns of the *Gore Mercury*, and all we need say about his candidacy is that he has as much chance of becoming an M.P.P. as his grandmother's grey cat had sixty years ago."

said that they might [illegible] to the Devil for protection. Since His Worship was one of the defeated candidates his testiness may be understood.

"East of the Market on King Street stood the North of Ireland Colersine Inn, where an Orange flag was displayed. The Reform hangers-on had a menacing attitude. They drummed on the doors and on the outside of the building with their sticks, and a woman threw a stone of protest against the Orange order. The persons in the house appeared at the upper windows, and one of them fired a pistol-shot at the crowd. A man named James Dunn, of course an innocent bystander, recently arrived from overseas as an immigrant, fell dead. Several other shots followed. Four or five other persons were wounded, among them being F. Langrill and a lad named Cathcart.

"The mob would have torn the house to pieces if it had not been for the appeals of Dunn and Buchanan, the Members, but while their angry followers halted between two opinions a company of British Regulars came upon the double, pressed back the mob, and brought seven or eight persons out of the house, conveying them safely to the jail. These seven or eight were said by the *Examiner* to be 'as bloodthirsty-looking men as ever disgraced the human form'.

"Neither party had a monopoly of hard words and extreme statements, for the atmosphere was electrical. It was said by Francis Hincks that during the polling in the two provinces from ten to twenty persons had been murdered and hundreds had been beaten and mauled. In Toronto during the week about fifty followers of Dunn and Buchanan had their heads laid open. The *Examiner* considerately neglected to mention how many Tories received similar treatment."[9]

This notable election inspired several political pamphlets. One, *The City of Toronto Poll Book*, consisted largely of a classified list of voters according to occupation and political adherence. The open vote made it easy to record how each one exercised his franchise, whether "for Dunn and Buchanan on the part of the Government and People",

[9] J. E. Middleton: *The Municipality of Toronto, a History*. 1923. Vol. I, p. 210.

or "for Sherwood and Monro on the part of the Family Compact and Corporation".[1] Another publication gives a Reformer's account of the riot already described, but the additional details therein contained make it worth quoting even at the risk of some repetition:

"About 12 o'clock noon the Procession started from the Ontario House, and such a procession for respectability and show never perhaps was seen in Toronto—upwards of 100 Banners, Flags, etc., with inscriptions and devices of all kinds—preceded by an excellent band of music; at one time, when it was organised, it seemed to reach nearly the length of King Street. . . . The citizens with their wives and children principally were in Carriages, Curricles, Gigs, Chaises, Waggons, etc.

"On arriving at the corner of Church Street it was assailed first by hisses and groans by a body of men supposed [to have come] from the country around with Bludgeons, who had taken their stand in Martial Array immediately under the windows of Mr. Sherwood's Office, in which were seen the Sheriff Jarvis, Saml. Sherwood, Crawford and others, it is said by some apparently urging on the men below. As the procession was passing along, some men occasionally inquired of those in waggons if they had not a coffin or coffins concealed—this seems to have been designed by the plotters of the mischief as an invention to work upon the the feelings of the Orangemen, they having been informed that it was designed as a burlesque to bury the Family Compact and bring socialism. There was no foundation whatever for the Report—it was pure invention by the Tory Party to set as a stimulus to a riot.

"At this spot a general onset soon commenced upon the persons forming the procession by throwing pieces of ice, bricks, etc., also a general cudgelling of the people by the men before alluded to. The alarm was immediately given to the front ranks that their friends in the rear were attacked, who immediately came to their assistance and a general fight ensued in which the assailants, the Bludgeons, were driven off, and many retreated into a house known as the Colerain Tavern, to which place they were followed. This house was made notorious by its being one of the open

[1] *The City of Toronto Poll Book*, 1841.

houses of the Sherwood Party and an Orange Lodge; for several days during the election parties of men sallied forth into the street and abused and knocked down several opponents, and, on the morning of the chairing, McLean and his son, a Scotch piper, on their way to join the procession, were knocked down and his pipes destroyed most wantonly and malleiously."

With further reference to the fight in front of the inn the account continues:

"During the scuffle . . . . three or four small pieces of firearms loaded with balls were discharged from the windows of the House—one killed a man on the spot, named Dunn, a Tailor; a Catholic and three others were severely wounded. A part of the military was immediately sent for, who protected the inmates of the house from the fury of the people, and subsequently took the landlord, Allen, Kelly, a carter, and several others into custody, all of whom were liberated with the exception of Kelly, the coroner's jury not [being] agreeable in a verdict."*

In 1856 a law was passed making the members of the Legislative Council elective. The next election, in 1858, was very fiercely contested in Toronto, and discreditable practices were resorted to by both political parties. A remarkable feature was the support given by William Lyon Mackenzie to the Conservative candidate, G. W. Allan, whose father had been a prominent member of the old Family Compact. Amidst great excitement in the city and the county the election for the Legislative Council took place in October, and resulted in Mr. Allan's victory over C. E. Romain by a majority of 1,384.

The celebrated Brown-Cameron election riot took place in Toronto in 1857. The main fight occurred near Richmond's blacksmith shop, at the north-east corner of Queen and William (now Simcoe) Streets. Across the street on the north-west corner Clinkunbroomer's brick house was in process of erection. John Ross Robertson notes that a pile of bricks to be used in the structure "were put to the very best possible use by the rioters. The friends of John Hillyard Cameron had come down from the neighbourhood of St. Patrick's Market, while the George Brown faction

*A Toronto Election, 1841.

assembled round the corner of this street, making Richmond's blacksmith shop their coign of vantage. Bob Moody and five hundred from St. John's Ward came down to help the Reformers, and the pile of bricks that stood about twenty feet square was levelled almost to the ground before the rioters got through exercising themselves with these missiles. The hot part of the riot occurred on Queen Street a little west of Sheppard's Marble Works, although on Queen Street from St. Patrick's Market to Simcoe many houses had not a complete pane of glass."[8]

The bitterly-contested general election which occasioned this riot was notable for the extent to which impersonation was practised—even members of the British Royal Family voted! It is of interest to recall in this connection that among the vaunted 1,280,000 signatures to the "People's Charter" in the great English Chartist agitation of 1839 was "Victoria Rex"; but we have a parallel in Toronto, for in the 1857 election "Prince Consort" cast no fewer than four votes against George Brown!

The ballot was introduced in municipal elections on January 1, 1857, and in 1874 a Dominion Act put an end to open voting. The closing of taverns, bar-rooms and liquor shops during elections greatly restricted the supply of liquor, and there was an almost immediate improvement in the conditions accompanying the exercise of the franchise. The excitement, too, was limited to a day instead of a week or more. As time passed, politics ceased to play the important part in the life of the people that was once the case, and modern Canadian elections disturb the equilibrium of the nation only to a comparatively small extent, though in the United States—and in New York and Chicago in particular—the old-time gangster election accompaniments are not unusual.

[8]Robertson, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 40.

CHAPTER XIX

Schools of Other Days

For many years after the first settlement of Upper Canada the government, which for all practical purposes meant the Lieutenant-Governor alone, made no provision whatever for education. In 1797 the Legislature presented an address to the King, praying "that [illegible] would direct his government in this Province to appropriate a certain portion of the waste lands of the Crown as a fund for the establishment and support of a Grammar School in each of the eight districts into which it was proposed to divide the province"; and also that a college or university be established for the whole province.[1] In the following year 500,000 acres of land was set aside for these purposes, and the proceeds of its sale were to be devoted to the erection of schools and the payment of teachers' salaries. The cost of each Grammar School was estimated at $3,000, and its annual maintenance charges at £180.

There was at first a great deal of opposition to the establishment of these secondary schools, for it was considered by many people that provision for elementary education should be made first, and that Grammar Schools would otherwise provide learning merely for the children of the rich, who could afford to patronise private elementary schools. Consequently bills introduced into the Legislature in 1805 and 1806 were defeated, though that of 1807 was accepted. Classics and mathematics were to be the chief subjects taught, and it is evident that such studies were of no value to the sons of poor citizens who had never been taught to read and write. In 1807, at the time of the passage of the Grammar School Act, the first school of that type was established in York. Meanwhile, however, private elementary schools had for some years been conducted in the town.

[1] This address, and many other documents referred to in this chapter, may be found in J. G. Hodgins: *Documentary History of Education in Upper Canada, 1792-1876*, 28 volumes, 1894-1910.

The first school in York appears to have been a small one established on George Street by William Cooper in 1798. Private tuition in the home, or the occasional visit of an itinerant schoolmaster, previously served the needs of the town in a rather unsatisfactory manner, while the sons and daughters of a few officials were sent to Lower Canada or the United States, where educational facilities were more advanced. Cooper advertised in the *Gazette* of November 3, 1798, that "he intends opening a school at his house in George Street on the 19th instant for the Instruction of Youth in Reading, Writing, Arithmetic and English Grammar. Those who chuse to favour him with their Puplis may rely on the greatest attention being paid to their virtue and morals".[1] In the summer of 1799 Cooper passed an examination before the Rev. John Stuart, a step necessary because the government had decided that "itinerant characters" should not in future be allowed to impose upon the inhabitants of the country.[2]

Six years later, on January 3, 1803, a school of somewhat greater pretensions was commenced by Dr. William Warren Baldwin. He had emigrated with his father from Ireland in 1799, settling first near Baldwin's Creek, in the Township of Clarke. In 1803 he married Phoebe Willcocks, daughter of William Willcocks of York, and they resided in a cottage at the corner of Palace and Frederick Streets. The school was first held at Willcocks' house on Duke Street, a much more pretentious building than Baldwin's small cottage. Dr. Baldwin's announcement of his school first appears in the *Gazette* of December 18, 1802, and contains a number of interesting particulars:

"Doctor Baldwin, understanding that some of the gentlemen of this town have expressed much anxiety for the establishment of a Classical school, begs to inform them and the public that he intends on Monday the 3rd day of January next to open a school in which he will instruct 12 boys in Writing, Reading, and Classics and Arithmetic. Terms for each boy eight guineas *per annum*, to be paid quarterly, one guinea entrance, and one cord of wood to be supplied by each boy on opening the school.

[1] *Upper Canada Gazette*, November 3, 1798.
[2] *Ibid.*, July 6, 1799.

"N.B. Dr. Baldwin will meet his pupils at Mr. Willcocks' house in Duke Street."[1]

Another early school had its inception owing to the exertions of certain parents who desired their children to [redacted] educated and who effected the arrangements themselves. In 1805 a number of the gentlemen of York associated themselves in a project to employ William Carson to teach some [redacted] children spelling, reading, writing and arithmetic. From May 1st to October 1st the hours of teaching were to be from 8 to 12 and 2 to 5; while during the rest of the year the decreased daylight suggested the elimination of the first and last hours of the schedule. No holidays were provided for, and it may be assumed that Sunday was the only day of rest for teacher a[redacted] students. The school was held in [redacted] house owned by William Jarvis on the north side of Duke Street. £3 16s. a month was the remuneration of the schoolmaster, together with "good and sufficient board and lodging, liquors excepted".

Charles McDonnell, Duke Street, kept school in York in 1811 and for some time previous. He announces in the *York Gazette* that [redacted] "returns his grateful and sincere thanks to the Public for their countenance and patronage. He has just built a large Room for the comfortable reception of their Children; a[redacted] hopes through his steady attention to the Morals and Education of the Pupils placed under his care he will still gain their future approbation and encouragement". From a postscript to the advertisement we learn also the interesting fact that an evening school, commencing "precisely on the first of September", was conducted by Mr. McDonnell.[2]

As previously stated, the first school supported by the government in York was not a "common" or primary school but one of the secondary type long called Grammar Schools. In the early years of the nineteenth century, probably not later than 1805, the Rev. Dr. Okill Stuart erected a small frame house [redacted] his residence at the south-east corner of King and George Streets. He also constructed a small low stone building, not much larger than a root-house, and attached to his dwelling at the south-east corner. In later years the stone walls were covered by a coating of clap-

[1]*Ibid.*, December 18, 1802. [2]*York Gazette*, November 13, 1811.

boards. This primitive building was for some time the Home District Grammar School, and Dr. Stuart was the first teacher when it opened on June 1, 1807. In 1813 Dr. Strachan was in charge, the school having been removed in that year to a barn at the corner of King and Yonge Streets. Another building was soon necessary, and in 1816 the Blue School, to the north of the present St. James' Cathedral, was occupied; the need of a coat of paint was met when Dr. Strachan collected funds for that purpose from prominent citizens. In 1829 the building was removed to the south-east corner of New (Jarvis) and March (Lombard) Streets, where it was used by Upper Canada College until 1831. After being closed for several years the Grammar School was re-opened in the old building in 1834.

With reference to the families represented in the classes at this school Dr. Henry Scadding notes that "the lists of the school in York always presented a strong array of the old, well-known and even distinguished Upper Canadian names. This will be seen by a perusal of the following document, which will give an idea of the variety of matters to which attention was given in the school. The numerous family names which will at once be recognised will require no comment. The intervals between the calling up of each separate class for examination appear to have been very plentifully filled up with recitations and debates".*

The document quoted by Dr. Scadding suggests that examinations at that time were largely oral. Considerable stress was laid upon orations and debates, and it is probable that these displays were popular with the audience, and particularly the proud parents of the participants. The description is headed "Order of Examination of the Home District Grammar School", and is as follows:

Wednesday, 11th August, 1819. First Day. The Latin and Greek Classes. Euclid and Trigonometry. Thursday, 12th August. Second Day. To commence at 10 o'clock. Prologue, by Robert Baldwin.—Reading Class.—George Strachan, "The Excellence of the Bible". Thomas Ridout, "The Man of Ross". James McDonell, "Liberty and Slavery". St. George Baldwin, "The Sword". William McMurray, "Soliloquy on Sleep". Arithmetic Class—

*Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old*, 1873, pp. 157-8.

James Smith, "The Sporting Gentleman". William Boulton, jun., "The Poet's New Year's Gift". Richard Gates, "Ode to Apollo". Orville Cassell, "The Rose". Book-keeping.—William Myers, "My Mother". Francis Heward, "My Father". George Dawson, "Lapland".—First Grammar Class.—Second Grammar Class.—"Debate on the Slave Trade". For the Abolition: Francis Ridout, John Fitzgerald, William Allan, George Boulton, Henry Heward, William Baldwin, John Ridout, John Doyle, James Strachan. Against the Abolition: Abraham Nelles, James Ràby, James Doyle, Charles Heward, Allan McDonell, James Myers, Charles Ridout, William Boulton, Walker Smith.—First Geography Class.—Second Geography Class. James Dawson, "The Boy that told Lies". James Bigelow, "The Vagrant". Thomas Glassco, "The Parish Workhouse". Edward Glennon, "The Apothecary".—Natural History.—Debate by the Young Boys: "Sir William Strickland", Charles Heward. "Lord Morpeth", John Owens. "Lord Hervey", John Ridout. "Mr. Plonner", Raymond Ràby. "Sir William Yonge", John Fitzgerald. "Sir William Windham", John Boulton. "Mr. Henry Pelham", Henry Heward. "Mr. Bernard", George Strachan. "Mr. Noel", William Baldwin. "Mr. Shippen", James Ràby. "Sir Robert Walpole", S. Givins and J. Doyle. "Mr. Horace Walpole", James Myers. "Mr. Pulteney", Charles Ràby.—Civil History.—William Boulton, "The Patriot". Francis Ridout, "The Grave of Sir John Moore". Saltern Givins, "Great Britain". John Boulton, "Eulogy on Mr. Pitt". Warren Claus, "The Indian Warrior". Charles Heward, "The Soldier's Dream". William Boulton, "The Heroes of Waterloo.—Catechism.—"Debate on the College of Calcutta". Speakers: "Mr. Canning", Robert Baldwin. "Sir Francis Baring", John Doyle. "Mr. Wainwright", Mark Burnham. "Mr. Thornton", John Knott. "Sir D. Scott", William Boulton. "Lord Eldon", Warren Claus. "Sir S. Lawrence", Allan Macaulay. "Lord Hawkesbury", Abraham Nelles. "Lord Bathurst", James McGill Strachan. "Sir Thomas Metcalf", Walker Smith. "Lord Teignmouth", Horace Ridout.—Religious Questions and Lectures.—James McGill Strachan, Anniversary of the York and Montreal

Colleges anticipated for 1st January, 1822. Epilogue, by Horace Ridout.'

Referring to modes of discipline Dr. Scadding describes a variety of remedies for minor indiscretions:

"Now and then a lad would be seen standing at one of the posts, with his jacket turned inside out; or he might be seen there in a kneeling posture for a certain number of minutes; or standing with the arm extended holding a book. An alley or apple brought out inopportunely into view during the hours of work might entail the exhibition, article by article, slowly and reluctantly, of all the contents of a pocket. Once, we remember, the furtive but too audible twang of a jewsharp was followed by its owner's being obliged to mount on the top of a desk and perform there an air on the offending instrument for the benefit of the whole school.

"Occasionally the censors (senior boys appointed to help in keeping order) were sent to cut rods on Mr. McGill's property adjoining the playground on the north; but the dire implements were not often called into requisition: it would only be when some case of unusual obstinacy presented itself, or when some wanton cruelty, or some act or word exhibiting an unmistakable taint of incipient immorality, was proven."[2]

Grammar School life did not contain the varied activities which almost overburden the students of today. The notable event of the school year was probably the "feast" which was allowed just before the midsummer closing. For this party everyone contributed pastry and other delectable dainties, as well as more substantial foods. It might seem that the scope of the fun was somewhat restricted from the fact that the place of meeting was the schoolroom, but it is said that it was frequently quite a riotous affair.

Soon after the passage of the School Act of 1807 petitions began to be sent to the Legislature asking that the money voted be applied to Common (primary) schools instead of those provided for in the Act. The Legislative Assembly made repeated efforts to have the Act repealed as worthless to the middle and lower classes, but the Legis-

[1] Ibid. [2] Ibid., pp. 163-4.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

THE FIRST SCHOOL IN LESLIEVILLE

Leslieville, on the Kingston Road, was an important suburb of Toronto.

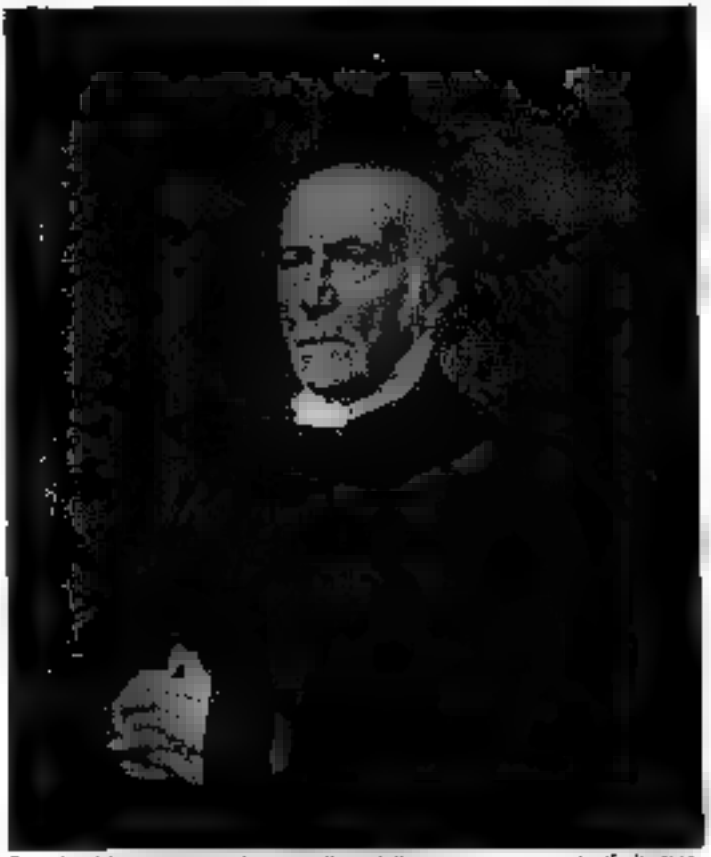
John Ross Robertson Collection.

THE BLUE SCHOOL, 1816

Dr. Strachan gave a course of lectures on Natural Philosophy to raise money to paint the Home District Grammar School, Toronto's first secondary school—though it commenced in 1807 in a small shed. The Blue School was situated north of St. James' Cathedral.

John Boyd Bowman Collection.

OLD UPPER CANADA COLLEGE, KING STREET WEST



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BISHOP STRACHAN

For half a century a prominent and public-spirited citizen of Toronto.

lative Council blocked all moves of this nature. The result was that private schools and academies became more and more numerous throughout the province, and provided the elementary education which the Government had denied. The deadlock between the two legislative bodies was finally broken, but it is probably to be credited more to an enlightened address by Lieut.-Governor Gore than to any voluntary change in the views of members of the Legislative Council. The Governor's suggestion that it would be desirable to have "some provision for the establishment of schools in each township which shall afford the first principles of learning to the children of the inhabitants" was effective in securing the passage of the Common School Act of 1816.

This Act was a start, but the $6,000 a year that it made available for elementary education throughout the province was pitifully inadequate. The election of three trustees in each municipality, an attendance of at least twenty pupils to rank as a fully organised school, and a maximum allowance of $100 towards the salary of each teacher were among the provisions of the Act. No American text books were to be used, but the failure to provide any others led to the ignoring of the regulation. The Act remained in force until the Union of Upper and Lower Canada in 1840 made new legislation essential.

The general condition of schools in Upper Canada under the Act of 1816 was unsatisfactory. In many instances incapacitated soldiers or other broken-down men supposedly fit for nothing else provided the personnel of the profession, and their remuneration was whatever they could squeeze from the parents of their pupils—from $5 to $10 per pupil *per annum* was usual. There were instances where the Bible was the only text book, but more generally books of American manufacture were prominent as the only ones available. General conditions of elementary education before 1832 are outlined by Dr. Thomas Rolph:

"It is really melancholy to traverse the Province and go into any of the Common Schools; you find a herd of children instructed by some anti-British adventurer instilling into the young and tender mind sentiments hostile to the parent State; false accounts of the late war—geography setting forth New York, Philadelphia and Boston as the largest

and finest cities in the world; historical reading-books describing the American population [redacted] the most free and enlightened under Heaven; insisting on the superiority of their laws and institutions to those of all the world; American spelling-books, dictionary and grammar, teaching them an anti-British dialect and idiom."[9]

A noted Common school in the years just previous to the inauguration of the city of Toronto was the Central or National School on the north-west corner of Adelaide and Jarvis Streets. There were separate sections for the instruction of boys and girls, and, as the following announcement in *Walton's Directory* states, those who could not afford to pay fees might be admitted without charge:

"York Central or National School at the corner of Newgate and New Streets. His Excellency Lieut.-Gov. Sir John Colborne, patron. His Excellency, being desirous that the course of instruction at this school should include all the branches usually comprehended in a good English education, has directed that it be conducted in the following manner. Boys' school, First Department, Joseph Spragge, master. English, reading, writing and arithmetic on the principles of Bell & Lancaster. Second Department, J. T. Wilson, headmaster. English, reading, writing, arithmetic, English grammar, book-keeping, elements of geography. Girl's school, Rebecca Sylvester, mistress. English, reading, writing, arithmetic and drawing. Scholars are to pay [redacted] per quarter. No family to pay for more than two children at a time, whatever be the number attending. Parents are requested to send children regularly [redacted] as neat and decent an order as their circumstances will permit. Free tickets of instruction [redacted] children of parents who cannot pay may be had of Archdeacon John Strachan, or Lieut.-Col. Joseph Wells. Received instruction in year ending April 30, 1833, boys, 402, girls, 235. At present [redacted] actual attendance, boys, 200, girls, 135."[10]

John Ross Robertson gives a description of the school and its teachers, as well as reminiscences and memories of the schoolboy pranks of our great-grandfathers:

[9]Thomas Ralph: *A Brief Account . . . . of the West Indies and the United States; . . . . together with a Statistical Account of Upper Canada.* 1836. p. 262.

[10]*George Walton's York Commercial Directory for 1834.* 1833. p. 125.

"Mr. Appleton was one of the first teachers at this school, and at a later date Mr. Sprague. In the Central the girls were upstairs, and the boys downstairs. The entrance for the girls was by the side stairs, running up the north side of the building from Jarvis Street, or New Street. The entrance for the boys was through a big gate on Adelaide Street. The lower floor of the Central had large folding doors, so that the two rooms could be thrown into one. Mr. John Fenton, a literary genius of the day, was at one time Mr. Appleton's assistant teacher here. Between the boys attending the Central School and the boys of the Grammar School, difficulties, of course, arose, and on many occasions feats of arms, accompanied by considerable risk to life and limb, were performed on both sides with sticks and stones. Youngsters ambitious of a character of extra daring had thus an opportunity of distinguishing themselves in the eyes of their less courageous companions. The same would-be heroes had many stories to tell of the perils to which they were exposed on their way to and from school. Those of them who came from the western part of the town had, according to their own showing, mortal enemies in the men of Ketchum's Tannery, with whom it was necessary occasionally to have an encounter; while those who lived in the east of the town, narrated, in response, the attacks experienced or delivered by themselves in passing Shaw's or Hugill's Brewery. . . .

"Across the road from the playground at York (?) Street, on the south side, eastward of the church plot, there was a row of dilapidated wooden buildings, inhabited for the most part by a thriftless and noisy set of people. This group of houses was known in the school as 'Irishtown', and 'to raise Irishtown' meant to direct a snowball or other light missive over the playground fence in that direction. Such an act was not infrequently followed by an invasion of the field from the insulted quarter. Some wide chinks, established in one place here between the boards, which ran lengthwise, enabled anyone so inclined to get over the fence readily. Once two men who had quarrelled in one of the buildings of Irishtown adjourned from over the road to the playground, accompanied by a few approving friends; and, after stripping to the skin, had a regular fight with fists.

After some rounds a number of men and women interfered, and induced the combatants to return to the house whence they had issued forth for the settlement of their dispute."[11]

Contemporary with the National School was a private seminary called the York Commercial and Classical Academy, conducted by Thomas Caldicott, Superintendent, and George Jeffery, Samuel Caldicott and Alexander Forsythe. Some conception of their methods is to be obtained from their announcement that, "in order that the supporters of this Institution may have the best opportunity of witnessing their children's improvement, the books of the Pupils will be invariably sent home for the inspection of those parents who reside in town, on the last day of every month; and for the inspection of parents resident in the country, as often as may prove convenient; there will, moreover, be a public examination annually at Midsummer."[12]

Among other duties the teacher serves to relieve parents from the arduous duty of looking after their children and keeping them out of mischief, and this was as true a century ago as now. We find that in the early thirties there was "the York Infant School, adjoining the Presbyterian Church, Hospital Street, formed 28th September, 1831, Miss S. D. Bliss, Mistress." The mistress was quite broad-minded for her day, for she announces that "Children of any religious persuasion under 7 years of age admitted at a charge of 7s. 6d. per quarter. The school at present consists of 60 or 90 children".[14]

In spite of the fact that taxes to support schools were frequently paid by people who had also to pay fees for their children's attendance, the principle of free schools had many opponents. At the same time the lack of facilities for elementary education in many districts made it the practice of over half the Grammar Schools to take in pupils who had not learned even to write. Some progress in educational policy might have been made earlier had it not been for the confusion resulting from the Rebellion of 1837, for a provincial system was commenced in 1832. A new

[11]John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*. 1904-1914. Vol. I, pp. 378-80. York Street is an error for Jarvis Street.
[12]*Walton's Directory*, p. 161.
[14]*Ibid.*, p. 186.

era was inaugurated in 1843 by legislation enabling the establishment of government-aided public schools in self-governing municipalities. This was followed in 1844 by the appointment of Egerton Ryerson to the position of Superintendent of Education, and the great developments of succeeding years were made possible. Though Dr. Ryerson's contribution to our educational system is nowhere doubted today, the political prejudices of his own times resulted in the following comment in the press concerning his abilities:

"That Mr. Ryerson is incompetent to discharge the duties of Superintendent of Education is no longer a debatable question; the fact is insisted upon by Reformers, admitted by Tories, assented to by Conservatives, and proclaimed by Moderates."[24]

In Toronto, meanwhile, a select committee of the City Council had, under the Act of 1843, been placed in charge of the school system, and these men proceeded to advertise for teachers and to rearrange school districts to enable equalisation of pupils. It was suggested at the start that one or more schools be for girls, and that education should have no sectarian bias. A committee of six, four of whom were clergymen, was asked to take charge of the arrangement of the curriculum. In 1844 George Barber was appointed Superintendent of Education for the city, and under his direction twelve common (elementary) schools with 1,000 students enrolled were in efficient operation.

By amendments to the School Act in 1847 provision was made for the establishment of a Board of School Trustees nominated by the City Council. The first Toronto Board met on November 20, 1847, and was composed of the following gentlemen: W. H. Boulton (chairman), the Hon. J. Elmsley, W. Cawthra, J. McMurrich, F. W. Barron, J. G. Bowes and John Cameron. Under recent legislation the schools were to be free, but as the City Council refused to supply funds they were closed on June 30, 1848, and so remained until July 1, 1849. Some aldermen, in fact, proposed in the interests of economy that they should be open only six months a year; for by 1848 the cost to operate the city's fifteen schools had increased to £2,009, and a

[24]The Toronto *Examiner*, February 24, 1847.

higher tax rate was inevitable. The School Act of 1850 provided for the election of school trustees in each ward, and the first board so elected had full power to develop educational facilities, the City Council being obliged to provide funds. On March 15, 1851, the principle of free admission to all city schools was adopted in spite of much opposition by ratepayers, many of whom could see no good reason why anyone should support schools except those whose children attended. Of the fifteen schools in Toronto at the middle of the century eleven were conducted in small rented houses, only four of which were of brick; and of the sixteen teachers thirteen were men and three women, their average annual salary being £122 10s. and £45, respectively. There were 1,260 pupils attending in summer and 1,432 in winter. The cost of heating the schools at that period was very small when compared with the outlay at present, for in 1852 the city purchased 561½ cords of wood for that purpose, the cost, including cutting, being only £60 18s. 8½d.—not much over 40 cents a cord. The number of pupils per teacher was very high, the twenty-one teachers of 1854 teaching an average of 69 pupils each; ten years earlier, when the school system commenced, there were, in fact, 1,194 pupils and only 12 teachers.

A survey of the other educational institutions existing at that time shows that there were three colleges with a total enrolment of 350 students, the Grammar School with 30 pupils, and ten private schools and seminaries with 190 in attendance. The corner-stone of King's College, the first institution of higher education in Toronto, was, after many years of planning, finally laid on St. George's Day, 1842. An elaborate procession of soldiers, judges, clergy and scholars, each group in its characteristic costume, inaugurated higher learning in Toronto, and Dr. John Strachan was appropriately pre-eminent during the proceedings of the day.[11] King's College was erected in Queen's Park, on the site of the present Parliament Buildings, and the institution was long the target of Reformers who urged its reorganisation on a non-sectarian basis, and of lesser critics of one type or another, each with his quota of real or imagined grievances. The first convocation for

[11] This notable event is described at greater length on pages 465-6.

the conferring of degrees was held on February 8, 1848, Dr. John McCaul, who was to be the first President of the University of Toronto, presiding. Six men received the degree of Bachelor of Arts, and seven that of Bachelor of Common Law, a very small graduating class in comparison with those of modern times.

It is a fundamental principle of the Roman Catholic Church that education must be closely correlated with religion, but religious prejudices long prevented or limited separate schools. The first Roman Catholic teacher in York was John Harvey, who had a school on Jarvis Street in 1830. Soon afterwards there were others. In 1841 Denis Heffernan conducted a private school on Richmond Street, east of Church Street, and it is recorded of him that he was "an accomplished classicist and mathematician, educated in Ireland. He birched frequently and with no little vigour, but his boys, who were both Protestant and Catholic, did him infinite credit".[11] Two years later he was teaching in the Catholic District School at the corner of Berkeley and Duke Streets. Forty boys ranging from 7 to 16 years of age were taught in a plain schoolroom with long narrow desks and benches without backs, and Mrs. Heffernan sometimes instructed a few girls in a small room upstairs. From 50c. to $1 a month per pupil was the fee which Mr. Heffernan attempted to collect. This establishment, the first separate school in Toronto, was made possible by legislation in 1843 providing for such schools, either Protestant or Roman Catholic. The demand for additional separate schools in Toronto led to an amendment in 1851 enabling one to be established in each ward if required. At that time the one separate school had three teachers.

A short description of the principal educational buildings in 1858 will be of interest, applying as it does to a time when Toronto was just entering the period of great expansion and had still many of the characteristics of the large town. The *Descriptive Catalogue of the Provincial Exhibition of 1858* refers to the commencement in the previous year of work upon "the new University Buildings on the west side of the ravine at the head of the College Avenue", referring, of course, to University College. Tor-

[11] Middleton, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 582.

onto's most notable architectural ornament. Pending the completion of this building the University classes were being accommodated "in a small building at the head of the College Avenue" (now University Avenue). Old Trinity College, "near the Exhibition Grounds" of that day, was described as "a handsome building of the third period of pointed English architecture which prevailed in the 14th and 15th centuries". Knox's College, "conducted in Elmsley Villa on Grosvenor Street, a building which was occupied by the Governor-General from 1849 to 1851", and St. Michael's College, "a fine building recently erected on Clover Hill, between the City and Yorkville", completes the survey of institutions of higher learning.

Upper Canada College, "situated between King and Adelaide Streets, west of Simcoe", was erected in 1829, the first important educational building in Toronto—if one may omit the Grammar School. The present Normal School on Gould Street, erected in 1851-2, is described as "among the finest buildings in Toronto"; nearly 160 students were in attendance to qualify as teachers throughout the province. Finally, "the Common School buildings of Toronto are in every way creditable to the city. The six principal schools are situated on George, Louisa, John, Phoebe and Victoria Streets, and one in the Park, having been erected at a total cost, including the price of sites, of £16,000".[11]

Private schools, which exist today to provide an educational and cultural life for those who can afford to pay for it, and who, for one reason or another, believe that such an environment is superior to that of the public school, were a necessity during the infancy of our government school system. Typical of early private schools for boys was that of Mr. Hart on Church Street. The material which John Ross Robertson collected concerning this old academy, its master and his pupils, is highly illuminative of school days of old:

"On the west side of Church Street, nearly midway between Queen and Richmond Streets, stands a small two-storey double frame house, Nos. 125-8, the lower floor of which is now (1894) occupied by a newsdealer and another shop. The whole of the building was once

[11] *Descriptive Catalogue of the Provincial Exhibition, 1858*, 1858, p. 49.

occupied as a school and residence by Mr. Hart, a small grey-haired Irishman, who habitually wore eye-glasses and a suit of iron-grey tweed. The school was started about 1843, and continued until 1848. The school room was on the ground floor of the northern half of the building. The remainder of the house was occupied by Mr. Hart as a residence. Thirty or forty pupils, all boys, attended the school, among whom were William and B. Hart, the sons of the master, E. W. Gardner, John Dixon, P. Bethune, J. Dalrymple, W. Mulholland, Raymond Baby, Dr. John King, William Liddell, Walter and Henry Kidd, Tip and Gordon Hellwell, Sam and Tom Allen, the latter now a resident of Ottawa, William Pearson, Secretary of the Gas Company, and James Tilt, Q.C.

"The school room was arranged in a peculiar fashion. The master sat behind a high desk on one side, with his back to the wall. Around the other three sides were ranged one continuous row of benches with desks in front of them. On these benches the boys sat, every one with his back to the master and his eyes to the wall. By this method of arranging his pupils he could watch every boy's movements unknown to him, and frequently when two boys were racing pens across the desk he would quickly descend from his perch and, stepping on tip-toe across the room, would suddenly seize each by the shoulder, greatly to their consternation. English branches and Latin constituted the course of study at the school.

"Mr. Hart was very attentive to his duties, very humorous, and although very passionate at times was rather a favourite among the boys. He seemed to live in constant dread of his wife, a tall, lean, angular and wiry-looking woman. A switch of nine tails was his weapon of punishment. It was his habit to mention how many blows—'pandies' they were called in the schoolroom vernacular—the convicted boy was to receive. The customary number was eight, four on each hand. John Dixon used to give great amusement to the boys and great vexation to the master by his argumentative resistance to punishment by the cat. After dodging and squirming to avoid the blows, he would dispute the count until the master became so confused and enraged that he would give him two or

three extra cuts with the stick end of the cat, but John invariably beat him on the count. With all his supposed cleverness as a master the smart boys would outwit him. One gave him every day for three months the same problems worked out by the Rule of Three. School hours were from nine to twelve and one to three except on Saturdays, when the boys were given a half holiday.

"The plank sidewalk in front of the building was used for marbles, peg-tops, and other school-boy amusements. The older boys, nearly every one of whom owned a rooster, indulged in the more advanced sport of cock-fighting in the adjoining field of Mr. Harris. The lane at the south of the house was the battlefield, and here nearly every day a pugilistic encounter took place. On several occasions J. Dalrymple, after a truant's trip of a week, was brought to the schoolroom by his mother, tied hand and foot and in a cart. These were red-letter days for the master, who would superintend his disembarkation with great glee, rolling up his coat-sleeves, flourishing his instrument of torture, and calling out in exultant tones, 'Bring him in, bring him in by the nape of the neck till I give him a taste of the flail'."[18]

In the early twenties a "select school for young ladies" was directed by Mrs. Goodman, and later by Mrs. Cockburn. It was advertised as under the patronage of Lady Sarah Maitland. The type of education provided, and the fees and other conditions enforced upon those who attended, are outlined in the *Gazette* of May 23, 1822:

"For education in the English language grammatically, History, Geography, the use of the Globes, with plain and fancy needlework, £2. Writing and ciphering, 10s., the French language, £1, drawing and painting on velvet, £1 10s. For board and lodging, £3 10s.

"Music, dancing, flower- and card-work are also taught in the school and charged moderately.

"Mrs. Cockburn will receive a junior class of little children from four to seven years of age for five dollars per quarter each.

"Entrance, One Guinea. Every lady to provide a table- and teaspoon, knife and fork, sheets and towels, and to pay for her own washing."[19]

[18]Robertson, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 247.
[19]*Upper Canada Gazette*, May 23, 1822.

Guardian Illustrated News

BOYS' MILITARY DRILL IN 1863

Military drill for school boys was decidedly a novelty at that time.

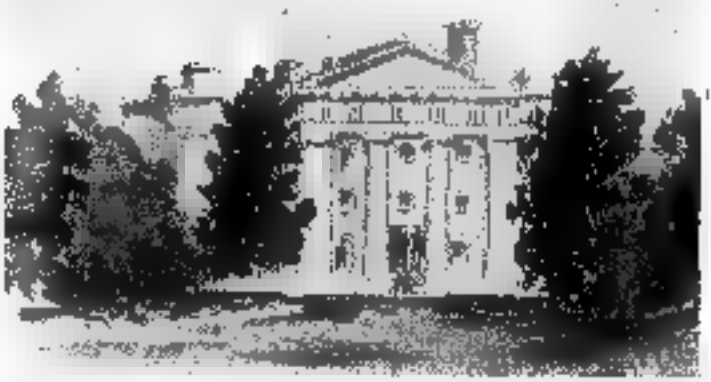
HART'S SCHOOL, 126-8 CHURCH STREET

The old school is shown as it appeared many years afterwards.

Canadian Illustrated News. William Armstrong.

UNVEILING THE RIDGEWAY MONUMENT, JULY 1, 1870

Nine members of the Queen's Own Rifles lost their lives in action against the Fenians at the Battle of Lime Ridge in 1866.



John Ross Robertson Collection.

KING'S COLLEGE

Toronto's first institution of higher learning stood on the site of the present Parliament Buildings.

Among ladies' private schools of note was Pinehurst, a select academy conducted just east of The Grange. The house was built about 1840, and in 1850 Monsieur and Madame Des Landes opened a ladies' school there. The fashionable clientele attracted during the three years in which they conducted the classes was continued during the long tenure of Mrs. Forster, a charming and accomplished school-mistress who presided over the establishment until 1866. The daughters of many prominent Canadian families received their education in this school. Mrs. Forster died in 1876, while Pinehurst was demolished in the late eighties to make way for the extension of McCaul Street to College Street.

Miss MacNally's private school was located on the north side of Wellington Street, in a large brick house east of Emily Street. The establishment opened in 1845-6, and the headmistress was assisted by her three sisters. About twelve years later she ended her connection with the school when she became the wife of Mr. John Boyd, at one time principal of a famous school on Bay Street—the Classical and Commercial Academy of the thirties. Miss MacNally was particularly proficient in modern languages, and her school attracted the patronage of many prominent families.

Another well-known ladies' academy was located at 325 King Street West during the years 1854-60. Miss Macartney, the lady principal, was the daughter of an English officer, and her school was highly regarded not only in Toronto but in other parts of the province. Later, as Mrs. Nixon, she conducted a school closely connected with the Church of England.

Upper Canada College has long been pre-eminent among private schools in Toronto. Originally endowed by a gift of 66,000 acres of Crown Lands, this famous school was able to inaugurate its work on a scale which could not be approached by others less fortunate. Upper Canada was originally called Minor College, presumably to distinguish it from the University of King's College which was part of the projected educational system, but which was some years later in its commencement. The original advertisement concerning the construction of Minor College appeared in the *U. E. Loyalist* in 1829:

"Minor College. Sealed tenders for erecting a School House and four dwelling-houses will be received on the first Monday of June next. Plans, elevations and specifications may be seen after the 12th instant on application to the Hon. Geo. Markland, from whom further information will be received. Editors throughout the Province are requested to insert this notice until the first Monday in June, and forward their accounts for the same to the office of the LOYALIST, York. York, 1st May, 1829."[30]

At the end of that year the school was ready to receive students, and the announcement of its opening appeared in the *Upper Canada Gazette* of December 17th. It will be observed that most of the first teachers were Cambridge graduates and clergymen. Upper Canada College still continues the policy of having about half of its masters from England, though the former custom of preferring clergymen as teachers in private schools of the Church of England is now in general restricted to the Headmaster, and even he is frequently a layman. The advertisement of the opening of the school is as follows:

"Upper Canada College, established at York. Visitor, the Lieutenant-Governor for the time being. This College will open after the approaching Christmas Vacation, on Monday the 8th of January, 1830, under the conduct of the Masters appointed at Oxford by the Vice Chancellor and other electors, in July last. Principal, the Rev. J. H. Harris, D.D., late Fellow of Clare Hall, Cambridge. Classical Department: Vice Principal, The Rev. T. Phillips, D.D., of Queen's College, Cambridge. First Classical Master: The Rev. Charles Mathews, M.A., of Pembroke Hall, Cambridge. Second Classical Master: The Rev. W. Boulton, B.A., of Queen's College, Oxford. Mathematical Department: The Rev. Charles Dade, M.A., Fellow of Caius College, Cambridge, and late Mathematical Master of Elizabeth College. French, Mr. J. P. De la Haye. English, Writing and Arithmetic, Mr. G. A. Barber and Mr. J. Padfield. Drawing Master, Mr. Drury. . . . (Signed) G. H. Markland, Secretary to the Board of Education. York, Upper Canada, Dec. 2, 1829."[31]

[30] The U. E. Loyalist, May 2, 1829.
[31] *Upper Canada Gazette*, December 17, 1829.

We cannot enter here into the history of the College, but a paragraph from an important publication of the late seventies, edited by the father of the present Principal of the school, recalls the old King Street building which stood near the site of the present Royal Alexandra Theatre, and the controversy which for a time threatened its existence:

"Regaining King Street, and turning to the west, we come upon Upper Canada College and the fine grounds that surround that historic institution. The building itself has no architectural attractions. The charm of the place is its foreground, with its bright, green sward, and the foliage of the trees that overhang the sidewalk. The College, which was founded by Sir John Colborne in 1829, has the good fortune to be well endowed, and is under the direction of a committee of the University Senate. Attached is a boarding-house; and the institution has a well-equipped staff. Many of the leading public men of the country have acquired their early education at the College: it consequently has some traditions. Some educational reformers now regard it, however, as out of line with the Secondary School System of the Province; and its right to exist has recently become a matter of fierce debate."[23]

It is fortunate that the opponents of Upper Canada College were not successful in terminating its career, for it is and has always been something greater than a school, and its graduates, in larger numbers, probably, than those of any other Canadian school, occupy positions of prominence throughout the world.

As the years passed, the public school system increased in scope with the growth of the city. By 1879 there were nineteen public schools, of which Dufferin, Ryerson and Wellesley were described as "large and handsome"; and five separate schools provided instruction for the children of Roman Catholics. Not until 1860 did the city make any provision for secondary education. In that year was commenced the policy of arranging for the entrance each year into the Grammar School of a few of the brightest pupils of

[23] G. M. Grant (Ed.): *Picturesque Canada*, 1879, Vol. I, p. 430. The most extensive account of Upper Canada College is George Dickson: *A History of Upper Canada College, 1829-1892*, 1893. In addition several shorter descriptions and collections of reminiscences have appeared in print.

the common schools. In 1865, when the Toronto Grammar School was located on the east side of Dalhousie Street, just east of Gould, it was first officially recognised as the high school of the city.[33] In 1870 old King's College, Queen's Park, provided temporary accommodations, while greatly increased civic grants made possible in 1871 the opening of a new building—the forerunner of Jarvis Collegiate—at the corner of Jarvis and Carlton Streets. The building cost slightly over $34,000 and accommodated 220 pupils, 75 of whom were in the "female department"—then a novelty. The students paid fees amounting to [illegible] a quarter, and the salaries of the staff varied from $1,600, paid to the Principal, the Rev. Dr. Wickson, to $250 received by one of his six assistants. Night schools started with a rush in October, 1855, but the 260 young men who entered the courses soon dwindled to 56, and as a result such supplementary instruction fell into disuse for twenty-five years. In 1876 Miss Ada Marcan was appointed first Kindergarten Directress, an innovation due to a visit to Toronto, at the invitation of the Department of Education, of two American exponents of that work. The work, however, did not commence until September, 1883, when 80 pupils were enrolled in the Victoria Street School.[34]

[33] Much information concerning the establishment of the Toronto public school system, and its development under Superintendent Barber after his appointment in 1864, is contained in the printed *Report of the Past History and Present Condition of the Common or Public Schools of the City of Toronto*, 1859. See also [G. P. Ure]: *The Handbook of Toronto*, 1858, pp. 102-105, for a good summary of educational facilities at that date, together with an outline of the history of Toronto schools and colleges. Several chapters in J. E. Middleton: *The Municipality of Toronto, a History* (1923) are devoted to the subject, and similar valuable material may be found in E. J. Hathaway: *Jesse Ketchum and his Times* (1920), pp. 94-122 and 274-82. The most notable contribution to our knowledge of the social and academic life of our fathers and grandfathers in attendance at the University of Toronto is W. J. Loudon's *Studies of Student Life*, (6 volumes, 1923-30); while the standard historical work upon the development of the provincial university is W. S. Wallace: *A History of the University of Toronto, 1827-1927*, 1927.

[34] A short but valuable summary of the history of the Board of School Trustees of Toronto is contained in the preface of the 1893 edition of *By-laws and Regulations of the Toronto Public School Board*. There is also a table of real and personal property of the Board, including the date of construction and other information concerning each of the 47 schools in existence at that time.

It is impossible here even to outline the great developments which have characterised the field of education in recent years. The scope and purposes of educational curricula as adapted to the needs of the individual have advanced at a rapid pace since the initial steps were taken to provide a small measure of technical and vocational training and guidance. The crippled child, the under-privileged and the subnormal, who received little but neglect or blows in earlier times, are now given the specialised attention which is their due; and it is probable that the exceptionally bright student will soon be similarly treated. Coincident with these advances there has been evident an ever-increasing *esprit de corps* among teachers, who now hold an honourable position in the state commensurate with the trust reposed in them as educators of the youth of the nation.

CHAPTER XX

THE MECHANICS' INSTITUTE

THE York Mechanics' Institute, or Society for Mutual Improvement in the Arts and Sciences, was established during the winter of 1830-31 in the Masonic Hall on Colborne Street near Church, and the first lectures and meetings were held in that building. In imitation of similar associations established in London and Edinburgh in the early eighteen-twenties, the organisers of the York Institute announced that "the object of this society shall be the mutual improvement of mechanics, and others who become members of the Society, in arts and sciences by the formation of a library of reference and circulation, by the delivery of lectures on scientific and mechanical subjects, the establishment of classes for the instruction of members in the various branches of study, and for conversation on subjects embraced by this constitution, from which all discussion on political or religious matters is to be carefully excluded".[1] At the time of the Institute's organisation the town of York had a population of about 3,000. Joseph Bates, who had had experience in such associations in England, was one of the leaders in the movement, and James Lesslie, Dr. Baldwin, Dr. Rolph, Dr. Dunlop, Sheriff Jarvis, Jesse Ketchum, John Ewart and David Paterson were the first office-bearers. 7s. 6d. was the annual fee, and the library, open to the members each evening "at Mr. Timothy Parsons', 215 King Street",[2] provided a place of diversion and education at a time when the tavern and beer-shop were the chief alternatives. The following extract from the third annual report of the Institute outlines the activities of the year. When we consider that the great majority of the members had not had the advantage of higher education it would seem that, apart from the conversation class, the proceedings must have been well over the heads of many of those who were intended to benefit:

[1] This sentence formed part of the original constitution of the Institute.
[2] *George Walton's York Commercial Directory for 1834*, 1833, p. 132.

"It is with feelings of gratitude and satisfaction that our committee have been enabled by the gratuitous exertions of their scientific friends to keep up the regular supply of lectures on the different subjects adapted to the objects of the institute. During the last year the following subjects have been taken up and ably discussed: the principle of matter—attraction, cohesion and repulsion; astronomy—the nature and properties of the sun and the phenomena of the planets Mercury and Venus; natural history—the cause and effect of climates, and other subjects of natural philosophy, such as electricity and pneumatics, with experiments and illustrations. The conversation class has likewise contributed greatly to those who have availed themselves of it, in bringing much interesting matter under their consideration."[4]

In 1835 the Institute received a grant of £200 from the government, and the money was expended largely upon scientific apparatus to illustrate "the principles of natural Philosophy, Geography, Astronomy and Mathematics", and which did not prove of much use. During the excitement of the Rebellion of 1837 there was a lapse in interest in the Society, but in 1838 the City Council provided a suite of rooms in the south-east corner of the Market buildings, and greater enthusiasm was aroused. The annual report of 1841 noted that the membership was 94, and that courses of weekly lectures were given "by the Rev. Mr. Lilley, on the Mind; by the Rev. Mr. Leach, President, on Education; by Mr. Lang, on Chemistry; and one by the Rev. Mr. Roaf, on Geology; for the untiring zeal of those gentlemen, under the depressing circumstances which the Institute has had to struggle with, the Committee tender their grateful acknowledgments". As is so often the case, some of the efforts of the directors of the Institute failed because of the disinterested attitude of the very persons who would be most helped by them. The report states that "an attempt was made to establish a class to meet five nights in the week, intended to combine the advantages of a reading-room and an academy, which unfortunately failed from the unexpected opposition of the persons chiefly intended to be

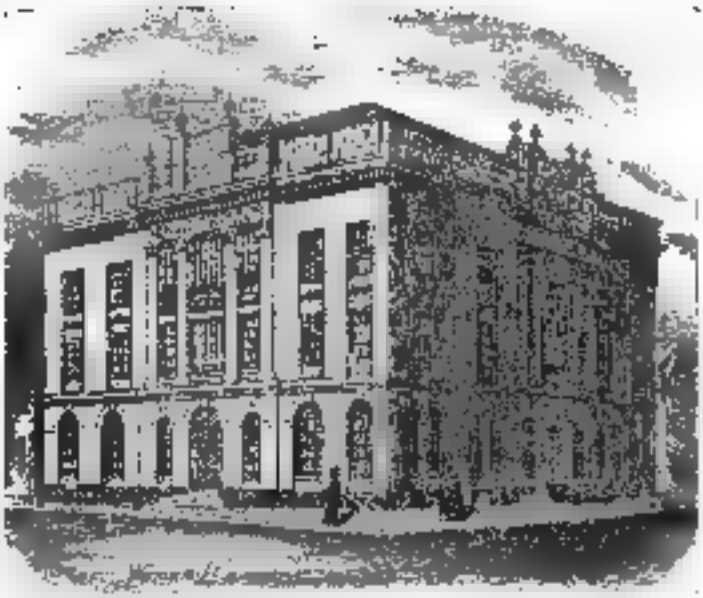
[4]The *Patriot and Newness' Monitor*, February 17, 1834.

benefitted by it".[4] Anyone, however, who has attended night school even two nights a week will readily excuse those who found it a hardship to come five nights. The same report noted also that many members did not return books loaned to them—human nature changing not at all in this respect down through the centuries.

In 1844 the Institute's quarters were changed to rooms on King Street, the Court Room being made available to them for lecture purposes. In the next year a firehall was commenced on Court Street, and the Institute obtained the use of the second storey by raising $1,861 to pay for the cost of that part. In 1848 the first of a series of exhibitions of fine arts, machines, ladies' work, etc., was held for a period of ten weeks. Receipts exceeded expenditures by about $200, so the exhibition was financially successful. In succeeding years similar displays were held, that of 1850 containing a model steam locomotive which attracted great interest, for there were at that time no steam railways in the province. The model was made by A. Parkes, woodturner, Adelaide Street, and a small spirit lamp propelled it on a raised track which ran around the room.

In 1851 was made the first suggestion of the necessity of increased space for the activities of the Institute. In that year the exhibition netted only $48, but it was one of the best displays yet held. In 1853 the north-east corner of Church and Adelaide Streets was purchased at auction for $6,529, and $4,800 was raised by public subscription towards defraying the cost of a building thereon. On April 17, 1854, the corner-stone was laid under Masonic auspices. A procession of Masons in full regalia, accompanied by the officers of the Institute and led by the band of the Royal Canadian Rifles, marched in procession from St. Lawrence Hall to the site. T. G. Ridout, D.G.M. of Canada, laid the stone with a silver trowel presented to him by Thomas J. Robertson, President of the Institute, and so was commenced "a hall for the public use of the mechanics of this city", as Mr. Ridout remarked. On the opposite side of the street, near St. James' school-house, a small cannon fired a salute

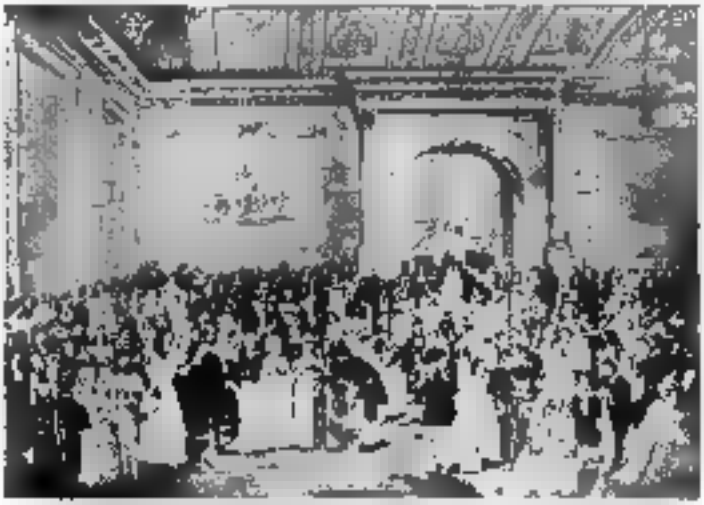
[4] See John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*, 1894-1914. Vol. II, pp. 706-7.



John Ross Robertson Collection.

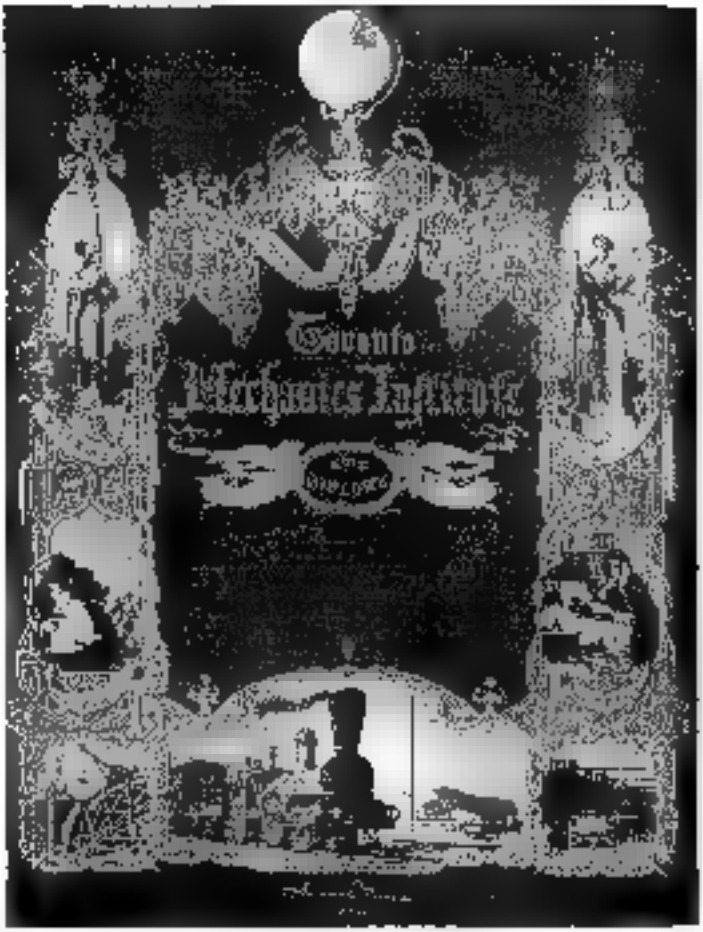
THE MECHANICS' INSTITUTE, ADELAIDE AND CHURCH STREETS

The building afterwards became the Public Library



Reproduced by courtesy of Mr. [illegible] from a copy of an [illegible]

FANCY DRESS BALL IN THE MUSIC HALL OF THE MECHANICS' INSTITUTE, APRIL 19, 1870



Sara Ross Robertson Collection.

A DIPLOMA OF THE TORONTO MECHANICS' INSTITUTE

For half a century the Institute afforded library and recreational facilities now provided by the Public Library and numerous clubs and societies.

of three rounds, and the proceedings ended with three cheers for the Queen.

It was found impossible to complete the project without outside help, and the Provincial Government granted over $21,000 within the next few years to finish the building, at the same time using some of it for offices. In 1861 it was completed at a total cost of $48,380.78. Meanwhile St. Lawrence Hall had been used for some of the lectures. Lists for 1857-58, as well as earlier and later courses, suggest that it must have been exceedingly difficult to arouse interest, among persons comparatively uneducated, in lectures which today would hardly be given outside of the university classroom. Scientists, professors and clergymen predominated among the speakers, and a random selection from the lists includes such topics as "Optics", "Heat and Light in their Chemical Relations", "Fixed Stars and Nebulae", "The Origin of Literature", "The Poetry of Insanity" and "The Anatomy and Comparative Anatomy of the Eye". The term "mechanics", however, must be taken to include business men, tradesmen and manufacturers as well as unskilled labourers and factory operatives; and many tradesmen were at that period men of some education who had come from the Old Land. In fact the Institute undoubtedly attracted to its lectures many non-members, of the same cultured classes which in our time patronise educational courses held under such auspices as the University of Toronto, the Art Gallery, and the Royal Canadian Institute. In 1857-8 non-members paid a "York shilling" (12½c.) admission, or $1 for the course, while members and ladies were charged only 50c. for the season. In 1858 the Institute had 300 members, and there were 4,000 volumes in the library—a number four times that of 1850. The expenditures in that year were £651 12s. 2d., a few pounds less than the receipts.

In 1862 a series of literary and musical entertainments was instituted and proved a great success; consequently similar programs were given in later years. During the same year the evening classes were reorganised, and continued until 1880, when the School Board established similar classes in three of the schools.

The early exhibitions of the Institute were evidently not

held every year, for in 1868 the display is called "the eighth annual exhibition". Artists, and persons possessing works of art, were invited to loan them to the Society, and the exhibit included ladies' needlework, engraving and photography. Over 700 pictures, including many "old Masters", were on display on this occasion, though the admission charge of 10c. did not produce enough to meet expenses, a deficit of $100 resulting.

From time to time additional attractions were introduced in the Institute. Billiard tables and chess were available in the recreation rooms, and there was a ladies' reading-room in addition to that originally provided for the members. A list of the presidents of the association between 1851 and 1883 includes many of the most prominent citizens of Toronto, some of whom devoted a great deal of time to the interests of their less fortunate fellows. W. Edwards, for example, was a prominent worker for thirty years, and many others might be mentioned whose activities in the Mechanics' Institute extended from eight to seventeen years. In 1883 the Institute was merged into the Toronto Public Library as a result of the acceptance of the Free Library by-law by the citizens.

The history of libraries in Toronto is obscure and fragmentary. A private circulating library was established in York in December, 1810. Among buildings entered by the American soldiery during the occupation of 1813 was the town library, and it suffered in consequence, though some books were later sent back by the American commander. In 1822 a meeting of the directors and subscribers was held in De Forest's Hotel for the purpose of disposing of such books as remained in the possession of the treasurer of the Library, William Allan, and it was suggested in the *Gazette* that other books still held by individuals should be returned to that official.[8] Another library was in existence in the early thirties, for an advertisement of the York Circulating Library appears in *Walton's 1834 Directory*.[9]

The Toronto Athenaeum was formed in the forties for the purpose of supporting a Public Library and Museum.

[8]*Upper Canada Gazette*, October 1, 1822.
[9]*Walton's Directory*, facing p. 124.

But this library and that of the Mechanics' Institute had on their shelves in 1849 a scant 1,000 volumes. The origin of the present library system dates from the acceptance of the Free Library by-law on January 1, 1883, and the Public Library instituted at that time was due particularly to the energy of Aldermen Hallam and Taylor. An outline of the early years of the Institution is given by John Ross Robertson:

"On taking possession of the building made over for the use of the Public Library by the late Mechanics' Institute, it was found necessary to alter the interior so as to afford space for the present reading-room, and to erect an additional building at the rear for the reception of the volumes. To carry out this work application was made to the Council of Toronto for $50,000 in debentures, the proceeds from which were placed to the credit of the Board. The nominal number of volumes possessed by the Mechanics' Institute when it became merged into the Public Library was 8,000, but of these all but 2,000 were worthless or nearly so. In June, 1883, the officers of the new institute were appointed, and in September of the same year Chairman John Hallam and Chief Librarian James Bain, jr., visited New York and London for the purpose of purchasing books.

"On March 6th, 1884, the library was formally opened by the Lieutenant-Governor. On this occasion addresses were delivered by Sir Daniel Wilson, President of University College, the Hon. G. W. Ross, Minister of Education, Professor Goldwin Smith and the Rev. Dr. Withrow. The members of the first board of managers were John Hallam, the Mayor, Dr. George Wright, James Mason, John A. Mills, John Taylor, W. H. Knowlton, George D'Arcy Boulton and William Scully. James Bain, jr., Chief Librarian; John Davy, assistant Librarian and Secretary. The reading-room of the new Library was opened March 10th, 1884, but no books were issued until April 2nd, when the demand was so great that it was necessary to enlarge the staff and duplicate and triplicate many books. Branches were established at St. Andrew's Market and St. Paul's Hall. Subsequently two other branches were established, making one in the west, one in the northwest, one in the north, and one

in the eastern portion of the city. The Library now (1894) contains about 55,000 volumes. The reference library has grown so extensive that there is an imperative need for more space for its patrons, and an enlargement for their convenience is now under consideration."[7]

In the forty years that have elapsed since this was written the development of library facilities has more than kept pace with the growth of the city. From time to time new branches have been opened, and the existing system under Dr. George Locke provides educational and recreational advantages for many thousands of people whose acquaintance with the best literature would otherwise be greatly circumscribed. There are at present eighteen public libraries in Toronto. The average annual expenditure upon new books over the last five years was $70,606, and in 1933 there were 4,433,761 books loaned. In recent times the number of small commercial lending libraries in Toronto has greatly increased, many of them being a part of the equipment of the "general store" of the day—the corner druggist; but usually they supply little but the current sensational novel, and could hardly be considered a satisfactory substitute for the service provided by the city's large staff of trained librarians.

[7]Robertson, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 399. John Hallam's public spirited services and generous gifts towards the foundation of our public library system place him in the foremost rank of the city's benefactors.

CHAPTER XXI

"A City of Churches"

As was to be expected, the Established Church of England gained a foothold in Upper Canada somewhat earlier than other denominations, though not to the extent that might have resulted from determined efforts by that body. Even as late as 1839 there were only 77 Anglican clergymen in the province, though the larger share of the blame for such a condition should be laid upon the Imperial Parliament, which controlled grants in support of the extension of the Upper Canadian Church. But, in spite of the fewness of Church of England clergy, arrogant governors and lesser officials long discriminated against [redacted] "dissenters". An attitude of social and religious exclusiveness was early characteristic of the (for most practical purposes) "established" church, but probably no one carried his feelings of superiority quite so far as an eccentric clergyman in the Bay of Quinté district, the Rev. John Langhorn. While travelling his circuit on foot during intense heat he was offered a horse by a considerate Presbyterian. Kindness was rewarded by this unique retort: "Sir, you are a promoter of schism in the flock of Christ. I cannot, therefore, have any intercourse with you, much less accept any favour from you. Please keep on your side of the road and go your way."[1] It was, however, a day of strong religious and political opinions, and Anglicans had certainly no monopoly of intolerance.

While the erection of a church[2] in York was not seriously considered until 1802, the Anglican service had for sev-

[1] Professor A. H. Young of Trinity College discovered this unique item during his research into Langhorn's life. The Church of England was, of course, never legally "established" in Upper Canada.

[2] In considering early religious life in Toronto it is intended particularly to portray the beginnings of the various denominations. The reminiscences of men like Dr. Henry Scadding concerning quaint events of no particular importance, perhaps, —but none the less illustrative of the times,—are added here and there.

eral years been held in the Government Buildings. At first the schoolmaster, William Cooper, read the service; and later the Rev. Thomas Raddish resided in York for eight months. The first permanent incumbent was the Rev. George Okill Stuart, who came to York in 1800 as missionary and remained in charge until 1812, when the Rev. John (later Bishop) Strachan arrived in York to become Archdeacon, and rector of St. James'. On July 9, 1803, a meeting of the subscribers to the proposed St. James' Church was held, and it was decided that the building should be of stone, and pine and oak planks;[2] this decision was changed, however, for the church was constructed entirely of wood. The building, which was not in use until 1807, had no steeple and was much like a house. Space was left for a burial-ground around it, and a few years later it was surrounded by a split rail fence.

The original St. James' Church was greatly altered in 1818, when a spire was added; and in 1831 the old structure was demolished and replaced by a stone church. This building was largely destroyed by fire in 1839, and the reconstructed church was among the many buildings burned in the great fire of 1849. The present[3] St. James' Cathedral was erected in 1850-52, the congregation meanwhile worshipping at Holy Trinity and other churches. With reference to the musical portion of the service at old St. James' C. C. Taylor wrote:

"Ecclesiastical music was entirely destitute of organs or melodeons. At the Church of St. James a Mr. Hetherington officiated as clerk, and his mode of procedure was to announce the psalm or hymn, give out the tune on the bassoon, and then accompany the vocalists present with original and often grotesque improvisations on that instrument. At one time a choir was formed at this church with a base viol, clarionet and bassoon as the accompanying instruments. The music was almost entirely confined to the churches that then existed, the choirs being accompanied by flutes, violins, violoncellos, and occasionally a trombone."[4]

[2] *Upper Canada Gazette*, July 16, 1803. A preliminary meeting was held in January of that year.

[3] For a traveller's account of the laying of the corner-stone see Chapter I, pp. 22-3.

[4] C. C. Taylor: *Toronto Called Back*, 1886, pp. 271-2.

Trinity Church, King Street, which was erected in 1843, was the second Anglican church in Toronto, though a year earlier the first St. Paul's was opened on Bloor Street, then outside the city limits, near the village of Yorkville. At that time "Church Street extended only as far as Carlton Street. Jarvis Street from the corner of Queen was only a sandy lane, as was also Sherbourne Street, then known north of Queen Street as Allan's Lane. West of St. Paul's on the south side of Bloor there was scarcely a house between the church and Yonge Street, and on the northern side there were only some three or four houses between the end of Jarvis Street and the Red Lion Hotel, on the north-east corner of Yonge and Bloor Streets, close ■ which was the toll-gate."* St. Paul's did not originally have a steeple. Concerning the acquisition Dr. Scadding says:

"While crossing the First Concession Line (Bloor Street), now in our northward journey, the moment comes back to us when on glancing along the vista to the eastward formed by the road in that direction we first noticed a church-spire on the right-hand or southern side. We had passed that way a day or two before, and we were sure no such object was to be seen there then; and yet, unmistakably now, there rose up before the eye a rather graceful tower and spire, of considerable altitude, complete from base to apex, and coloured white.

"The fact was: Mr. J. G. Howard, a well-known architect, had ingeniously constructed a tower of wood ■ a horizontal, or nearly horizontal position on the ground close by, somewhat as a shipbuilder puts together 'the mast of some vast admiral'; and then, after attending to the external finish of, at least, the higher portion of it, even to a coating of lime wash, had, in the space of a few hours by means of convenient machinery, raised ■ on end, and secured it permanently in a vertical position.

"We gather some further particulars of the achievement from a contemporary account. The Yorkville spire was raised on the 4th of August, 1841. It was 85 feet high, composed of four entire trees or pieces of timber each of that length, bound together pyramidically, tapering from ten

*John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*, 1894-1914. Vol. IV, p. 15.

feet base to one foot at top, and made to receive a turned ball and weather-cock. The base was sunk in the ground until the apex was raised ten feet from the ground; and about thirty feet of the upper part of the spire was completed, coloured and painted before the raising. The operation of raising commenced about two o'clock p.m., and about eight in the evening the spire and vane were seen erect, and appeared to those unacquainted with what was going on to have risen amongst the trees as if by magic. The work was performed by Mr. John Richey, the framing by Mr. Wetherell, and the raising was superintended by Mr. Joseph Hill.

"The plan adopted was this: three gin-poles, as they are called, were erected in the form of a triangle; each of them was well braced, and tackles were rove at their tops; the tackles were hooked to strong straps about fifty feet up the spire, with nine men to each tackle, and four men to steady the end with following poles. It was raised in about four hours from the commencement of the straining of the tackles, and had a very beautiful appearance while rising. The whole operation, we have been told, was conducted as nearly as possible in silence, the architect himself regulating by signs the action of the groups at the gin-poles, being himself governed by the plumb-line suspended in a high frame before him. . . . .

"The original St. Paul's before it acquired in this singular manner the dignified appurtenance of a steeple, was a long, low, barn-like, wooden building. Mr. Howard otherwise improved it, enlarging it by the addition of an aisle on the west side. When some twenty years later, i.e., in 1861, the new stone church was erected, the old wooden structure was removed bodily to the west side of Yonge Street, together with the tower, curtailed, however, of its spire.

"We have been informed that the four fine stems, each eighty-five feet long, which formed the interior frame of the tower and spire of 1841, were a present from Mr. Allan, of Moss Park; and that the Rev. Charles Mathews, occasionally officiating in St. Paul's, gave one hundred pounds

in cash towards the expense of the ornamental addition now made to the edifice."[7]

With an evangelical appeal directed particularly among the "common" people, Methodism was already a strong denomination in the United States when its first influence was felt in Canada. This fact alone was enough to create intense suspicion, and Egerton Ryerson, speaking in 1837, noted that in the early days of the province "Methodism was a subject of scorn and ridicule. Its principles were deemed absurd; its ministers were viewed as ignorant, idle, hypocritical adventurers and political spies".[8]

That there was some excuse for this attitude is obvious when we remember that all the first Methodist missionaries and pastors were sent out by American conferences, and in most instances were Americans. After the formation of the Canada Conference in 1824 and, five years later, the separation of the American and Canadian churches, the opposition to the Methodist body was gradually dispelled.

Among the earliest Methodist circuit-riders to visit Little York was the Rev. Nathan Bangs, who was there in the last days of December, 1802, having been appointed to cover a circuit "from the village of Kingston to the town of York". While in the district he travelled up Yonge Street and held meetings at various places, noting that the people had "their own code of decorum" and were "fond of disputation". This was particularly exemplified in one locality about ten miles from the town, where that abomination of Methodists—a fiddler—was not repressed without a struggle. Dr. Bangs' account of the episode serves to recall an attitude of mind which persisted as long as Canadian Methodism:

"There was a great awakening among the people, but an

[7]Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old*, 1873, pp. 405-7. The mention of J. G. Howard, who donated High Park to the city, recalls that he was for many years one of the most important surveyors, architects and builders in Toronto, St. George's Church and the Lunatic Asylum being among his contributions to architectural design. He was drawing master at Upper Canada College from 1829 to 1850. The first white bricks to be used in Toronto were made in 1842 from clay obtained near Sheriff Jarvis' home, "Rosedale", and Howard used 20,000 of them in that year to build a store at 103 King Street, which also had German silver sashes and plate glass.

[8]Cited in J. E. Middleton: *The Municipality of Toronto*, Vol. II, p. 633.

inveterate fiddler seemed set on by the great adversary to contest the victory with me inch by inch. He had earned considerable money as the musician of the winter-night dancing parties of the settlers; but he was now willing to fiddle for nothing, if they would meet in dance and frolic rather than to pray. He contrived every possible method to keep the young people from our meetings. For some time he carried matters with a high hand, and the war was at last fully opened between us. One Sabbath morning, however, I fairly caught him. I was preaching on Galatians v. 19-21, and when I came to the word 'revelings' I applied it to his tactics and said, 'I do not know that the devil's musician is here today; I do not see him anywhere'. But he was sitting in a corner out of my sight, and he now put out his head and cried out, 'Here I am, ha! ha! ha!'—making the place ring with his laughter. 'Ay,' said I, 'you are there, are you?', and turning toward him I addressed him in language of rebuke and warning. I finally told him that if he did not cease to allure the young people into sinful amusements I would pray God either to convert him or take him out of the way, and I had no doubt that God would answer my prayer. The power of God evidently fell upon the assembly; a divine influence seemed to overpower them. The guilty man began to tremble all over like a leaf, and turned deathly pale. He finally got up and rushed out of the house. He went home, burned his fiddle, and we were thenceforth rid of his interference with our meetings and his opposition in the community."[4]

Yonge Street was first made a circuit in 1806, but the Rev. Daniel Pickett, who was in charge, does not appear to have organised a class in York. In fact the first Methodist meetings seem to have been held in 1817-18 "in the House of Assembly and sometimes in the home of Dr. Stoyles, in the Rev. Thomas Stoyles' house, and in the residence of the Dettars". Another authority gives a different origin of Methodism in York, linking it with the arrival in 1818 of James Lever, under whose influence a religious group assembled in a manner characteristic of the commencement of religious bodies all over Canada:

[4]Quoted in John Carroll: *Case and His Contemporaries*, 1867-77, Vol. 1, pp. 96-6.

"James Lever and his family emigrated from England and came to York this year. He had heard Mr. Wesley preach, was a pious man, and a member of the Methodist Society. He inquired if any Methodists were in the town, and was directed to a tailor. He went to him, and they agreed to have a prayer meeting once a week. At first but few came, but the number gradually increased. Mr. Ryan thought there was encouragement enough to build a frame meeting-house; and with his usual energy determined on and accomplished the object."[10]

The church so erected in the summer of 1818 was in charge of the Rev. David Culp, first resident minister. The building was situated on the south side of King Street, just west of the present Jordan Street, a site now occupied by the head office of the Canadian Bank of Commerce. John Ross Robertson describes the chapel, typical of many others in Canada at the time, as follows:

"It was a little low commonplace-looking frame structure, originally forty feet square, but afterwards enlarged to forty by sixty feet. Its builder was Robert Petch. The little chapel had a solitary double doorway opening towards King Street. On each side of the entrance was a window, which, as compared with the size of the building, were of considerable dimensions. Three windows of similar size lighted the interior from each side. The interior was fitted up with a high square box-like pulpit at the end. Rude wooden benches were ranged along each side, leaving a narrow passage down the middle from the door to the pulpit. The entire cost of the building was about $250, and it is said that the congregation were three years in raising this amount. . . . In the first Methodist Church the custom prevailed of separating the men from the women, the former sitting on the right hand entering the building, the latter on the left."[11]

A prominent Toronto Methodist recalled that "the social

[10]The first quotation is from T. E. Champion: *The Methodist Churches of Toronto*, as reprinted in connection with the history of the King Street Methodist Church in the Toronto Centenary Number of the *New Outlook*, March 14, 1934, p. 166; while the second origin is from George F. Playter: *History of Methodism in Canada*, 1862, p. 107. "Stoyles" is more correctly "Stoyell".

[11]Robertson, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 140. For many further details see the authorities referred to in Note 10.

status of the adherents and members of the Methodist Church" was not as high in the fifties and sixties as it has been in more recent times: "In fact to become a member of that Church was to some extent to lose caste. . . . There were very few professional men connected with the body, and none who were wealthy. . . . The Methodist Church was much more strict then, attendance at theatres, dancing and card-playing being specifically prohibited in the rules of the Church. . . . The rule against 'the putting on of gold or costly apparel', although generally ignored, was observed by some by whom the wearing of flowers on their hats or bonnets or having flounces on their dresses was considered worldly". He remembered—and there was the same sincerity with varied manifestations in other denominations—that "Love Feasts, held quarterly, were generally crowded. . . . . Attendance at class-meetings was a condition of membership. There were, however, exceptions made in the case of persons of well-known Christian character, who constitutionally were unable to relate their religious experience before others."[12]

Richmond Street Church, long called "the Cathedral of Methodism", and the mother of a large number of congregations, was erected in 1822. The building itself was not, however, distinctive, being merely "a plain, common-looking brick structure with not a single external ornamentation to relieve the painful severity of its plainness. But the old-fashioned portico with its four pillars gave it a rather unique appearance, and in earlier times must have made it imposing before more impressive architecture and more palatial church structures came to crowd in out".[13] Many changes and additions were made from time to time, until eventually the building extended to Temperance Street. By the eighteen-eighties the structure showed signs of

[12]W. H. Pearson: *Recollections and Records of Toronto of Old*, 1914, pp. 248-50. The proceedings at early Methodist services were frequently very similar to the revivalism which one may witness in many a Negro church in the southern United States today. An excellent description of a Methodist service in Toronto in 1833 - the exhortation of the minister, the moans of sinners, and the general emotional excitement—may be found in a recent novel based upon a story, Patrick Slater's *The Yellow Briar*, 1933, pp. 90-8. Similarly, the usual events at a Roman Catholic wake are truthfully depicted, pp. 106-16.

[13]Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. IV, p. 343.

dilapidation and insufficient maintenance, though it was still in use. In 1888 the site was sold and the old building torn down, its congregation removing to a church on McCaul Street.

The ranks of Methodism were early split by controversies which resulted in the establishment of various sects, among them Episcopal, Primitive, and British Wesleyans; but the Wesleyan branch was by far the largest and most important. In the eighteen-sixties and -seventies several of these reunited with the Wesleyan body, and men like the Rev. Morley Punshon, who was in Toronto in 1868, did much to make Methodism the powerful body which entered the United Church of Canada in 1925.

The first Roman Catholic priest to visit York was the Rev. Edmund Burke in 1796, but it was many years before the denomination was organised. The transference of the capital from Niagara to York in 1796-7 removed several Roman Catholic families to the town, notably the Macdonells, and at the same time land was allotted to Father Burke for religious purposes. Again in 1806 four prominent Roman Catholics were issued a patent for the lot at the corner of George and Duke Streets, for over half a century the site of De La Salle Collegiate Institute. This land was intended to be the site of a church, but was sold in 1821 and the proceeds used to purchase a lot at the corner of Queen and Power Streets, where the first church, St. Paul's, was erected in 1823-6. Prior to the completion of the church its adherents were accustomed to meet in one another's homes. The first priest was Father Crowley, but he removed to Peterborough in 1826. The original structure was a small frame building, soon to be replaced by a substantial edifice of brick which remained in use until the eighteen-nineties.

St. Paul's was for some years the cathedral church of Roman Catholicism, but in 1842 Bishop Michael Power purchased the site of the present St. Michael's Cathedral, the land then being covered with forest. On May 8, 1845, he laid the corner-stone of the edifice, and on September 29, 1848, the cathedral was consecrated by the Bishop of Montreal. Some 4,000 people, many of whom were Protestants who had contributed towards the cost of the church,

attended the ceremony of laying the corner-stone, and it is recorded that "in a leaden box which it contains are, besides a great many other articles, fragments of a stone pier from the nave of the Cathedral [redacted] York and of the English oak roof of the same, which was built in 1340, and also a fragment of one of the earliest Roman temples in England, built before the conversion of the Britons".[14] The spire of [redacted]. Michael's was not added until 1862.

Itinerant missionaries of the Dutch Reformed Church of the United States provided the earliest contact of Presbyterianism with York and vicinity. In the first years of the nineteenth century the Rev. Robert McDowell visited the town, and in 1810 the Rev. John Beattie of the same religious body preached at York during an eighteen weeks' tour of the north shore of Lake Ontario. As early as 1818 an organized group of Presbyterians was holding meetings under the direction of the Rev. W. Jenkins, Scottish missionary from the United States. In 1821 several of them were attending service each Sunday in a small house on Hospital (Richmond) Street, the Rev. James Harris having organized a congregation in the previous autumn. Mr. Jesse Ketchum not only donated the land, but also paid £125 for the construction of a small wooden chapel. The church lands extended to Queen Street, that portion, we are told, being used "mainly for the cultivation of potatoes. It was leased for 21 years at a rental of £45 per annum, the rents to go to the minister".[15] The new church was opened on February 18, 1822, and was the only Presbyterian Church in York until St. Andrew's was erected on the south-west corner of Adelaide and Church Streets in 1830.

As in the case of the Methodists, the Presbyterian body was early divided into sects arising from differences of opinion in matters of ritual or organisation. The first congregation, on Richmond Street, for example, was unconnected with the Scottish church; but St. Andrew's on Adelaide Street, the opening service in which was held on Sunday, June 19, 1831, was affiliated with the National Church of Scotland. Prominent among the

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 311.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 216. For a detailed account of the origin of the first Knox Church, as recorded by James Harris in 1870, see the Toronto Centenary Number of the *New Outlook*, March 14, 1934, p. 167.

organisers of this congregation was Dr. William Dunlop, a picturesque pioneer whom one meets frequently in the pages of the early history of this province. St. Andrew's Church was a building "of unadorned simplicity, crude in all its appointments, with the old-fashioned, elevated, semi-circular wine-glass pulpit and sounding-board, and stiff, straight, high-backed uncomfortable pews ranged in rectilineal form, heated by large stoves in which wood was burned".[10] The 79th Regiment of Scotch Highlanders attended the opening service, and many members of this and the 71st Regiment were prominent in St. Andrew's congregation as long as they were garrisoned at York.

In 1843 occurred the "disruption" of the Established Church of Scotland, and those who seceded from that body formed the Free Church of Scotland. The main point of difference was that the latter group believed in the complete separation of church and state. The controversy spread to Canada, and 83 members withdrew from St. Andrew's Church, uniting with the earlier congregation on Richmond Street. The united body took the name Knox Church in December, 1844. On May 31, 1847, the church building was destroyed by fire; and, after worshipping for a time in St. Andrew's Church and in the Temperance Hall, the congregation occupied the new Knox Church in the early autumn of 1848. The edifice is described as "a plain, brick structure, with the old-fashioned, high, square-backed pews both on the gallery and main floor, arranged in stiff, formal manner straight across the church. The only ornamental portion of the room was the pulpit and its oak and walnut canopy—a most ornate and artistic piece of workmanship; the canopy with its pinnacles and graceful gothic lines being especially noteworthy".[11]

Characteristic of other times when people held strong convictions was the attitude of a considerable minority in Cooke's Presbyterian Church in 1880 who registered violent protest against the purchase of a reed organ. While the leader and his "music circle" were rehearsing for Sunday service, members of this group removed the offending organ from the church. The tuning-fork was good enough for the old-time Scottish, and we find in earlier days other out-

[10] Robertson, *ibid.*, p. 225. [11] *Ibid.*, p. 216.

breaks of a similar nature against "the Deil's kest o' whustles". In fact there is a Presbyterian church on the Kingston Road within the boundaries of Toronto where the tuning-fork is still retained among other traditional religious usages. In this connection it is of interest to know that St. Andrew's was the first Presbyterian church in Canada to permit instrumental music at its services. In 1852 the band of the 71st Highland Light Infantry played at the morning service, and in the following year a melodeon was purchased and a choir formed.

While there were members of the Baptist Church in York at least as early as 1820, the commencement of regular services appears to have been in 1829, when a few people were accustomed to meet in the Masonic Hall, the upper room of a Colborne Street building. The first Baptist Church was erected in 1832 on March (later Stanley, and now Lombard) Street. It was a small, square, one-storey chapel with a seating capacity of about 160. The first minister was the Rev. A. Stewart, 1829-1836, and for the four years following several laymen conducted the services in the absence of a regular incumbent. Among the first lay workers was T. F. Caldicott, later a clergyman, but at that time a member of the 29th Regiment—a school teacher who was often called "the soldier preacher". His life work—in later years he was the Rev. Dr. Caldicott—merited the eulogy that it was "the solid rock foundation upon which is built the present prosperity of the Baptist Church in Toronto".[14]

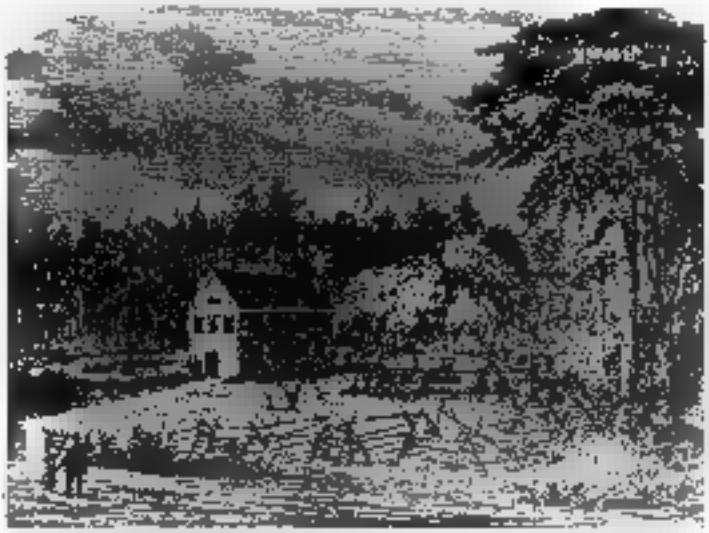
When the Baptist congregation was first organised in 1829 twenty-three persons contributed towards running expenses. From old records we learn that the minister's salary was £171; that "Elder Butler received 10 shillings for one day's sermons" on March 8, 1841; and that in July of the same year "Elder Moon was paid 10 shillings for a sermon on Election".[15] In 1844 the chapel was sold and the congregation removed to Bond Street. Jarvis Street church traces its origin to the March Street chapel, and among later congregations may be mentioned that of Walmer Road, whose church, erected in the early nineties, was long considered one of the handsomest in Canada.

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 424. [15] *Ibid.*

Artist Unknown.

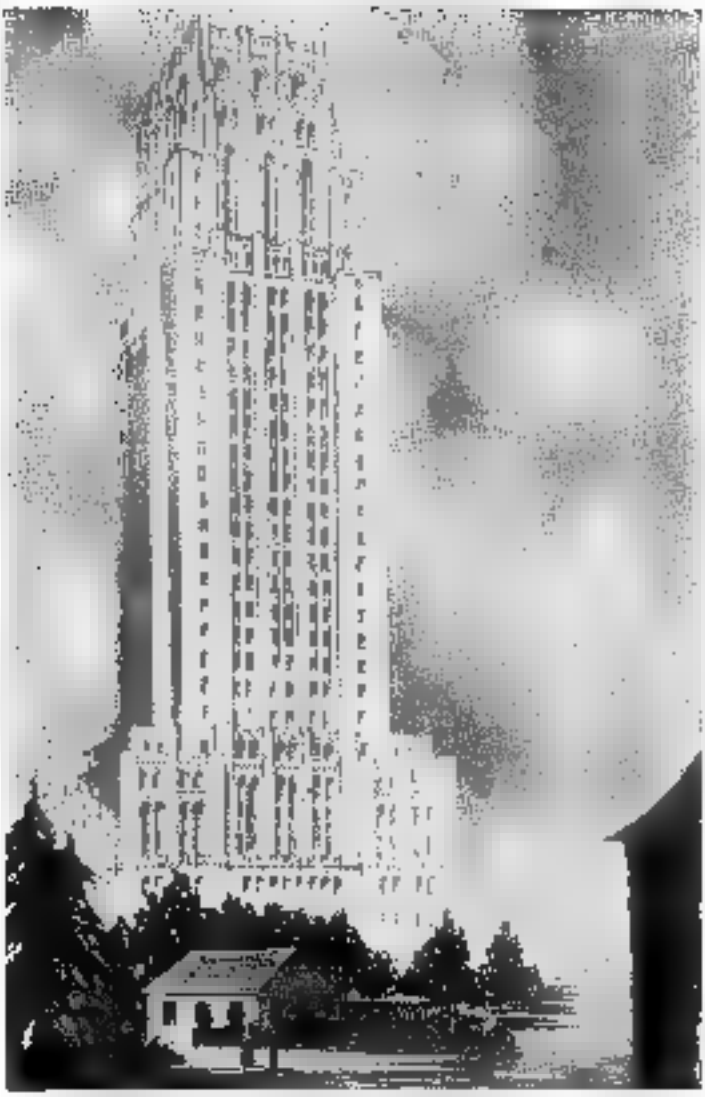
YORK IN 1808

The population at that time was 456, and the taxes collected amounted to a mere £62.



John Ross Robertson Collection — Hon. G. W. Allan, after an earlier sketch.

TORONTO'S FIRST CHURCH: ST. JAMES', 1807



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KING AND JORDAN STREETS, 1834-1934

Erected in 1818, the Methodist meeting-house was the Theatre Royal in the first year of the city. In the city's Centennial Year the magnificent 33-storey Canadian Bank of Commerce Head Office occupies the site.

Congregationalists were never a strong religious body in Toronto. Their organisation dates from the first year of the city, 1834, when seventeen members become associated under the leadership of the Rev. Mr. Merrefield, a member of the Independent Church in England. The first services were held in the Masonic Hall on Colborne Street, where the early Baptists also held their meetings. In 1837 the use of the Methodist chapel on George Street was secured, and the congregation became known as Zion Church. In 1839 a new church was erected on the north-east corner of Bay and Newgate (Adelaide) Streets, the structure being "a neat and commodious edifice, 40 x 80 feet, capable of seating 700 persons, with a basement for the Sunday school. It was brick-faced, with plaster made of white marble dust, and cost, exclusive of the land, about $10,000".[20] This was the mother church of Congregationalism in the province.

Among the citizens of early Toronto who took an active part in religious life may be mentioned Jesse Ketchum, "the Children's Friend". At first a pew-holder in St. James' Anglican, he frequently attended the Methodist chapel after 1818, and taught in the Sunday School. His home was always open to travelling ministers, and family prayer was conducted there twice a day. His gift to the Presbyterian Church has already been mentioned. He was a strong temperance advocate, and even when eighty years of age was accustomed to give short addresses to the boys and girls in Toronto Sunday Schools. His generosity in subscribing liberally to public enterprises of a religious, educational and philanthropic nature has ensured him a distinguished place in the memories of the past.[21]

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 474. For further details see the official report dated 1872, quoted in the *New Outlook*, March 14, 1934, p. 166.

[21] Mr. Ketchum aided financially in the construction of ten churches of several denominations in Toronto. Temperance Street was opened by him through his property and named by him; and he erected Temperance Hall on its south side and presented it to the Temperance Reformation Society—it now (also?) houses the Empire burlesque theatre. When in later years he removed to Buffalo his philanthropy was equally characteristic of his life there. A good biography of Jesse Ketchum by the late E. J. Hathaway, *Jesse Ketchum and His Times*, was published in 1929.

The commencement of the Salvation Army in 1882 is an event that can be recalled by many people still living. Long persecuted by the rough and vicious in the community, as well, it is feared, by many who were professed Christians, the "soldiers" and "officers" steadfastly persevered in good works. Preaching a simple Christianity on a military basis, the Salvationists were the pioneers in social service, and their activities among the unfortunate, while recalling something of the spirit of early Methodism, have seldom been equalled by other religious denominations.

The first meeting of the Salvation Army in Toronto was held in McMillan's Hall, corner of Yonge and Gerrard Streets, on June 11, 1882. At this time the organisation was unconnected with that founded by William Booth in England, though officers had previously been dispatched to the United States to inaugurate the Army there. On September 1st activities were rapidly accelerated when Staff Captain Charles Wass arrived in Toronto from England. Soon afterwards the marching and open-air preaching so characteristic of the Salvation Army were inaugurated, and as a result "an outcry of 'new religion' was raised, and for a time the little band of workers had unmistakably stormy weather; they were mercilessly 'guyed' and mobbed by the public on every appearance, and were looked upon with no small disfavour by the majority of religionists. In spite of this the progress here, as elsewhere, was rapid and substantial".[17]

During 1883 the "mother barracks" on Richmond Street was opened—the first in Canada. Concerning the building, its inauguration, and some of the typical activities of Salvationists, a contemporary writer says:

"The Salvation Temple just completed is quite an imposing structure with its castellated bastions, combining in appearance the castle, the barracks and the temple. The frontage is 106 feet, with a depth of 100. It is built of red brick with stone facings. The Temple is constructed in amphitheatrical form and has one gallery at the back. The ground floor rises from the centre, and a passage runs entirely round next the wall. The auditorium will hold

[17]Robertson, *Ibid.*, p. 508.

about 2,500 people, and there is not a bad seat in the house; the ventilation is perfect, as are also the acoustic properties.

"The officers conducting the services sit on the north side, with the soldiers and audience all about them. The soldiers for the most part occupy the pit, or dress circle. This latter arrangement is in accordance with the system followed by General Booth in England. The ceiling of the Temple is of varnished wood, while the walls are finished stucco work in plaster. Texts and mottoes will be used as additional ornaments. The entire height of the building, which comprises four stories, is 80 feet to the top of the tower, and 50 feet to the centre and slates. The windows are all stained glass and Scripture mottoes. A pair of iron gates close in the front entrance, over which appears in stone letters the single word 'Hallelujah'. The entire cost will be about $40,000. . . .

"The Temple was formally opened on the arrival of Marshall Bullington Booth, who came this way from Australia (on his return journey to England) to dedicate the building. The 'Council of War' continued from the 1st to the 8th of May, and was the occasion of enthusiastic demonstrations. The daily processions, accompanied by bands of music, were witnessed by immense crowds of people, and at night the vast auditorium of the Temple was crowded to excess. On Sunday, the 2nd, the formal dedication took place, and each succeeding day and evening through the week there was a change of programme, including a Hallelujah Wedding and Infant Dedication. On the night of the latter ceremony a number of officers and soldiers who had been imprisoned for noisy demonstrations appeared in prison costume and related their experience."[1]

Among the interesting smaller congregations which were early established in Toronto was one usually called the African Church, but more correctly the First Calvinistic Baptist Church. As early as July, 1827, meetings under David Pallison were being held in the rooms of No. 8 Masonic Lodge, Colborne Street. In 1834 the congregation organized, and in 1841 the first church edifice was erected on the north-east corner of Queen and Victoria Streets. While consisting mainly of Negroes, the congregation in-

[1]Taylor, op. cit., pp. 284-6.

cluded a number of white worshippers. A writer of a century ago makes the following reference to this church:

"The coloured inhabitants of Toronto have an African church which is well attended—it is very gratifying to bear testimony to the good conduct [redacted] the negroes residing in this city. They have most of them escaped from slavery, they are well protected and kindly used, and appear to evince a sense of gratitude at their treatment, and show that they duly appreciate the inestimable blessing of freedom."[24]

The first Jewish synagogue in Toronto was on the south side of Richmond Street, a short distance east of Victoria. The interior was not greatly different from that of Christian churches, consisting of main floor and galleries. About 125 persons made up the congregation of this synagogue in 1866, and it was known by the name of Holy Blossom. In 1897 the present Holy Blossom Synagogue was erected on Bond Street at a cost of over $40,000, financial aid being contributed by a number of Christians. Writing concerning its construction, John Ross Robertson noted in 1903 that, as "the Jewish population in Toronto includes barely 150 members, the cost would have been an almost unconquerable obstacle without assistance from outside".[25] There were, perhaps, but 150 members of Holy Blossom Synagogue, but Jews numbered 1,425 in Toronto in 1891 and 3,078 in 1901. At that time the only other Jewish synagogues were three small buildings which served chiefly small groups of Austrian, Polish or Russian Jews; but during the last thirty years large numbers of immigrants have greatly increased Toronto's Jewish population.

[redacted] 1844 a religious census of the city was taken, and among the interesting facts to be derived therefrom is that Jews numbered only 16, and that those who wished themselves recorded as of no church were but 210. Many denominations no longer in existence figure largely in the following table:

[24] Thomas Ralph: *A Brief Account . . . . of the West Indies and the United States; . . . . together with a Statistical Account of Upper Canada.* 1836, p. 173. Further interesting details concerning the early history of this church may be found in the *Globe*, March 16, 1934.

[25] Robertson, *ibid.*, p. 560.

Church of England	7,921
Church of Scotland	1,860
Roman Catholics	3,678
United Secession Church	398
Independent Presbyterians	426
Congregationalists	629
British Wesleyan Methodists	1,102
Wesleyan Methodist Church in Canada	640
Episcopal Methodists	[illegible]
Primitive Methodists	283
Other Methodists	185
Lutherans	8
Jews	18
Disciples of Christ	77
Universalists	[illegible]
Apostolic Church	123
Covenanters	35
Baptists	454
Quakers	22
Millerites	55
Unitarians	4
Free Church	[illegible]
All Churches	[illegible]
Dutch Church	7
Bethelites	2
No Church	210
Total	18,410

Much of interest might be written concerning many of the small sects enumerated above. The Millerites, for example, believed that the world would be consumed by fire in February, 1843, and so certain were they that the end was near that some residents of the rural districts burned up their rail fences or gave away their farms. One Sarah Terwilliger, near Oshawa, "made for herself wings of silk, and on the night of the 14th of February jumped off the porch of her home, expecting to fly heavenward. Falling to the ground some fifteen feet, she was shaken up severely and rendered wholly unfit to attend the fires that were expected to follow the next day".[14]

[14] Thomas Conant: *Upper Canada Sketches*, 1898, p. 92.

Memories of processions of Quakers in early Toronto are recalled by Dr. Scadding:

"Still referring to processions associated in our memory with Court House Square, the recollection of another comes up, which once or twice a year used formerly to pass down King Street on a Sunday. The townspeople were familiar enough with the march of the troops of the Garrison to and from Church to the sound of military music on Sundays. But on the occasions now referred to, the public eye was drawn to a spectacle professedly of an opposite character—to the procession of the 'Children of Peace', so-called.

"These were a local off-shoot of the Society of Friends, the followers of Mr. David Willson, who had his headquarters at Sharon, in Whitchurch, where he had built a 'Temple', a large wooden structure painted white and resembling a high-piled house of cards. Periodically he deemed it proper to make a demonstration in town. His disciples and friends, dressed in their best, mounted their waggons and solemnly passed down Yonge Street, and then on through some frequented thoroughfare of York to a place previously announced, where the prophet would preach. His topic was usually 'Public Affairs: their Total Depravity'. When waxing warm in his discourse, he would sometimes, without interrupting the flow of his words, suddenly throw off his coat and suspend it on a nail or pin in the wall, waving about with freedom, during the residue of his oration, a pair of sturdy arms, arrayed, not indeed in the dainty lawn of a bishop, but in stout, well-bleached American Factory. His address was divided into sections, between which 'hymns of his own composing' were sung by a company of females dressed in white, sitting on one side, accompanied by a band of musical instruments on the other. Considerable crowds assembled on these occasions; and once a panic arose as preaching was going on in the public room of Lawrence's Hotel: the joists of the floor were heard to crack; a rush was made to the door, and several leaped out of the windows.

"The following notice of the 'Children of Peace' occurs in Patrick Swift's *Almanac for 1874*, penned, probably,

with an eye to votes in the neighbourhood of Sharon, or Hope, as the place is here called. 'This society', the *Almanac* reports, 'numbers about 260 members in Hope, east of Newmarket. They have also stated places of preaching at the Old Court House, York, on Yonge Street, and at Markham. Their principal speaker is David Willson, assisted by Murdock McLeod, Samuel Hughes, and others. Their music, vocal and instrumental, is excellent, and their preachers seek no pay from the Governor out of the taxes'."[27]

Toronto has long been called "the city of churches", as well as (somewhat sarcastically, no doubt,) "Toronto the Good". In its Centennial Year the city has no fewer than 390 churches and missions, and the comment which C. C. Taylor made in that connection in 1886 is probably almost as true today:

"In no city in the world are churches more numerous, or the congregations larger in proportion to the population, and it is safe to say that in this respect the church accommodation is larger than in any other city. Taking the average capacity to be one thousand, and the number of churches in Toronto and suburbs at one hundred and twenty, the entire population, if present at one time, could nearly be accommodated; and this cannot be said of any other city."[28]

Apart altogether from religious life the churches of early Canada made a notable contribution to education. The connection between education and religion was early emphasised by every denomination, and the importance at-

[27]Scadding, op. cit., pp. 105-7.

[28]Taylor, op. cit., p. 261. A book appeared in 1898 suggesting in no uncertain terms that the Queen City had no right to the appellation "Toronto the Good". Those who wish to know the location of dens of immorality in the "gay nineties", to hear of the evil that characterized portions of the waterfront and the island, and to learn something of the seamy side of life generally, may find a rambling account in C. S. Clark: *Of Toronto the Good; A Social Study. The Queen City of Canada As It Is.* The work appears to have been inspired by the Social Purity Conference in Baltimore and the World Convention of the W.C.T.U. in Toronto, both held in 1897. Whether the writer was a social service investigator or obtained his evidence by personal experience, there is undoubtedly a good deal of truth in his revelations; but some of his general statements—particularly the one "women are largely fools" (which he emphasizes)—might be harder to prove!

tached to the union of the two is evident from the fact that facilities for higher education were primarily provided entirely by the various religious denominations. Victoria College, established in Cobourg in 1841 by the Methodists, was the earliest in the province, and King's College, Toronto, under Anglican auspices, a close second. It may be said that in general there has been a weakening in the tie in modern times, a condition to be explained partly by the great development of state education, and partly by the undoubted diminution in intensity of religious feeling among almost all bodies, a distinct tendency towards shallowness of thought being coincident with the education of the masses, the mechanisation of our existence, and the lower moral tone resulting from the modern worship of material things.

CHAPTER XXII

THE "GLORIOUS TWELFTH"

TWELFTH of July celebrations have so long been prominent in Ontario, and in Toronto in particular, that some account of their origin, characteristics, and reception by inhabitants of opposing sympathies will be illustrative not only of Toronto's local history but also of "old times" in this province. Many people still look upon the Orange Walk as the event of the year, while the varied activities connected with the Lodges occupy a large part in the social life of a considerable portion of our population. For nearly a century the Orange Lodge has been so strong in Toronto that the greater part of almost every City Council have been those appearing on the Orange "slate"; in fact, with the exception of but a few each year, the aldermen have commonly been members of the Order. There have been occasions and events in the city's history which suggest the contrary, but the policies of Conservative and Protestant Orangeism have usually been considered, at least by those outside Toronto, to be the public opinion of the city as a whole; though in the early days of the Order it was opposed by Family Compact Tories as well as by Reformers.

It is believed that British regiments on garrison duty brought Orangeism to Canada, but it was not until 1830 that the Orange Association was organised in Brockville under the name of the Grand Lodge of British America. The first celebration in York of which we have any record occurred in 1822. The *Upper Canada Gazette* of July 18th notes that the members of the York Lodge assembled in their room and "at two o'clock marched in procession to church, accompanied by the band of the West York Militia, where the Hon. and Rev. Dr. Strachan gave an elegant and appropriate discourse on the occasion. After divine service they repaired to Mr. Phair's Tavern, where upwards of one hundred members sat down to an elegant dinner prepared for their reception. They remained until a late hour, the greatest harmony prevailing". The toast list suggests the

military nature of the proceedings of that day; while the accompanying songs included *Rogue Water*, *Rule Britannia*, *St. Patrick's Day*, *British Grenadiers*, and *The York Quick-step*, the last-named appropriately sung to the toast of the Upper Canadian Militia.[1] The celebration of 1823 was almost identical with that of the previous year, but the account suggests the additional information that the Lodge Room of the Association was in Phair's Tavern.

When in 1830 Ogle R. Gowan organized the Grand Lodge of British America the first steps were taken to establish a branch in York, and in 1831 the Nassau Lodge, No. 4, was formed. By 1833 York County had about 1,000 Orangemen, but the annual processions appear to have been objectionable to many people; consequently we find that in 1834 the York Association decided to replace the parade by a dinner. The *Patriot* of July the 15th commends the Orangemen for their good intentions in making "this gratifying concession to public opinion". Only about thirty members attended the dinner in the Ontario House, but the lack of numbers was no impediment to their enthusiasm, for seventeen toasts were proposed, including many of that partisan nature which was foreign to the original Orange celebrations but had come to be characteristic of the lodge. The *Patriot* notes that "in the morning some dozen or fifteen silly bodies attempted to pick up a procession, in defiance of the lodge, but as nobody noticed them they began to suspect how foolish they looked, and dropped off one by one till all vanished, nobody knew how or where".[2]

The general attitude of the Family Compact towards Orangeism was that of aristocratic contempt, which was frequently expressed in language that could not be mistaken. In 1835, for example, the *Patriot* noted that "some of the lower orders" walked in procession, with resulting riots in various parts of the city. Consequently "the Police Court has been engaged the whole of the past week in trying cases of assault, riot, etc., growing out of the disturbances".

In June, 1839, Lieutenant-Governor Sir George Arthur addressed a letter to the mayor and aldermen of Toronto

[1]*Upper Canada Gazette*, July 18, 1822.
[2]*The Patriot*, July 15, 1834.

instructing them to use their influence to prevent an Orange procession on July 12th. Mayor Powell replied upholding the celebration of the day, and tendering his resignation from the office of justice of the peace and captain of the militia if there was to be any interference. The chief result of the Lieutenant-Governor's action appears to have been an unusually large procession.

There was for many years a feeling of hatred between the members of the Orange Order and the Reform Party. This was intensified in 1843 when the Baldwin-Lafontaine Ministry introduced a measure suppressing all secret societies other than the Freemasons. The bill, which passed the Assembly easily, was reserved by the Governor and finally disallowed by the British Government, though at that time the Orange Order was suspected in Britain and no army officer was permitted to belong to it.

Meanwhile an Orange demonstration was organised in Toronto to show the supporters of the bill how their proposed legislation was appreciated. The *Examiner*, organ of the Reformers, carried the following account of the disturbance:

"Last night between eleven and twelve o'clock a large body of Orangemen was permitted by the city authorities to disturb the public peace with hideous yells and cries of 'Down with popery', as they followed a cart in which was erected a gallows; from it hung two effigies on which they had inscribed 'Baldwin and Hincks, the traitors', and 'No surrender'. The 'heroes' will, however, be compelled to surrender, and Mr. Baldwin and Mr. Hincks would indeed be traitors to their long-expressed principles did they allow the present session to pass over without bringing forward the Act for the suppression of secret societies, as without that measure it is impossible to obtain security for life and property.

"P.S. The effigies were burned amid the most indecent ribaldry immediately in front of the Hon. W. W. Baldwin's residence. It is well known that the venerable Doctor's health has been for some time in a very precarious state, which renders the outrage doubly atrocious. Our citizens may well rejoice at the opportunity which will soon be afforded them of displacing the present violent partisan

city magistrates by the nomination of men possessing character, property and intelligence".*

In 1848 the Party Processions Act was passed in Kingston, prohibiting such demonstrations as Orange parades. The Act was in general unpopular, and, as is usually the result of attempts at suppression, it succeeded only in increasing the numbers of Orangemen, and adding vigour to the organisation. While many political processions were not prevented, there was frequently interference with Orange parades, though juries usually refused to convict persons arrested under these circumstances. Among those who urged the repeal of the law in 1851 was William Lyon Mackenzie, though he had no reason to be particularly fond of the Orange Order. By a vote of 38 to 16 the Act was removed from the statute books, and a law which had been generally disobeyed came to an end. The celebration of 1850 will serve as an example of the lack of respect for the existing law. The *Patriot* of July 13th describes as follows the events of the day:

"According to custom, the approach of this anniversary was hailed by the discharge of firearms of all kinds and sizes, which continued during nearly the whole of Thursday night, a mode of celebrating holidays in Canada which we would be glad to see discontinued. Yesterday morning proved to be fine, and at an early hour our streets were quite enlivened by the number of farmers with their wives, daughters and sisters, bedecked with orange and blue ribbons, who had come in to join the celebration of the day. Seven lodges met soon after midday and formed in procession to the number of from four to five hundred with their banners and badges. A more respectable body of men we have seldom seen.

"After walking through the principal streets they directed their course up Yonge Street and by College Avenue to the grounds of Caer Howell, where they were addressed by the Deputy Grand Master, R. Dempsey, Esq., on the duties and privileges of Orangemen. The address, we are told, was a very excellent one. The lodges then left the grounds, to meet at their several lodge-rooms in the evening, where they dined together and doubtless concluded the

*The *Examiner*, November 8, 1848.

day very much to their own satisfaction. We rejoice to add that everything passed off well, and that at a late hour last night nothing had occurred at all calculated to disturb the general harmony—a fact which is highly creditable to our good city."[4]

In 1852, the year following the repeal of the law against political processions, a parade in which several thousand participated was held in Toronto. Steamboats brought many people from Hamilton, St. Catharines and other towns to join their brethren in Toronto. The procession which formed in front of the Parliament Buildings, near the corner of Front and Simcoe, was nearly two miles long, and was accompanied "by several bands of music, a still greater number of Orange flags, Orange dresses and other insignia. The tunes common to the occasion were played by the bands, and crackers were fired off". The parade ended at the Cricket Grounds, or Caer Howell, located a short distance south of College Street and just west of University Avenue, where a cold luncheon was served to about 2,000 people. After hearing a number of speeches the rural Orangemen made their way homeward, while those of the city dined at their respective lodge-rooms in the various hotels. The *British Colonist* notes that the police were prepared for disturbances, but none took place. This was no doubt due, to a considerable extent at least, to the advice issued from the pulpit of St. Michael's Cathedral urging all Roman Catholics not to interfere in any way with the activities of the Orangemen.

A description of the units in the parade of 1852 will serve as an example of what has been more or less characteristic of the processions from that day to the present:

The Chief Marshall, mounted on a steed, with a scarlet gown, cap and plume.

A brass band.

A band of drums and fifes.

The Union Jack.

Tyler, with drawn sword.

The Grand Master of York County, East and West.

The District of Toronto.

The Grand Tyler, with drawn sword.

[4]The *Patriot*, July 13, 1850.

The Grand Flag.

The Grand Officers.

Rural and visiting lodges, led by the men of Slabtown and St. Catharines.

The City Lodges, [illegible] by No. 4.

[illegible] the sides of the procession were eight marshalls mounted on grey chargers and dressed in scarlet; these men carried batons and kept the crowd from the parade. Among the bands which were placed at intervals in the procession were those of Toronto, Cooksville, Ancaster, Streetsville, Hamilton and St. Catharines; while 116 standards, flags and banners were carried, in addition to a large number displayed from shop windows along the route of march. Remarkable to relate, the press notes that "neither an angry look nor an angry word, or a drunken and disorderly person, was seen or heard to dishonour the day or to mar its enjoyment".[2]

[illegible] 1853 Mayor Bowes arranged for the presence of troops on the 12th of July because "fearful reports were in circulation about the railroad labourers coming into the city to prevent the Orange procession". As early as 4 a.m. the reports of firearms were heard in various parts of Toronto, but they were merely evidence of "warming-up" on the part of the Orangemen. Otherwise the day passed off as usual, except that one newspaper referred to the celebrants as "individuals who by occupation were little more than labourers working for their daily bread", while [illegible] alderman described them as "a set of loafers".

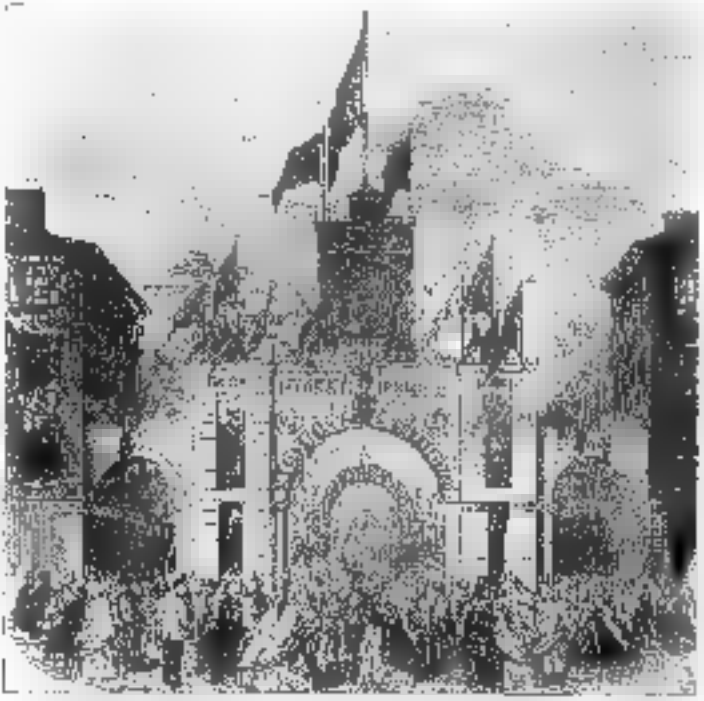
Little of note occurred during the next few years. In 1857 there was "the largest and most splendidly arranged procession we have witnessed in Toronto during thirty-six years". After attending church and parading the streets the lodges dined in St. Lawrence Hall, at that time the centre of Toronto's social life. The *Examiner* noted that "there is one feature in the processions of the 17th of March and the 12th of July which shows the increasing good sense of both Catholic and Protestant in Toronto—each party plays its own tunes, displays its own badges, marches where

[2]Many interesting details concerning the history of the Orange Order may be found in *John Ross Robertson's Landmarks of Toronto*, Vol. VI, pp. 197-204. Quotations in this chapter not otherwise credited are from the record.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

THE ENNISKILLEN ARMS

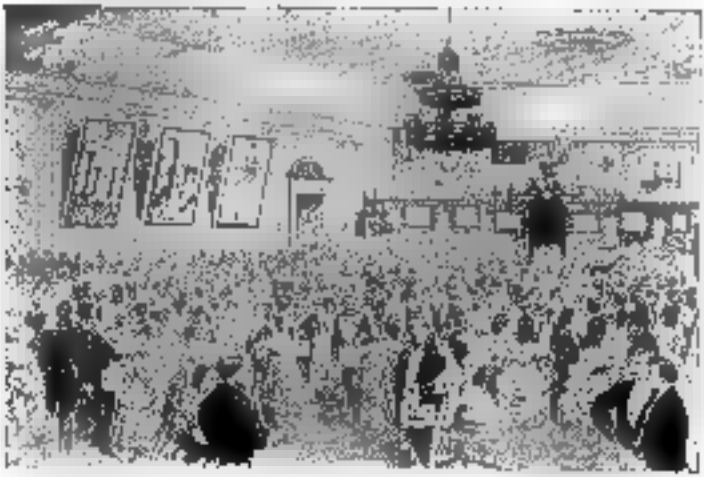
This tavern, located on the north side of Queen Street between University and Simcoe, was long popular among Orangemen, W. C. Mack, its proprietor, being a prominent member of the Order.



Illustrated London News.

THE ORANGEMEN'S ARCH, KING AND CHURCH STREETS, 1860

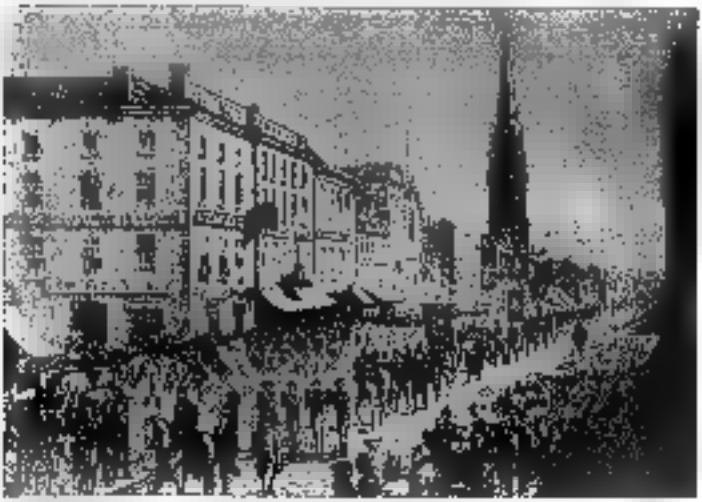
The arch was located on King Street at Church, but the Prince's party avoided it by continuing down Church to Wellington Street!



Canadian Illustrated News. F. M. Bell Smith.

MASONIC CONVERSAZIONE, FEBRUARY 20, 1873

For this event Professor Davin' Band supplied the music, and the party broke up at 3 a.m. The Masonic Hall was the scene of the entertainment, which resembled what was later called a promenade.



Canadian Illustrated News.

THE ORANGE WALK, 1874

Early Orange Parades not infrequently resulted in riots. The procession is here shown on King Street East, with the beautiful spire of St. James' Cathedral in the background.

it thinks fit, says what it likes, none molesting it, and injuring no one".*

In 1858 there occurred one of those "bloody battles" which until modern times often resulted from gatherings of a partisan nature—in many rural localities, in fact, from assemblies of any kind. The *Leader* describes the riot:

"As the procession was wending its way along Queen Street, near William Street, a row occurred which at one time threatened to end more seriously than it did. Through some means a quarrel was stirred up between two parties, one of whom was an Orangeman and the other a Roman Catholic. . . . Shots were freely fired, but, though the contents of the pistols took effect in some instances, they did not result fatally. One man named James Brown, gardener to the Mayor, was shot in the back. Another man named King, of the opposite party, was also wounded by a ball which passed through his cheek, carrying away some of his teeth and making a very ugly wound. Though in a very faint state for some time after being picked up, little fears of a fatal result are to be apprehended.

"During the heat of the row a large body of police were called out, with guns loaded ready for action. They were carried off in cabs post-haste to St. Patrick's Market. On arrival there they succeeded, with the help of the Mayor, in dispersing the crowd, and quietness was soon restored. The policemen, however, remained about the place for a considerable time, not deeming it desirable to leave, as knots of men might here and there be seen conversing—not in the most cool manner possible, nor in the most select choice of expression.

"There was another row about Victoria Street, but this was of a more trifling nature, though it is to be regretted that pistols were here also made use of. One man had his hand slightly scarred by the graze of a bullet; and another had the flesh of his left thigh somewhat ruffled by the abrasion of a ball. As is generally the case when pistols are used in such disturbances, a cry was immediately set on foot that two men were killed—shot dead—mortally wounded—or something of that description of a more or less shocking nature. The city was somewhat agog as the

*The *Examiner*, July 13, 1857.

rumour spread, and people hastened to the scene of the disaster; but their fears were allayed when they learned that nothing more serious than what we have related alone had occurred.

"Several Lodges dined together in the evening and engaged themselves in song and glee till a late hour at night,—some [redacted] an early hour in the morning."

Reminiscent of other times is the same newspaper's report that "the juveniles, [redacted] usual, amused themselves by setting off squibbs and firecrackers, sometimes [redacted] the no little inconvenience of ladies who paraded the streets with a rather extended display of crinoline".[1]

The visit of the Prince of Wales (later Edward VII) to Canada in 1860 provided an unintentional impetus to Orangeism. The Prince's private secretary, the Duke of Newcastle, was a Roman Catholic, and through his influence the official party frowned upon and avoided all celebrations where Orange or other partisan demonstrations were prominent. Some caustic references were made to this [redacted] several subsequent 12th of July celebrations, and the Hon. J. H. Cameron was sent to England to present to the Queen the remonstrances of Canadian Orangemen. The annual "walks" of 1862 and 1863 were more enthusiastically supported than ever before, the parade of the latter year being described as "by far the largest Orange turnout that has ever been witnessed in Canada". Queen's Park was the rendezvous, and by eleven in the morning thousands were on hand to enjoy the "temperance beverages" which enterprising saloon-keepers dispensed from tents hastily erected for the purpose. Brother Robert Wigmore, seven-foot giant from Pickering, officiated as Grand Tyler, and 52 visiting lodges joined Toronto Orangemen in a procession led by Bonnhart's brass band of St. Catharines. Almost every lodge brought some sort of music to enhance the pleasure of the day, and the parade proceeded by Yonge and Queen Streets to the Don Bridge, and thence by King, York and Queen Streets to the Crystal Palace, where addresses and refreshments catered, respectively, to the mind and the body.

Visits to other towns became more common in the sixties,

[1]The *Weekly Leader*, July 14, 1868.

Hamilton, Barrie and St. Catharines being the locale of the Orange parade in 1864, 1867 and 1869. In later years various places of assembly were used for the Twelfth of July celebrations held in Toronto. In 1870 a vacant lot at the south-west corner of Adelaide and Toronto Streets served the purpose; while in 1871 the old "Fair Green" east of Gooderham's Mill was the location, in 1872 Clarence Square and Wellington Street, in 1873 the corner of Beech and Parliament Streets, in 1874 the ground "used by circus companies at Grenville Street and Yonge Street Avenue", and in 1876 "Beaty's Field", at the corner of Parliament and Gerrard Streets. The year 1877 was notable because of the riots in Montreal on the twelfth of July, resulting in the shooting of Thomas Lett Hackett. At subsequent Toronto celebrations at the Exhibition Grounds or in Queen's Park numerous references were made to conditions in Montreal, and protests were recorded.

The parades of later years did not differ greatly from those which preceded them, for the celebrations do not admit of much variation except in their accompaniments. The 1889 "Walk" was record-breaking in extent, a fact due largely to the discussion aroused among Protestants by the Jesuits' Estates controversy. Among the speakers was Ogle R. Gowan, M.P.P., founder of the Canadian Orange Association, the Gowan family being from the start among the most prominent members of the organisation. It was rumoured on this occasion that Orangemen had planned to attack St. Michael's Cathedral, but although a few Roman Catholics were on guard all night, no disturbance occurred. After the celebration the various lodges dined in their respective rooms, or in one or another of the numerous hotels and taverns which then dotted Toronto, many of which were operated by Orangemen. In 1895 the Manitoba school question was agitating the Orange lodges, and occupied much of the time devoted to addresses and resolutions.

In the days of the horse railway it could hardly be expected that the public transportation services could be kept on schedule in streets through which the parade passed, nor does it appear that any attempt was made to do so. But when electric cars were inaugurated in 1892 the attitude of the Toronto Railway Company underwent a change, and

there were occasional attempts to operate cars from time to time as the parade progressed. In 1894, for example, a motorman continued to run his car from Walton to Elm Street on Yonge, in spite of the fact that the procession was in progress and that spectators objected to any interference with their view. Finally an onlooker climbed on to the car and persuaded the motorman in no gentle manner that it would be to his advantage to stop.

It was in 1907, however, that the major battle over the comparative rights of processions and trolley cars took place. R. J. Fleming, Manager of the Railway Company, insisted upon the right of the general public to uninterrupted transport facilities, particularly at the noon hour at Yonge and Queen Streets. Negotiations between the Company and the lodges appeared to have been successfully concluded, for the usual and comfortable rendezvous—Queen's Park—was abandoned, and the corners of Jarvis and Gerrard and Jarvis and Wilton were substituted. The old route of march down Yonge and west on Queen was changed to Jarvis Street, and westward by Adelaide, Bay, King and Dufferin to the Exhibition Grounds. It was arranged that cars were to run through gaps in the procession, while representatives of the Company and of the lodges were to be stationed at the chief intersections to see that the agreement was carried out. But a circular was issued by the Company notifying motormen that no parade should be allowed to interfere with the time schedule of the cars.

This unexpected development aroused the hostility of Orangemen, as well as that of a considerable body of other citizens, and the arrest of a few disturbers at the intersection of Queen and Jarvis Streets succeeded only in precipitating further trouble elsewhere. The efforts of officials of the Company, of police, prominent Orangemen, and all others, were of little avail in providing a car service along the route of march, and the parade proceeded to its destination without any appreciable interruption. A police automobile opened the way for some west-bound cars, until at Strachan Avenue a bystander jabbed a jack-knife into one of the tires. At the King Street subway bricks and stones were scattered across the tracks by the crowd, and only after a stiff fight did the police clear the street. Finally

it became impossible to make way for any street cars, and manager Fleming ordered all power shut off, so that for an hour and a half the city was without any service. The confusion resulting from this condition need not be described; but the denunciation which the press and public poured upon the Company, the Orangemen, the police, and everyone in any way concerned, had at least a result, for in all subsequent processions of any kind the control of both traffic and parade was vested in the police exclusively, with satisfaction to all concerned.

In general it may be said that religious antagonism between certain adherents of the Roman Catholic and Protestant bodies characterised most occasions upon which they came in contact. In the eighteen-eighties—and later—a Roman Catholic moonlight excursion almost invariably drew to the harbour a group of their enemies, the Orangemen, and the return of the ship was frequently greeted with showers of stones; and, it is hardly necessary to add, the Roman Catholics did not fail to return the compliment when the occasion offered. So much damage was done to excursion ships by these raids that it became difficult to charter a boat, and outings of another nature had sometimes to be substituted.

Many people love uniforms, insignia, titles and public prominence, and all the world enjoys a procession. The Orangemen's Walk certainly caters to the public fancy in these respects, and, whatever may be one's opinion concerning parties, lodges, and other sectional organisations, certainly no one is injured by their outward manifestations if they interfere with the rights of citizens no more seriously than does the "Glorious Twelfth".

CHAPTER XXIII

Memories of Old St. Lawrence Hall

St. Lawrence Hall, for over twenty years the centre of Toronto's social life, was erected in 1850-51 to provide a place of assembly. The great fire of 1849 had destroyed most of the public buildings on King Street, and some such hall was a prime necessity in a growing city. The central portion of the building was the property of the corporation, while the wings were privately owned. The hall itself had a capacity of less than 1,000 persons, but many more were frequently crowded into it. A contemporary description notes that "the principal object of the talented designer of this edifice, W. Thomas, Esq., was to ensure its complete usefulness as well as ornamentality; for, while the hall is used for public purposes, in its rear runs the St. Lawrence Market, a range of arcade 200 feet in length by 39 feet in breadth, with neat stores on each side, at the end of which is another frontage, south, consisting of general stores".

The front of the hall proper "is wholly of cut stone, of the Roman Corinthian order, from the example of Jupiter Stator, the centre being tetrastyle portico of three-quarter columns, with sculptured tympanum of the pediment, surmounted with a rich attic. The carved work throughout the enrichments is of a rich and varied character. . . . The finishing of the interior is in good style, with dado and rich cornice; the ceiling is boldly covered with rich panelled centre and emblematical enrichments".[1] The building was crowned by a cupola forming a circular open temple of the Corinthian order, and therein was a large alarm bell of 2,130 pounds. The total cost of the structure was slightly over $28,000.

[1] See [G. P. Ure]: *The Handbook of Toronto*, 1858, pp. 238-40, for an interesting description of St. Lawrence Hall. Among other items of information we learn that "the ceiling of this hall has recently been decorated with some of the most grotesque-looking figures perhaps ever witnessed, yet when the large and magnificent chandelier is lighted up, and when the room is filled by such an assembly as that which graced Jenny Lind's concerts, it has a brilliant and most imposing effect".

There was no public ceremony to inaugurate this notable hall. In fact it was first used some months prior to its completion, when, on August 8, 1860, some 200 prominent citizens of Buffalo visited Toronto by invitation of the City Council. After an elaborate procession and public reception the visitors were entertained at dinner in the North American Hotel, after which a Grand Ball was held in the partially completed St. Lawrence Hall, beautifully decorated for the occasion. At midnight the party proceeded by way of a canvas passage to the old City Hall and, after a banquet there, the dance was resumed with enthusiasm. St. Lawrence Hall had, therefore, a notable inauguration.[2]

The first use of the hall after its completion was on April 1, 1861. On the first three evenings were held public lectures on the subject of slavery, George Thompson, M.P., of England, speaking on April 1st, and Frederick Douglas, the noted negro abolitionist, on April 2nd and 3rd. Henceforth the attractions at St. Lawrence Hall were as varied as they were numerous: soirées, balls, promenades and levees; concerts, operas, musicales and festivals; lectures, panoramas, cycloramas and tableaux; meetings of Firemen, Orangemen, Oddfellows, Mechanics, and the National Societies; dinners, breakfasts and suppers; bazaars, exhibitions and presentations; election meetings, protest assemblages and charitable gatherings; and performances of itinerant magicians, minstrels, midgets and monstrosities. Here was surely enough variety to appeal to the learned savant, the socially prominent, the tired business man,—in fact to the great mass of citizens who compose a city.

Many of the events are indicative of other times and other conditions. The National Societies of St. George, St. Andrew and St. Patrick were at the height of their popularity in a day when much of the country was still in the midst of conditions of pioneer life, and when so many held treasured memories of the Old Land. The Mechanics' Institute was then in a flourishing condition, and furnished educational and recreational facilities now provided by schools, libraries and sporting clubs. The firemen's organ-

[2]The historical information in this chapter is based almost entirely upon innumerable contemporary descriptions appearing in the press, the individual notation of which would not only be difficult but of little value.

iations recall a time when fire-fighting was a public duty—not merely a department of civic government; while many of the popular entertainments were of a type which belongs to the past. But the differences are, after all, superficial, and the social life which flourished eighty years ago was basically the same as it is today.

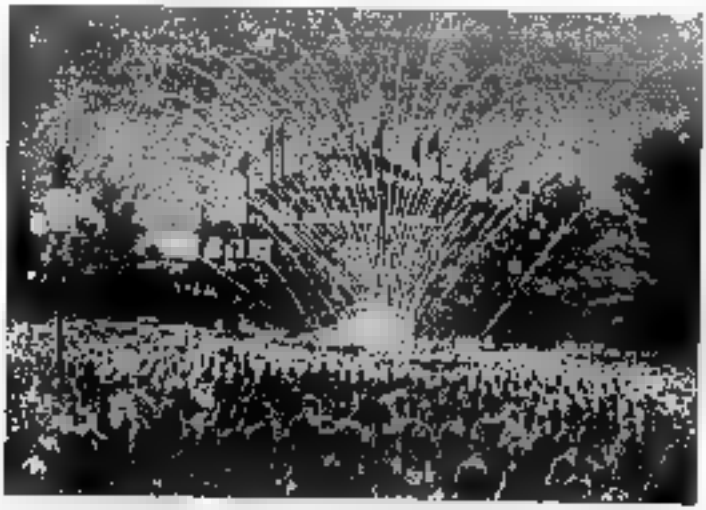
The lectures given from time to time at St. Lawrence Hall were in many instances arranged in courses under the auspices of the Toronto Mechanics' Institute; a few were similarly conducted by the Ontario Literary Society. Many of the speakers were professors at the University. The subjects of the discourses included "The Education of Children", "Electro-Biology", "Insects, their Structure and Functions", "Sabbath Observance", "The Ancient Hebrews as Promoters of the Arts and Sciences", "Spiritualism", "Homeopathy", and "Phrenology". A lecture upon "The Church of Rome, Fallible or Infallible" recalls a dispute which long raged bitterly in the field of controversial theology. In July, 1855, a noted statesman, Thomas D'Arcy McGee, gave two lectures—"Ireland as I found it in 1855", and "Emigration as a Source of National Wealth". A considerable number of lecturers spoke upon "Slavery", a topic which was in the forefront owing to controversy which eventually led to the American Civil War. Great enthusiasm was aroused, for example, by Elihu Burritt, "the learned blacksmith who could be silent in nineteen different languages", whose remarks upon "A Plan of Brotherly Copartnership of the North and South for the Peaceable Extinction of Slavery" were greeted with warm applause. Another seasonable subject was "Woman and her Work", Mrs. Lucy Stone lecturing twice in March, 1855, upon "Women's Rights".

A popular adaptation of the lecture was the panorama or cyclorama, a large number of which were given in St. Lawrence Hall. Many of them were what would now be called travelogues, and were descriptive of Ireland, the Holy Land, the Great Lakes, the Thames, and kindred subjects; while others portrayed literary masterpieces such as *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and *The Pilgrim's Progress*, the latter holding the interest of excellent audiences for three weeks in the autumn of 1857. Reminiscent of the days of

Canadian Illustrated News.

ST. LAWRENCE HALL IN 1863

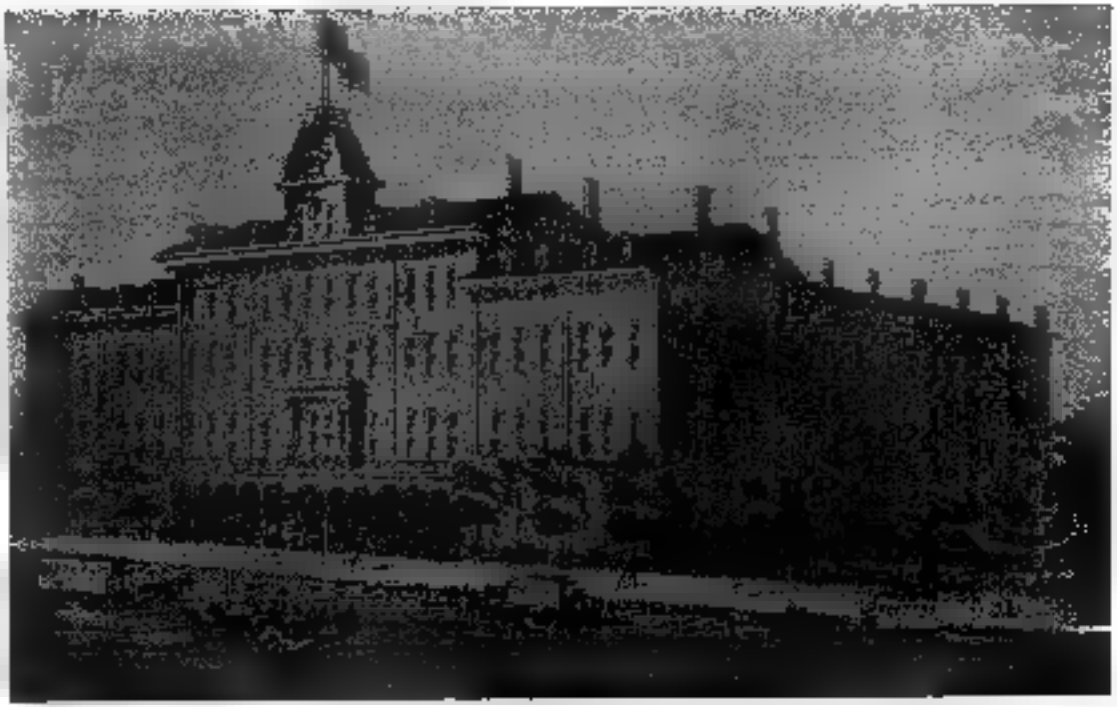
This notable building was erected in 1850.



Canadian Illustrated News.

FIREWORKS IN THE HORTICULTURAL (ALLAN) GARDENS, CIVIC HOLIDAY, 1881

The Horticultural Pavilion was one of the buildings which succeeded St. Lawrence Hall as a centre of social life.



Tingsdale's Illustrated Toronto.

THE QUEEN'S HOTEL IN THE SEVENTIES

The "Old Queen's" was Toronto's best for nearly half a century.

the Indian Mutiny and the Crimean War are the numerous panoramic lectures which were delivered upon these subjects; while a similar representation of the American Civil War was shown for nearly three weeks in 1862. "King Solomon's Temple" was the subject of an entertainment in 1864, and other pictorial representations included La Prince's Panopticon Exhibition, Dr. Kane's Arctic Voyages, Brewer's Grand Mirror Panorama, P. T. Barnum's Crystal Palace Illustrated, and Howarth and Bathwell's Tableaux of the Holy Land.

Public meetings were frequently held in St. Lawrence Hall. On July 8, 1851, the Anti-Clergy Reserve Association met there under the presidency of the Hon. Adam Fergusson, founder of the Scottish settlement at Fergus. When the meeting was called to order it was found that plenty of defenders of Reserves were in attendance, and consequently the motion denouncing the system and demanding its immediate abolition met with great opposition. Finally an amendment carried, and the assemblage broke up in great confusion. Another political meeting upon a controversial subject which agitated the people of that day was held in March, 1852. Under the presidency of the Mayor the assembly was called to order to protest against the recent adoption of Free Trade as an English fiscal policy. Many of those present were of the opposite opinion, however, and the speakers aroused a warm debate. Among those who spoke were the Hon. William Cayley, George P. Ridout, M.P.P., Ogle R. Gowan and William Henry Boulton.

A meeting of a more local nature occurred on November 13, 1854. Mayor G. W. Allan presided, and the object was "to adopt means to set a limit to our enormous taxation, and especially in view of the Esplanade expenditure". The waterfront development of that day was rendered more necessary owing to the construction of the Grand Trunk Railway; and though it was a small affair in comparison with modern improvements, yet a considerable expenditure was essential to buy properties and control harbour facilities which might otherwise have fallen under the control of the Railway.

On January 8, 1855, a capacity audience assembled to devise means to raise funds in aid of the widows and

orphans of those who had given their lives during the Eastern (Crimean) War, and to assist the wounded and disabled. The Hon. J. H. Cameron acted as chairman, almost all of the notable public men of Toronto and vicinity were in attendance, and ten of them addressed the assemblage. Another meeting had as its purpose the raising of a memorial to the Duke of Wellington, but nothing was ever done. In May, 1855, the fourth anniversary meeting of the Anti-Slavery Society of Canada was held in the Hall, and, as usual, was largely attended. At meetings of societies of this nature arrangements were frequently made to hold bazaars, musicales and concerts to further the aims of the benevolent persons who composed their membership.

While ballroom dancing has always been a popular amusement there were many people eighty years ago who strenuously objected to it; consequently balls were frequently replaced by soirées, promenades and—later—conversaziones. Some of these entertainments combined dancing with more staid amusements, while on other occasions the dance was entirely supplanted. On January 8, 1852, a "promenade concert" was held in aid of negro fugitive slaves from the United States. The affair appears to have been in charge of women, among whom Mrs. Arnold, Mrs. Henning and Miss Macaulay were most prominent. The press reported that "the Rev. S. R. Ward (coloured) delivered during the evening an address suitable to the occasion". The general course of the remainder of the evening may be gauged from the same account, which states that "coffee and other refreshments were served from 7 to 8 o'clock in the supper room, and during this time the splendid band of the 71st Regiment played in the hall". In May, 1856, Mrs. John Beverley Robinson, long well-known in the musical life of Toronto, gave a "soirée musicale" in St. Lawrence Hall in aid of the City Industrial Farm, and the affair was a great success.

Most balls and soirées were, however, held under the auspices of the National Societies, the Fire Companies, the Regiments, or the chief lodges—Orangemen, Masons and Oddfellows. On February 22, 1856, a "Grand Orange Soirée" was given with the object of raising funds to provide a new Orange Hall and library in Toronto. A large

number were present, and the Toronto *Leader* notes that, "taking all things into consideration, the meeting was the best of the kind ever held in the St. Lawrence Hall". Another interesting soirée was that which took place on December 12, 1854, to commemorate the first anniversary of the Young Men's Christian Association; while on December 31, 1857, the Loyal Orange Cadet Lodge, No. 7, crowded the Hall to dance the Old Year out and the New Year in. Among the firemen's organizations which held balls in the Hall were the Rescue, Deluge, Hook-and-Ladder, and Hose Companies.

Among the more notable balls may be mentioned that given by the citizens on September 24, 1862, in honour of the Governor-General, Lord Monck, and Lady Monck. The committee in charge consisted of the Hon. J. B. Robinson, M.P.P., the Hon. John Ross, John Crawford, M.P.P., George Michie, Alderman J. E. Smith, John Bell, William Henderson, Sheriff Jarvis, John Cameron, J. D. Merrick, Lewis Moffatt and George Anthony Barber. Included in the Governor-General's party were his two daughters and Earl Mulgrave and his daughter, Lady Laura Phipps. Major-General Napier, Major Dillon, and most of the officers of the Garrison were present, while other prominent guests were the Hon. John Sandfield Macdonald and T. D'Arcy McGee. Over 850 people were in attendance, and the press reported that "the ball will long be remembered in Toronto as among the best the city has ever seen".

Another celebrated ball was held on the evening of October 15, 1857, in honour of the commencement of the construction of the Northern Railway. Her Excellency the Countess of Elgin, wife of the Governor-General, cut the first sod earlier in the day, and guests to the number of four hundred were present at the ball, among them the Hon. Francis Hincks and the Hon. John Ross.

Toronto was once accustomed to have a Mayor's Ball. In 1857 Mayor Hutchinson, assisted by the patronesses—Mrs. J. B. Robinson, Mrs. Crooks and Mrs. Philpotts (for the Mayor was a bachelor), provided an evening's dancing that was an immense success. He was complimented in the press by the comment: "We speak but the universal opinion

when we say that the Mayor's ball was the most successful ever given in Toronto."

The term "festival" was somewhat loosely used to denote a varied entertainment which generally included supper and dancing. In 1853, for example, a "festival ball" was held on May 24th to commemorate the Queen's Birthday. This celebration was under the patronage of the National Societies of St. Patrick, St. Andrew and St. George, and the sun was streaming through the windows of the hall before the dance concluded.

The Early Closing Association, consisting of most of the merchants of the city, held a festival on January 11, 1858. The Mayor acted as chairman, and five men delivered addresses, after which those in attendance were no doubt well able to appreciate the supper and the dance which concluded the entertainment. Another festival of a similar nature was that held on January 29, 1852, when the Toronto and St. Lawrence Division of the Sons of Temperance congregated in large numbers in St. Lawrence Hall; while a militia festival under the presidency of Colonel, the Baron de Rottenburg was well attended on December 3, 1867, and added a considerable amount to the funds of the Military Asylum in Quebec. On January 25, 1859, a festival consisting of a supper and ball was given by the Burns Club to celebrate the centennial of Robert Burns.

Among the public dinners held in St. Lawrence Hall one of the most important was that given by the Reformers on February 23, 1852, in honour of the Hon. Malcolm Cameron. Over 150 prominent members of the party attended, and eight columns of newspaper space were devoted to the proceedings. Mr. Charles Lindsey, son-in-law and biographer of William Lyon Mackenzie, was among those present. A similar complimentary banquet was tendered to Thomas D'Arcy McGee, M.P.P., in 1859. Complimentary breakfasts were not unusual at that time, one being given to the Rev. Mr. Duff, well-known missionary, on April 12, 1854; a more famous missionary, the Rev. Joseph Evans, D.D., was similarly honoured on December 17, 1858, just prior to the journey of Evans and his colleagues to the wilds of British Columbia, then under Hudson's Bay Company control.

Upon some occasions presentations were made at these

complimentary banquets. An event of considerable interest occurred on October 31, 1856, when the corporation of the city assembled at St. Lawrence Hall to do honour to Captain and Brevet-Major Frederick Wells, 1st Royal Regiment of Foot, who had just returned from the Crimea with a very distinguished record. He was presented with a sword of honour and a complimentary address. A few weeks later a ball was also held in honour of Major Wells and A. R. Dunn, V.C., 11th Hussars, who had displayed conspicuous gallantry in the same campaign. Perhaps a short digression will be pardoned to enable some further reference to this Toronto-born hero of the charges of Balaclava, the record of which is among the saddest but proudest memories of the British army. Dr. Henry Scadding tells much of interest in his account of Lieut. Dunn and his family, long important in the life of the city:

"On the south side of the expansion of Queen Street, in front of Peterafield and a little beyond Peter Street, (which, as we have previously noticed, had its name from Peter Russell), was the abode of Mr. Dunn, long Receiver-General of Upper Canada. It was (and is) a retired family house, almost hidden from the general view by a grove of ornamental trees. A quiet-looking gate led into a straight drive up to the house, out of Queen Street. Of Mr. Dunn we have already discoursed, and of Mrs. Dunn, one of the graceful lady-chiefs in the high life of York in the olden time. In the house at which we now pause was born their famous son, Alexander Roberts Dunn, in 1833; who not only had the honour of sharing in the charge of the Light Brigade at Balaclava in 1854, now so renowned in history and song, but who, of all the six hundred there, won the highest meed of glory.

"Six feet three inches in stature, a most powerful and most skilful swordsman and a stranger to fear, Lieut. Dunn, instead of consulting his own safety in the midst of that frightful and untoward *mêlée*, deliberately interposed for the protection of his comrades in arms. Old troops of the Eleventh Hussars long told with kindling eyes how the young Lieutenant, seeing Sergeant Bentley of his own regiment attacked from behind by two or three Russian lancers, rushed upon them single-handed, and cut them down; how

he saved the life of Sergeant Bond; how Private Levett owed his safety to the same friendly arm when assailed by Russian Hussars. Kinglake, the historian of the Crimean War, records that the Victoria Cross placed at the disposal of the Eleventh Hussars was unanimously awarded by them to Lieut. Dunn, the only cavalry officer who obtained the distinction.

"To the enthusiasm inspired by his brilliant reputation was mainly due the speedy formation in Canada of the Hundredth Regiment, the Prince of Wales' Royal Canadian Regiment, in 1857. Of this regiment, chiefly raised through his instrumentality, Mr. Dunn was gazetted the first major; and on the retirement of the Baron de Rottenburg from its command, he succeeded as its Lieutenant-Colonel.

"In 1864 he was gazetted full Colonel; at the time he had barely completed his thirty-first year. Impatient of inactivity, he caused himself to be transferred to a command in India, where he speedily attracted the notice of General Napier, afterwards Lord Napier of Magdala; and he accompanied that officer in the expedition against King Theodore of Abyssinia. While halting at Senafé in that country, he was accidentally killed by the sudden explosion of his rifle while out shooting deer."[1]

Presentations of another nature were made in St. Lawrence Hall from time to time, when the students of Upper Canada College, the Grammar School, and other public or private schools received awards in the Hall as a result of proficiency in their examinations.

While receptions to individuals were not uncommon in St. Lawrence Hall, there were very few official levees held there. When Sir Edmund Head came to Toronto as Governor-General in 1855, however, he held his first levee in the hall on November 19th, and the newspapers carried a complete list of the gentlemen who paid their respects to His Excellency.

Bazaars to raise funds for religious, educational and charitable purposes were held from time to time, and frequently included a soirée or concert. In December, 1858, the erection of a church at the corner of Mutual and Queen Streets was furthered by a bazaar and soirée; while in

[1]Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old*, 1873, pp. 342-3.

December, 1861, a bazaar in aid of the establishment of a Female Industrial School was liberally patronised, and was followed a few weeks later by a banquet in behalf of the same institution.

Educational exhibitions were to be found in St. Lawrence Hall on numerous occasions. The most frequent were those of the Toronto Horticultural Society, which usually held three exhibitions a year. In 1855 these took place in May, July and September. In April, 1854, pottery and earthenware received some attention when an Exhibition of Ceramic Art occupied the hall for three days. In 1851 there was presented for two weeks Thiebon's "Mechanical and Pictorial Royal Exhibition of Arts". In 1862 a large number of interested spectators were attracted by an exhibition of the handiwork of the New England glass-blowers, who occupied the Hall during the last three days of May. In striking contrast to these educational displays was one of a distinctly novel character—"The Exhibition of Industrious Fleas"—which, needless to say, brought large crowds of people to St. Lawrence Hall during the week of September 5, 1859. This particular show must have been an old-timer, for an advertisement announcing its appearance in Toronto occurs in the *Courier of Upper Canada* of October 18, 1836.

Another entertainment of a semi-educational nature was that presented in March, 1858, by "Kawshawgance and troupe", illustrating the manners and customs of the Rocky Mountain Indians; while a performance by A. McKeown of Hamilton entitled "Twa Hours in the Land o' Cakes" was given twice in the winter of 1856-7. Mr. Maitland's "Scottish Entertainment" may be presumed to have attracted much the same audience in March, 1857.

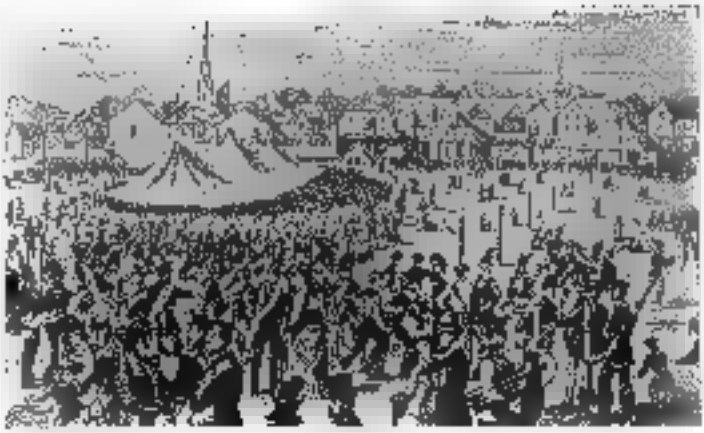
Among performances somewhat less intellectual in appeal were those of magicians, midgets, monstrosities and minstrels who visited St. Lawrence Hall on numerous occasions. Macallister, "the great magician", Signor Jerome Blitz, "the great Moravian Wizard", Professor Jacobs, "the World Renowned Wizard", and Professor Kergan, advertised as "the Great Wizard King and Ventriloquist", were among those who drew a good-sized audience whenever they appeared. The Aztec Lilliputians, Maxima and

Herbola, were on exhibition during the week of August 4, 1851; and "General" Tom Thumb held four of his periodic "réceptions" in October, 1861. Minstrel shows had a considerable following in Toronto, and among those who played at St. Lawrence Hall were Christy's, Sharpley's, Stanley's, Birch and Donniker's, and Wood's.

If any one type of entertainment might be taken as typical of old St. Lawrence Hall perhaps it was the concerts and musicales which were so frequently held. As still holds true today, it appears to have been considered seventy-five years ago that foreigners excelled in musical ability; and Germans and Italians were more often in the spotlight than other nationalities. Bands were more frequently seen in parade and at balls than in concert activities. Regimental bands were very popular at that time, but there was also a Toronto Brass Band, for the benefit of which a concert and soirée was held on December 20, 1860. An interesting departure in a day of comparative seclusion of women must have been the Madden family brass band, "composed entirely of females", which gave an entertainment on two nights in October, 1854.

Not infrequently concerts were held to raise funds for benevolent and charitable purposes. In June, 1851, the Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society arranged an entertainment in aid of destitute negro fugitives who had taken refuge in Canada. Typical of a number of charitable efforts was that of the St. George's Society, which gave, on December 10, 1857, a concert in aid of "the prevailing distress among emigrant Englishmen". A fashionable benefit concert in 1856 was given by Mr. Haycraft, and the proceeds were devoted to "the widows and orphans of the heroes of Sebastopol". Among those who assisted upon this occasion were Mrs. John Beverley Robinson and Messrs. Haycraft, Griebel and Martin Lazare.

The majority of the musicales displayed the talents of foreign artists, but there were many in which British musicians were featured, and others where the talent was entirely local. In 1851 the Queen's Birthday was celebrated by a concert under the direction of Principal Barron of Upper Canada College, and those who contributed towards the entertainment appear to have been largely, if



Canadian Illustrated News

The Foresters' Fête, 1874

The second annual *fête* of the Foresters took place in the Cricket Grounds on July 29-31, 1874. Owing to the inquisitiveness of the inevitable small boy the grand display of fireworks took place unexpectedly and en masse several hours early!

John Ross Robertson Collection. Jack O'Brien.

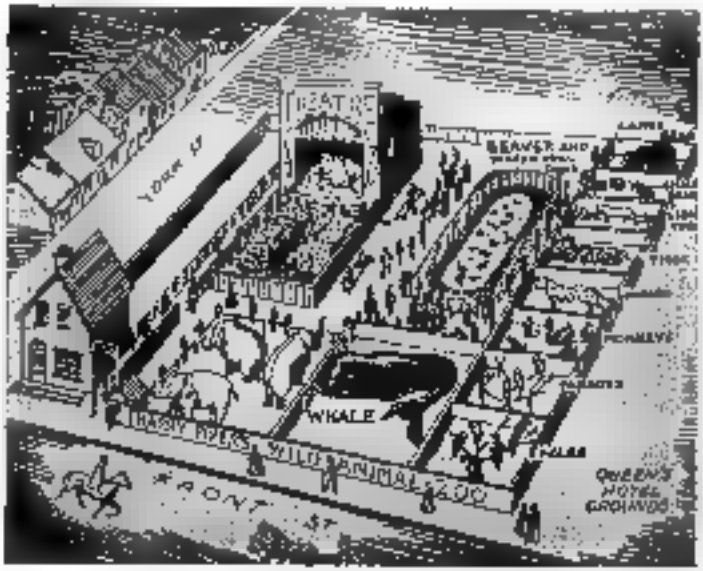
Queen's Birthday Celebration, Government House, 1854

As the Crimean War was in progress at the time even the Turks were cheered!

Canadian Illustrated News. Arthur Elliott.

IN THE ZOO, TORONTO, 1881

This was Harry Piper's Zoo, which commenced about 1872. Among other locations it was for a time in the Crystal Palace.



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PIPER'S ZOO IN THE EIGHTIES

The layout of the Zoo when it was on the site of the Royal York Hotel is here shown.

not entirely, students of the school. The concert was held on the evening of the 23rd of May, and as the clock struck twelve a curtain at the north end of the hall was drawn, displaying an illuminated crown and the letters V.R. above the words "God Save the Queen". The whole assemblage joined in the National Anthem, after which a dance concluded the evening's entertainment.

"An agreeable entertainment by native Indians" was given in December, 1856, when Mr. Ma-zaw-ke-yaw-se-gay and Mr. and Mrs. Mah-koonce appeared on two occasions. The lady was described on the programme as a "granddaughter of the famous, brave and warlike, yet generous and hospitable Captain Brant". In July, 1857, Emma Stanley, "vocalist and imitator", in her "Seven Ages of Woman and Polymelos", gave eight entertainments which drew crowded houses. In September of the same year the European and Anacreontic Society gave three excellent concerts, Mrs. Macready, dramatic reader, followed with three evenings, and Mr. George Henry Russell's concert took place on the 29th of the month.

Typical of the enthusiasm aroused by Handel's oratorios was the first public performance of *The Messiah* on December 17, 1857. John Carter, organist and choirmaster of St. James', was the conductor, and the instrumentalists included Herr Griebel and Messrs. Noverre, Maule, Schmidt, Lazaro and E. A. Hastings. Among the vocalists were Jacob Wright, S. Thompson, G. M. Wyllie, F. W. Barron, Charles Grasett and James Baxter. The concert was considered a wonderful achievement, and the audience included Governor-General Sir Edmund Head. The performance was repeated in 1858, and in June of the same year Handel's *Judas Maccabeus* was given before a very large audience. The patrons of these concerts included almost all of the notable residents of the city. The band and chorus in the production contained some 200 performers, including twenty violins and a proportionate number of other instruments. A few of those who took part in this excellent performance were guest soloists, but the others were all citizens of Toronto. A new organ had been installed for the occasion, and so successful was the presentation that it was repeated twice during the month.

Apart from these oratorios of Handel it would appear that the most socially exclusive audiences attended the performances of foreign artists, a large number of whom visited Toronto. It is easy to visualise the appearance of King Street near the entrance of St. Lawrence Hall upon those occasions: the elaborate carriages with their well-groomed horses and coachmen, each one bringing its quota of beautiful ladies and handsome men in evening dress; the somewhat less aristocratic occupants of hired cabs, and their less pretentious drivers, (though the city hackmen showed their *esprit de corps* by holding a ball under the patronage of His Worship the Mayor in 1867); and the uniformed doorkeepers, attendants and ushers busily but smoothly performing their duties with that polished etiquette and courtly ceremonial characteristic of the times. In July, 1861, Mlle. Teresa Parodi and Mlle. Amalia Patti gave a concert which was the first of its type in St. Lawrence Hall. Three months later, on October 21st, Jenny Lind, "the Swedish Nightingale", made her first appearance in Toronto, and attracted a capacity audience of nearly 1,000 people, all of whom paid at least [redacted] admission; and [redacted] many were disappointed in obtaining tickets that the concert was repeated the following evening.

From contemporary records of the impression which she made upon her audience it would seem that Jenny Lind's appearance in Toronto was the outstanding musical event of a generation. A lady who was present at her concert wrote most enthusiastically of the famous cantatrice and her singing:

"She is in my opinion quite an angelic creature. Her voice is exquisite. Every note clear, sweet and flute-like. Her Echo and Bird-songs are too fascinating. They are almost supernaturally sweet in some parts. She is not handsome, but the unaffected simplicity of her manner and the truthful expression of her countenance render her very attractive, and one cannot help respecting and even loving the lowly Swedish maiden who, unshaken in her high resolves [redacted] by the temptations of the world, has devoted unceasingly her splendid talent to the best and noblest purposes, and, having raised her parents to comfort and affluence, has, it is said, given nearly a million of money

to the establishment of free schools through her native land so that the poorest fisherman's child may obtain an education in Sweden. . . . Her charities and her pure piety will be long remembered after the sweet voice has ceased to be heard on earth."[4]

In 1852 another celebrated cantatrice, Catharine Hayes, gave two most successful concerts on May 24th and 26th. She was assisted by Herr Griebel, violinist, Menzies, baritone, Kyle, the flautist, and Lavenu on the piano; while a month later the Germania Musical Society, assisted by Alfred Jaell, pianist, gave a musicale in St. Lawrence Hall. In November, 1853, Ole Bull, Amalia Patti and Maurice Strakosch drew a very large audience to a concert which was announced as Ole Bull's farewell appearance; the other two artists, assisted by Teresa Parodi, Signor Giovanni and Leo Lardi, gave two operatic concerts in July, 1855, and the same performers were heard from time to time in later years. In 1860, however, Amalia Patti's sister, Adelina, who for forty years was to be known as one of the world's foremost operatic singers, visited Toronto along with Amalia and her husband, Herr Strakosch, who was Adelina's instructor and conductor. While describing the concert as a great success, and Adelina's singing as productive of vociferous applause, a Toronto newspaper stated that it "would like to ask Herr Strakosch why, since Jenny Lind visited America, we get no new ballads in the concert room? *Within a Mile of Edinboro' Town* and *Home, Sweet Home* are very well, but ten years of perpetual repetition is rather too much. The charming Patti would raise a furore with some of the new English ballads judiciously selected". Among other renowned soloists to appear at St. Lawrence Hall were Thalberg, pianist, Mme. Eliza Biscaccianti, and Mlle. Piccolomini, "the charming Italian singer".

The heyday of St. Lawrence Hall was the first ten years of its existence. After 1862 it was not as extensively used, though until the early seventies numerous entertainments were held there. By 1872 the meetings in the old hall had become infrequent owing to the erection of other

[4]Mary Jarvis to Fanny Jarvis, October 29, 1851. See Aldan Meredith: *Mary's Rosedale and Family of Middle York*, 1928, p. 206.

buildings and the extension of the boundaries of the city westward and northward, which made the location less convenient and attractive as a centre of social life. The varied performances which for a quarter of a century had characterised it were held elsewhere, and the famous hall gradually passed out of general use. The Albert Hall, Queen and Yonge Streets, was the chief successor for miscellaneous entertainments, and Shaftesbury Hall, in the Y.M.C.A. Building at Queen and James Streets, was the best lecture hall in the city in the late seventies. The Grand Opera House and the Royal Opera House provided stages and auditoria specially constructed for dramatic and operatic entertainment, and they remained unrivalled in this field until Massey Hall was opened in the early nineties. Musicales and balls for the socially *élite* were sometimes held in the Music Hall in the old Mechanics' Institute Building, Adelaide and Church Streets, and in the Horticultural Pavilion in the Allan Gardens. St. Lawrence Hall itself had dropped into the category of less important assembly rooms, along with the Agricultural Hall, the Masonic Hall, St. Andrew's Hall and the Canadian Institute.

The old building was developed as a market centre in the early years of the new century; and the famous hall itself was considerably used as an armouries by the York Rangers and other regiments, particularly during the Great War. In 1911 several thousand dollars was spent in its renovation, but, apart from a few meetings, its use was limited to the soldiery and, in recent years, as a hostel for unemployed—rather different from the activities which centred there three-quarters of a century ago. And so, like many another early Toronto building, St. Lawrence Hall, its glories departed, has now little but proud memories of the times when the socially and intellectually prominent continually passed through its portals.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE PAGEANT OF SOCIAL LIFE

IN Toronto's early years the presence of government officials, officers of the army and navy, and other "gentlemen" gave a higher tone to social life than was usually to be found anywhere else except at Kingston and Niagara. The amusements of that day depended largely upon individual effort, or upon arrangements made by small groups of social equals. Life in York was much like that of an English town of the period. Alexander Macdonell, Sheriff of the Home District, resided in the town in 1799, and describes in his diary how the members of the official class spent their time.[1] Office duties usually ended at 2 p.m., and dinner was served at 3 o'clock. From Joseph Willcocks' diary we learn that an ordinary dinner included "a salmon, a fillet of veal, a pair of roast fowl and a bread pudding"; while on Christmas Day, 1800, a good old English dinner of "soup, roast beef, boiled pork, a turkey, plumb pudding and minced pies" was served at the Willcocks home.[2] Class distinctions were very rigid in early days, and the fashionable society of York was restricted to a comparatively small section of the population. The military and civilians alike were fond of horse-racing and field sports, fishing and sailing, football and cricket in summer, and of skating and curtiking in winter; while at all seasons dancing, chess, whist, wine and conversation served to while away the time.

Mrs. Simcoe gives some account of these activities in her diary. While at Niagara she wrote: "We play at whist every evening. Colonel Simcoe is so occupied during the day with business that it is a relaxation. I have not lost one rubber since the 28th of November. We usually play four every evening."[3] Two weeks later she notes: "Mrs.

[1] Macdonell's journal is printed in Middleton and Landon's *The Province of Ontario*, 1927, Vol. II.

[2] The quotations are, respectively, from the entries of October 6, 1800, and December 25, 1800. The diary is printed in Middleton and Landon, *ibid.*

[3] *Diary of Mrs. John Graves Simcoe*, December 31, 1792.

Macaulay gave me an account of a subscription ball she was at, which is to be held in the town of Niagara every fortnight during the winter. There were fourteen couples, a great display of gauze, feathers and velvet, the room lighted by wax candles, and there was a supper as well as tea."[1] In 1796 she refers to a ball at her house where "we danced eighteen couple and sat down to supper seventy-six".[2] It may be assumed that a similar social life flourished in York, especially after the seat of government was removed thither in 1796-97. Military bands supplied the music at these official social functions, and at all fashionable balls or "assemblies" in the garrison towns full evening or military dress was worn.

Some of the higher officials of the government had extensive estates on the outskirts of York, where they carried on farming and experimented in the growth of cherries, melons and peaches, in addition to many typically English vegetables and flowers which their gardeners produced. Their stables were noted for spirited horses, suitable for the pleasures of carrioling, the race-track and the hunt. A few of the wealthier inhabitants had yachts and were able to enjoy sailing on the Bay. Even in Indian days the peninsula (now the Island) was a resort for the purpose of regaining health; and, among the early citizens of York, a favourite ride or walk.

The gentlemen of the town also engaged in field sports—hunting, fowling, hawking and fishing. Many a canoe might be seen on the Bay in the evening, its occupants intent upon the exciting sport of spearing fish by jack-light. In the winter of 1801 William Jarvis held a fox hunt on the ice of the Bay, and when the fox was unbagged, "the chase was followed by a number of gentlemen on horse-back, and a concourse of the *beau monde* of both sexes in carriole and sleigh".[4]

Riding and carrioling were prominent in York during Simcoe's *régime*. A letter written by Peter Russell to John McGill in December, 1796, expresses the hope "that the ladies may be able to enjoy the charming carrioling which

[1]*Ibid.*, January 15, 1795.
[2]*Ibid.*, June 4, 1796.
[4]*Upper Canada Gazette*, February 14, 1801.

you must have on your Bay, and up the Yonge Street Road, and to the Humber, and up the Don to Castle Frank, where an early dinner must be picturesque and delightful".[7] There were picnics on the peninsula and along the Don and Humber, and dances for the social set at Castle Frank, Russell Abbey, or in the Government Buildings.

From time to time notices appear in the *Gazette* concerning the York Assemblies, or dances. The first of these announcements is in the issue of December 8, 1798, and asks "the gentlemen of the town and the garrison" to meet at Miles' Hotel to make arrangements for the winter and pay their subscription.[8] It may be presumed that similar social events were held during previous winters, when York had no newspaper in which the announcement might be inserted.

The earliest of these events of which we have an intimate account took place at Frank's Hotel in 1814. The original manuscript of the arrangements informs us that "at a meeting of the gentlemen of York, subscribers to the assemblies, Stephen Jarvis and George Ridout, Esquires, were appointed managers for the season, the sum to be paid by each subscriber to be three pounds, Halifax currency. . . . First dance on St. Andrew's night, dancing to begin at half-past eight o'clock". The dresses worn by the ladies are called "chaste and elegant"; while a private letter gives us the interesting information that "one lady of great loveliness" wore black lace over an underskirt of crimson, with an artificial rose in her waist and hair.[9] A few prominent merchants usually joined the government officials and the officers of the garrison in these dances.

Occasionally there would be a public holiday in York, and a special demonstration of loyalty sometimes occurred upon the receipt of war news from England. On August 1, 1798, was fought the Battle of the Nile, but it was over five months later, on January 3, 1799, that the news reached York. A celebration was immediately planned, however, and took place the following day. It is said that William Willcocks was the only inhabitant who did not light up his

[7]Quoted in Henry Scadding: *Four Decades of York*, 1884, p. 23.
[8]*Upper Canada Gazette*, December 8, 1798.
[9]See John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*, 1894-1914, Vol. I, p. 498.

home in honour of the occasion, so a mob led by one Thomas Smith smashed the windows of his house.

On June 4th the King's birthday was always celebrated. The *Gazette* of June 8, 1799, notes that the Queen's Rangers fired three volleys, the militia assembled on the beach, and a Royal Salute of twenty-one guns was fired by the Royal Artillery; after which, "at night the Government Buildings were superbly illuminated, at which place His Honour the President gave a splendid ball and supper".[10] Another notable event occurred in 1803, when the Duke of Kent visited the little town, staying at Oakhill, the residence of General Aeneas Shaw, in whose daughter Sir Isaac Brock was later engaged. The Duke was entertained in the log cabin which preceded General Shaw's frame house.

A social custom of the period was duelling, though death as a result was infrequent. The most notorious of York duels occurred on January 3, 1800, and though it was purposely passed over with little comment by the official government organ, the *Gazette and Oracle*, the *Canada Constellation* of Niagara, in announcing the death of Attorney-General John White, spared neither the participants nor society in general:

"Died at York, on the 3rd instant, John White, Esq., Attorney-General of this Province. His death was occasioned by a wound he received in a duel fought the day before with John Small, Esq., Clerk of the Executive Council, by whom he was challenged. We have not been able to obtain the particulars of the cause of the dispute; but, be the origin what it may, we have to lament the toleration and prevalency of a custom falsely deemed honourable, or the criterion of true courage, innocency or guilt, a custom to gratify the passion of revenge in a single person, to the privation of the country and a family of an ornament of society, and support: an outrage on humanity that is too often procured by the meanly malicious, who have preferment in office or friendship in view, without merit to gain it, and stupidly lacquey from family to family, or from person to person, some wonderful suspicion, the suggestions of a soft head and evil heart; and it is truly unfortunate for Society that the evil they bring on others should pass

[10] *Upper Canada Gazette*, June 8, 1799.

by their heads to light on those the world could illy spare. We are unwilling to attribute to either the Attorney-General or Mr. Small any improprieties of their own, or to say on whom the blame lies; but of this we feel assured, that an explanation might easily have been brought about by persons near to them, and a valuable life preserved to us. The loss is great; as a professional gentleman the Attorney-General was eminent, as a friend, sincere; and in whatever relation he stood was highly esteemed; an honest and upright man, a friend to the poor, and dies universally lamented; and we here cannot refuse to mention, at the particular request of some who have experienced his goodness, that he has refused taking fees, and discharged suits at law by recommending to the parties, and assisting them with friendly advice, to an amicable adjustment of their differences; and this is the man whom we have lost!"[11]

On the 20th of January Small was tried before Mr. Justice Alcock and a jury, but the verdict was "Not Guilty". Mr. White's remains lie in St. James' Cemetery, whence they were removed in 1871 when labourers discovered the original grave.

After the War of 1812 the social life of the town gradually became more complex. In the eighteen-twenties, though the town was still a village in population, there occurred small agricultural fairs, and meetings and celebrations of the National Societies, the Orangemen, and other lodges. In the same period the first fire company was organised, while the visits of circuses, theatrical companies, and other itinerant exhibitions became quite common.

It was nearly half a century after the arrival of the first settlers before commercialised theatrical exhibitions were to be found in Upper Canada. Writing in 1817 Robert Gourlay found that "the country is too young for regular theatric entertainments and those delicacies and refinements of luxury which are the usual attendants of wealth. Dissipation, with her fascinating train of expenses and vices, has made but little progress on the shores of the lakes".[12] Among the earliest dramatic efforts were occasional plays

[11] Niagara *Canada Constitution*, January 11, 1830.

[12] Robert Gourlay: *A Statistical Account of Upper Canada*, 1822. Vol. I, p. 260.

produced by the officers of the garrisons at York, Kingston and Niagara; in these the female parts were usually taken by men. As a general rule only comedies were attempted, Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer* being among the number. Mr. (later Sir) Allan MacNab was one of a number of amateur performers in York, and he acquitted himself so well that he was seriously advised to become a professional actor.

Among other early inhabitants of York who were greatly interested in amateur dramatics were the members of the Baldwin and Sullivan families. During the Christmas holidays of 1824-5 a rather elaborate drama called *The Revenge* was presented in the Baldwin home, Spadina House, parts of the production having been written for the occasion by Robert Baldwin, later an important figure in political life. The parts were taken by "the juvenile part of the family", and the entertainment included Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer*, and an afterpiece of a type popular at the time—*Bombastes Furioso*.[13]

The first theatrical performances by professionals were introduced by American companies in the early eighteen-twenties—possibly as early as 1820. Two plays were usually produced for one evening's entertainment, a rather serious melodramatic performance being followed by a boisterous comedy, with perhaps a little vaudeville during the intermission. As was true also of many other pioneer activities, the first theatrical entertainments in Upper Canada usually took place in taverns. The first theatre in York was the ballroom of Frank's Hotel, located in the rear of the establishment, which was on the north-west corner of Market Lane (Colborne Street) and West Market Square. There travelling companies of actors presented such plays as *Pizarro; Barbarossa, or The Siege of Algiers; Ali Baba, or The Forty Thieves; The Lady of the Lake;* and *The Miller and His Men*. A small stage, few dramatic effects, and little or no scenery were characteristic of this as of all other early theatres in Upper Canada.

Concerning York's first theatre Dr. Scadding gives some

[13] See J. E. Middleton: *The Municipality of Toronto, A History*. 1923. Vol. I, pp. 158-60, where a lengthy account of the entertainment is quoted from the Powell Papers in the Toronto Public Library.

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VIEW OF YORK FROM GOODERHAM'S WINDMILL, 1833

John Ross Robertson Collection. F. V. Poole.

FRANK'S HOTEL, NEAR THE MARKET

The first commercialized theatrical performances in Toronto were at Frank's.

John Ross Robertson Collection

THE TAM O' SHANTER INN, QUEEN AND BROADVIEW, 1860

John Ross Robertson Collection John Fraser

JOHN NICKINSON OF THE ROYAL LYCEUM THEATRE

He is seen here as Hawthorne in *The Old Guard*.

details of interest. The hotel was a white frame building, and when the ballroom was fitted up for dramatic purposes it was approached by a stairway from the outside:

"Here companies performed under the management, at one time, of Mr. Archold; at another, of Mr. Talbot; at another, of Mr. Vaughan. The last-named manager, while professionally at York, lost a son by drowning in the Esy. We well remember the poignant distress of the father at the grave, and that his head was bound round on the occasion with a white bandage or napkin. Mrs. Talbot was a great favourite. She performed the part of Cora in *Pizarro*, and that of Little Pickle, in a comedy of that name, if our memory serves us. . . . . The body-guard of the Dey of Algiers, we remember, consisted of two men, who always came in with military precision just after the hero, and placed themselves in a formal manner at fixed distances behind him, like two sentries. They were, in fact, soldiers from the garrison, we think. All this appeared very effective.

"The dramatic appliances and accessories at Frank's were of the humblest kind. The dimensions of the stage must have been very limited; the ceiling of the whole room, we know, was low. As for orchestra—in those days the principal instrumental artist of the town was Mr. Maxwell, who, well-remembered for his quiet manner, for the shade over one eye in which was some defect, and for his homely skill on the violin, was generally to be seen and heard, often alone, but sometimes with an associate or two, here, as at all other entertainments of importance, public or private. Nevertheless, at that period, to an unsophisticated yet active imagination innocent of acquaintance with more respectable arrangements, everything seemed charming; each scene, as the bell rang and the baize drew up, was invested with a magical glamour, similar in kind, if not equal in degree, to that which, in the days of our grandfathers, ere yet the modern passion for real knowledge had been awakened, fascinated the young Londoner at Drury Lane."[14]

Flair's Tavern on the west side of Market Square had assembly rooms similar to those at Frank's, and the following advertisement describes in considerable detail the

[14]Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old*, 1873, pp. 110-11.

performance given by Talbot's Theatrical Troupe, aided by the York Band, in October, 1824:

"Theatre York—This evening, October 7th, will be presented at Mr. Phair's assembly rooms Otway's celebrated tragedy of *Venice Preserved*, or *A Plot Discovered*—

Pierre	Mr. Archold.
Jaffre	Mr. Talbot.
Priuli	Mr. Gilbert.
Duke	Mr. Trowbridge.
Badamar	Mr. Davis.
Renault	Mr. Gilbert.
Conspirators.	
Belvedera	Mrs. Talbot.

After the tragedy the following songs:

Comic Song—Cherry Cheek.	
Patty	Mr. Gilbert.
Song	Mr. Davis.
Comic Song	Mr. Talbot.

The whole to conclude with a laughable farce of *Nature and Philosophy*.

Brother Philip	Mr. Archold.
Ronaldo	Mr. Gilbert.
Cousin, a youth who has never seen woman	Mrs. Talbot.
Eliza	Miss Allan.
Gertrude	Mrs. Archold.

"On Friday evening will be presented the much-admired comedy of *Animal Magnetism*, with the laughable farce of *The Irishman in London*, together with a variety of comic songs, glees, etc., etc., as will appear in the bills.

"N.B.—Mr. Archold, ever anxious to merit the esteem of his generous patrons, has, in addition to the entertainments hitherto afforded, engaged the York Band, which will attend each evening during his stay in York. Tickets to be had at the *U. C. Gazette* Office, at the bar of Mr. Phair's Tavern, and at the Steam Boat Hotel. Boxes 3s. 9d. Back seats 2s. 6d. currency. Children half price. Two tickets

will admit a gentleman and two ladies. Doors open at six o'clock and performance at seven precisely."[15]

Two years later a similar travelling company advertised its performances to take place in the ballroom at the rear of Frank's Hotel. The press contained a news item about this company:

"Mr. & Mrs. Judah, with a *Corps Dramatique*, have arrived in town, and on Thursday and Friday evenings gave entertainments at Frank's, where they have fitted up a theatre. The estimation in which Mr. and Mrs. Judah were held in Montreal, and the liberal support they have met with in Kingston, will, we hope, entitle them to the patronage of the ladies and gentlemen of York. Mrs. Carres' singing is of itself an inducement to visit the theatre, to the lovers of rational amusement, where they have no doubt they will find Mr. and Mrs. Judah and company at home, happy and well prepared to receive them."[16]

The advertisement of this company read:

"Theatre—At Frank's Ball Room Mr. Judah respectfully informs the ladies and gentlemen of York and its vicinity that on this evening (Saturday), October 21st, 1826, will be performed, for the first time in York, Shakespeare's much-admired comedy of Catherine and Petruchio, or *Taming of the Shrew*, with the laughable farce of *Fortune's Frolic*, or *A Ploughman Turned Lord*. N.B.—For particulars see bills."[17]

York's next theatre, a frame building on the north side of Colborne Street, west of the Market, was a workshop the upper storey of which was altered in 1829 to suit the purpose of dramatic entertainment. A local amateur club produced several plays there. This theatre was long remembered by many people as the place where Charles French murdered a man named Nolan in the autumn of 1829. French was an apprentice in William Lyon Mackenzie's printing office, and the Reform leader tried his best to secure a reprieve for him, but without success. The murder and subsequent execution quickly wrote *finis* to the activities of the Colborne Street theatre.

[15] *Upper Canada Gazette*, October 7, 1824.
[16] *U. E. Loyalist*, October 21, 1826.
[17] *Ibid.*

A few years later, in 1834, the old Wesleyan Chapel, on the site of the present head office of the Canadian Bank of Commerce, was converted into a place of amusement which for a time was known as the Theatre Royal. *A Panorama of the Burning of Moscow* was the first entertainment presented in this theatre, which was operated by Waugh Brothers, proprietors of a confectionery store on King Street. Contemporary with the Theatre Royal was another place of amusement, a barn-like building on the north side of Front Street, east of Keating's British Coffee House. This frame hall had no gallery, but accommodated some two or three hundred people. Candles provided the illumination, and the scenic effects were very crude, but the performances, and particularly the acting of Mr. and Mrs. Thorne, were frequently very good.

It is, of course, impossible to gauge the value of any entertainment from the producers' announcements; nor can a press report of it always be accepted as unbiased criticism. The fact that most of the players were from the United States prejudiced the chances of a fair reception at the hands of a considerable number of people, among whom the editor of the *British Colonist* appears to have been one of the most pronounced in his views. With obvious dislike he records a visit to the second Theatre Royal in 1839, when "a party of strolling players from Yankee-land" were performing. He says that "the performance commenced with what was styled in the bills 'The much-admired farce of *Nature and Philosophy*', on the youth who never saw a woman. . . . Both the farce and the actors of it are altogether too contemptible for criticism". A Scotch song was "brutally murdered" by Mrs. Lennox. This was followed "by an attempt to act the opera of *The Maid of Cashmere*, and it was but an attempt. Miss Inco danced tolerably well, and that is all that can be said in favour of the performance. By this time our patience was quite exhausted; we left, and immediately set to write this notice, lest by delay we might so far forget what we had witnessed as to do injustice afterwards to any of the company by detracting from their just merits as players. . . . There is no reason why such a miserable catchpenny as that at present in operation should

be tolerated. The municipal authorities should interfere and abate the nuisance".[16]

In spite of such scathing criticism, however, it is probable that this company was no worse than the average of the day; and no doubt many unprejudiced patrons enjoyed the entertainment provided.

The first commercialised amusement to become available to all except the most remote settlers was the circus. Appearing first in the towns, they were soon stopping at taverns in every settled part of Upper Canada. The organisations were almost exclusively of American origin, and were advertised in the exaggerated style characteristic of all types of commercialised entertainment.

As early as 1827 York had a resident circus under the management of Bennard and Black. This was held in the barn of De Forest's Hotel on King Street, east of Sherbourne. There was no menagerie connected with it, the entertainment consisting of "riding and feats of horsemanship, trapeze and horizontal bar performances, and tricks of juggling". Mrs. Bennard was the favourite of the circus-goers of that period, and her "tossing of balls and knives was one of the principal features of the show".[17] From De Forest's the Bennard circus ring was moved to George Garside's Hotel on the west side of New (Jarvis) Street, near Duke; thence it was removed to Barney Roddy's Tavern on the west side of Church, just below King; and finally was located on the south side of Wellington Street, a short distance west of Church. Here, enclosed by a high board fence, the circus was long operated by Bennard and was a well-patronised place of amusement.

The earliest stopping-place in York for itinerant menageries was a large open space on the west side of Yonge Street north of Lot (Queen) Street. The Sun Tavern (Elliott's) was located at the northwest corner of the intersection, and to the northward of that building numerous menageries pitched their tents in the eighteen-twenties. In the days of waggon transport the travelling circus was a wonderful spectacle all along the route, and a short stop on

[16]The *British Colonist*, September 4, 1839. The second Theatre Royal was near the north-east corner of King and York Streets.

[17]Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 479.

the outskirts of a community was sufficient to refurbish the parade with considerable pageantry, which was the more appreciated in a day when a surfeit of entertainment had not rendered the populace *blasé* and ultra-sophisticated.

In later years the old Fair Green near the Don became the favourite location for travelling shows, and P. T. Barnum's announcement of his "Grand Colossal Museum and Menagerie" of 1852 is typical of the "ballyhoo" which everyone has seen on barns and fences for over a century. We will attempt to preserve as far as possible the original form of the advertisement:

"P. T. BARNUM'S

GRAND COLOSSAL MUSEUM AND MENAGERIE.

The largest travelling EXHIBITION in the World, being a combination of all the most popular and unexceptionable amusements of the age—enlarged and improved for the season of 1852.

A TEAM OF 10 ELEPHANTS

Will draw the Great Car of Juggernaut.

A BABY ELEPHANT

only one year old and but 3½ feet high, will carry upon his back, around the interior of the immense Pavilion, the Lilliputian General Tom Thumb. The magnificent *cortège* comprises 110 horses and 90 men. The Pavilion of Exhibition has been enlarged until it is capable of accommodating 15,000 spectators at once. The collection of living Wild Beasts includes the most splendid specimens ever exhibited in America. Among many others will be found

SIX BEAUTIFUL LIONS,

Fresh from their native forests.

A SACRED BURMESE BULL,

from the Island of Ceylon, worshipped there by the Pagan Natives, and recently taken from an Idolatrous Temple.

A monster WHITE OR POLAR BEAR! of prodigious size and ferocity.

A magnificent ROYAL TIGRESS—the largest one ever captured alive.

AN INFANTILE CAMEL—only six months of age, the first one ever born in America.

The DROVE OF ELEPHANTS were captured in the jungle of Central Ceylon by Messrs. S. B. June and Geo. Nutter, assisted by 260 natives, after a pursuit of three months and four days in the jungles. They were finally entrapped and secured in an Indian Kraal or Trap, of enormous dimensions and prodigious strength, where they were subdued. The calf elephant accompanies its dam, and was weaned on its passage from India.

A NATIVE CEYLON CHIEF, of high caste in his own country, has charge of the elephants, having accompanied them from Ceylon."

But for fear these attractions should not prove sufficient, it was advertised in addition to the aforementioned wonders that "the real, genuine, original

GEN. TOM THUMB

is attached to this exhibition, and will appear, in all his performances, as given before the principal crowned heads of Europe, including Songs, Dances, Grecian Statues, and his admired personations of Napoleon and Frederick the Great. The Little General is twenty years of age, weighs only fifteen pounds, and is but twenty-eight inches high."

Then, besides all the foregoing attractions, there was

"MR. NELLIS,

the man without arms", who executed his extraordinary feats of loading and firing a pistol with his toes; cut profile likenesses; shot at a mark with a bow and arrow; played upon the accordion and violoncello, etc. And in addition to all these marvels a fine military band performed the most popular airs of the day as the procession entered town, and also during the hours of exhibition.

Finally, the charge for admission was "only 25 cents to the whole of this immense establishment, including General Tom Thumb, the entire collection of wild animals, wax statuary, Mr. Pierce's performances in the dens, the baby elephant, Mr. Nellis' performances, etc., no extra charge under any pretence whatever, let the reports be what they may. Doors open from 1 to 4, and from 7 to 9 o'clock, p.m."[29]

Dancing has long been pre-eminent among amusements, and the assemblies and balls of the society set of the capital

[29] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, pp. 813-14.

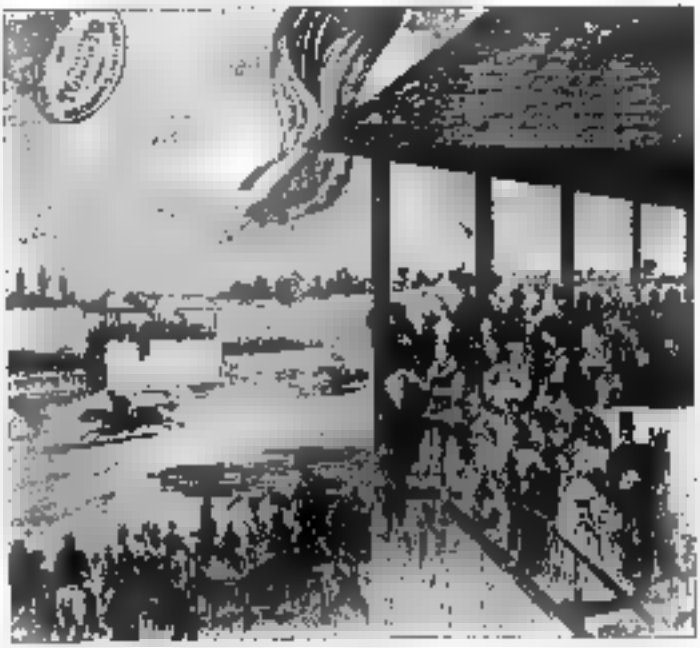
have always been characterised by brilliancy. Among the most notable of such events was that which occurred on April 22, 1842, the second day of Governor-General Sir Charles Bagot's visit to Toronto. The occasion was celebrated by a Grand Ball in Government House in honour of the distinguished visitor. A large Committee of Management, of which G. P. Ridout was Secretary, T. D. Harris Treasurer, and W. H. Boulton Master of Ceremonies, was in charge of the event, tickets for which were 30s. ($6.00) each. A press account of the ball noted that "towards 9 o'clock the fashionable world stirred into busy motion, and the rolling of wheels was fast and furious as carriages in quick succession deposited their lovely freight at the entrance door of the Government House. Passing through the ante-room, which was ornamented with the choicest green-house plants, the visitors passed on to the spacious ballroom, where the Lady Mayoress, who did the honours of the Ball, received the respects of the company, who were presented as they arrived by the Master of Ceremonies, W. H. Boulton, Esq."

The arrangements for dancing were quite elaborate. In one room, "prettily ornamented to resemble a Turkish tent", was stationed the Quadrille Band of the 43rd Light Infantry; in another were the Band and Bugles of the 93rd or Sutherland Highlanders. The Turkish room contained "repose-inviting couches" around the walls, and in the centre "a most luxurious looking ottoman—long festoons of verdant wreaths hung in graceful sweeps, and, lighted by one handsome chandelier, the room was the beau-ideal of a temple prepared for Love and Beauty. The Ballroom was brilliantly lighted, and was decorated with gorgeous banners of the National Societies. On the walls were mirrors which "reflected many a lovely face radiant with hope"; and parallel with the Ballroom was the long picture gallery, an attractive promenade. The grand drawing-room was "superbly furnished with Turkey carpets, richly wrought *bergeres* and ottomans, and a harp and piano gave promise that vocal music would add its zest to the pleasures of the evening. Everywhere one went, taste and opulence displayed themselves in the arrangements."

At ten o'clock "the clang of steel without" announced the

Canadian Illustrated News. W. H. Gardiner.

ANNUAL BALL OF THE ROYAL YACHT CLUB AT THE GRAND OPERA HOUSE, 1874



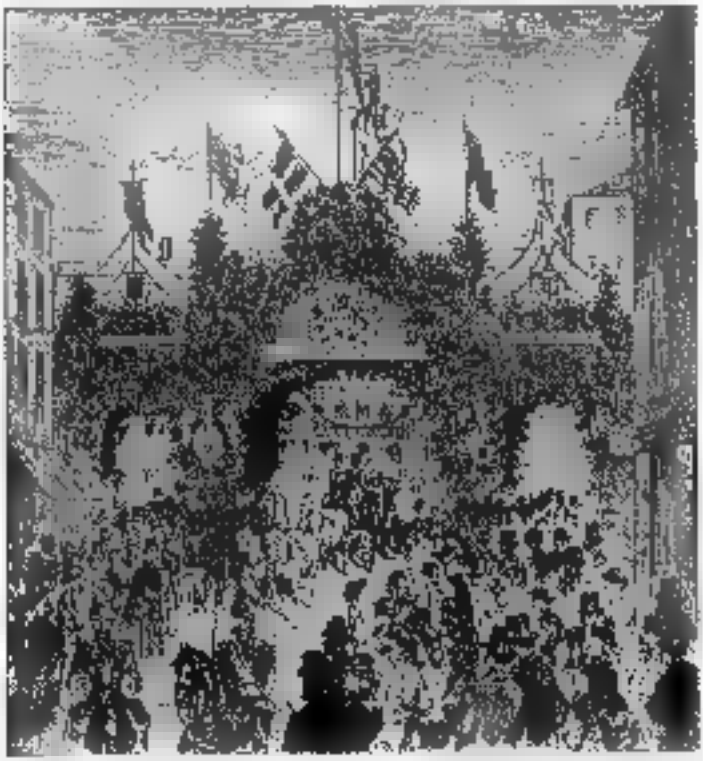
Canadian Illustrated News

THE TORONTO HUNT CLUB STEEPLE CHASE RACES, 1870

Even the stamp at the upper left is historical, for it recalls that the Toronto Public Library inherited the books of the old Mechanics' Institute.

John Ross Robertson del.

THE BUTCHERS' ARMS TAVERN, MILL LANE, 1850



Canadian Illustrated News. M. Matthews.

RECEPTION TO LORD AND LADY DUFFERIN, 1872

The triumphal arch at the corner of King and Yonge.

arrival of His Excellency, and, as the bands played the National Anthem, the Governor-General and his glittering staff entered, were received by the Lady Mayoress, and the ball commenced. Three quadruple sets of quadrilles inaugurated the program, and the scene was "as brilliant as beautiful women could render it".

The "whirling waltz" and the "inspiring galoppe" alternated with the graver quadrille during the evening. Those who did not dance visited the picture gallery, played cards, or merely watched the colourful scene, listening, perchance, to "the syren warblings which poured forth their melody in the drawing-room". At intervals the ladies visited the refreshment room and were regaled by tea, coffee and ices; while their more robust partners "rejoiced in the sterner luxuries of Roman punch and wine negus".

At one o'clock His Excellency led the Lady Mayoress to supper, which was served in four rooms upstairs; many, it is said, were forced to wait until "second table". Everything that could please the palate was served—"even the fragrant and grateful pine apple, opportunely brought from more southern skies"; champagne of superior flavour was poured forth in abundance, and (needless to say) goblet after goblet was drained in honour of the occasion. The guest of honour left after supper, but dancing continued until "the cock's shrill clarion" bid the gay revel cease; "and just as the orient sky was becoming tinged with the golden hues of morning" the last of the dancers were homeward bound. It was no exaggeration to say that "a more splendid and successful result never crowned the labours of a committee,—the judicious tact and complete finish of the thing, through all its appointments, reflect the greatest credit upon the taste and spirit of the gentlemen under whose able management the arrangements were matured and carried out."

Unfortunately we have no record of the ladies' gowns, but it is stated that among the five hundred guests one might see "fifteen varieties of uniform", of which that of the Governor-General, "a magnificent silver and blue dress", and the uniforms of his Aides-de-Camp, which "dazzled the eye with the sheen of scarlet and gold, their coats being actually covered with the richest bullion lace", were out-

standing for splendour and beauty. Take it for all in all, the occasion "will long continue a vivid beacon and 'the light of other days'."[21]

An early fancy dress ball of great interest is fully described by Dr. Scadding:

"It was in the assembly-room at Frank's, dismantled of its theatrical furniture, that a celebrated fancy ball was given on the last day of the year 1827, conjointly by Mr. Galt, Commissioner of the Canada Company, and Lady Mary Willis, wife of Mr. Justice Willis. On that occasion the general interests of the Company were to some extent studied in the ornamentation of the room, its floor being decorated with an immense representation, in chalks or water-colour, of the arms of the association. The supporters of the shield were of colossal dimensions: two lions rampant, bearing flags turning opposite ways: below, on the riband, in characters proportionably large, was the motto of the Company, *Non matet genus solum*. The sides and ceiling of the room, with the passage leading from the front door to it, were covered throughout with branchlets of the hemlock-spruce: nestling in the greenery of this perfect bower were innumerable little coloured lamps, each containing a floating light.

"Here, for once, the potent, grave and reverend signiors of York, along with their sons and daughters, indulged in a little insanity. Lady Mary Willis appeared as Mary, Queen of Scots; the Judge himself, during a part of the evening, was in the costume of a gay old lady, the Countess of Desmond, aged one hundred years; Miss Willis, the clever amateur equestrienne, was Folly, with cap and bells; Dr. W. W. Baldwin was a Roman senator; his two sons, William and [redacted]. George, were the Dioscuri, Fratres Helenae, lucida Sidera; his nephew, Augustus Sullivan, was Puss-in-Boots; Dr. Grant Powell was Dr. Pangloss; Mr. Kerr, a real Otchipway chief, at the time a member of the Legislature, made a magnificent Kentucky backwoodsman, named and entitled Captain Jebediah Skinner. Mr. Gregg, of the Commissariat, was Othello. The Kentuckian (Kerr) pro-

[21]The quotations are from the most interesting account of the event appearing in the *Toronto Commercial Herald*, as reprinted a few days later by the *Examiner* of April 27, 1842.

fessing to be struck with the many fine points of the Moor, as regarded from his point of view, persisted, throughout the evening, in exhibiting an inclination to purchase—an idea naturally much resented by Othello. Col. Givins, his son Adolphus, Raymond Baby, and others, were Indian chiefs of different tribes, who more than once indulged in the war-dance. Mr. Buchanan, son of the British Consul at New York, was Darnley; Mr. Thomson, of the Canada Company's office, was Rizzio; Mr. G. A. Barber was a wounded sailor recently from Navarino (that untoward event had lately taken place); his arm was in a sling; he had suffered in reality a mutilation of the right hand by an explosion of gun-powder on the preceding 5th of November."[32]

People frequently travelled long distances to be present at the social gatherings of the *élite*. Mrs. Anna Jameson wrote on May 20, 1837: "Last night a ball at the government-house, to which people came from a distance of fifty—a hundred—two hundred miles—which is nothing to signify here. There were very pretty girls, and very nice dancing". The wealthier classes usually insisted on the best [redacted] music at their assemblies, and if the Paul Whiteman or Vincent Lopez of the day was not available the deficiency was quickly noticed; Mrs. Jameson, for example, referring to the same ball, observed that "we had all too much reason to lament the loss of the band of the 66th Regiment, which left us a few weeks ago—to my sorrow".[33]

It was not easy to be up-to-the-minute in dance steps when square and fancy dancing was in vogue. Quadrilles and schottisches were usual at the fashionable balls [redacted] Government House on such occasions as the opening of legislature; while dancing schools endeavoured in addition to insure proficiency in "Zodiac's New Pantomime, Scotch Sling, Children's Hornpipes, the 6th and 4th Hanoverian Waltzes, De la Cour Minuet walked in six corners, and Country Dances".[34]

There were numerous benevolent people in York, and their activities did much to alleviate the suffering and distress of immigrants. At the annual meeting of the

[32]Scadding: *Toronto of Old*, pp. 111-12.
[33]Anna Jameson: *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada*, 1838, Vol. I, p. 292.
[34]Kingston *Upper Canada Herald*, August 3, 1825.

Stranger's Friend Society held at De Forest's Hotel on November 30, 1822, it was reported that over £110 had been expended in relief of the destitute and sick. It was recognised that "the great expense attending the passage of emigrants and their families up the St. Lawrence frequently exhausts their means, depresses their spirits, and, added to the great fatigue of the journey and the exposure of the weather, produces sickness among them ere they reach York"; and to these, and others who needed provisions until their crops were harvested, the aid of the Society was most welcome. James Fitzgibbon, the secretary, reported that 7,898 rations had been distributed and 215 families relieved during the year.[33] In 1829 the same organisation was known as the Society for the Relief of the Sick and Destitute; while three years later the York Emigrant Committee, appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor, was assisting the Society in facilitating the settlement or employment of the large numbers who were then entering Upper Canada.

The first charitable bazaar in York occurred on September 2, 1832, in the commissariat storehouse near the foot of John Street. The interior of the building was gaily decorated with flags for the event, which was to provide funds for the relief of distress caused by the recent great cholera epidemic. The bazaar was under the patronage of Lady Colborne, and a piece of music called *Raven Plume* was written for the occasion by James M. Cawdell, dedicated to Miss Mary Powell, and sung by J. E. Goodson. A contemporary publication noted that "all the fashionable and well-disposed attended; the band of the gallant 79th played; at each table stood a lady; and in a very short time all the articles were sold to gentlemen who will keep as the apple of their eye the things made and presented by such hands. The sum collected was three hundred and eleven pounds."[34]

The fashionable caterer for such social events was an Italian, Franco Rossi, the first "scientific confectioner" in York. Dr. Scadding describes his shop as "ever fragrant and ambrosial. In his specialties he was a superior workman. From him were procured the fashionable bridecakes

[33] *Upper Canada Gazette*, December 12, 1822.
[34] *Sibbald's Canadian Magazine*, January, 1833.

of the day; as also the noyeau, parfait-amour, and other liqueurs set out for visitors on New Year's Day. Rossi was the first to import hither good objects of art: fine copies of the Laocoon, the Apollo Belvidere, the Persens of Canova, with other classical groups and figures sculptured in Florentine alabaster, were disseminated by him in the community".[27]

Rossi's emporium of the artistic and delicious was located on the south side of King Street to the east of Bay Street, and is the *affiche* visited in 1832 by Thomas Hamilton, who was thereby reminded of Grange's—presumably a fashionable resort in London:

"In passing through the streets I was rather surprised to observe an *affiche* intimating that ice-creams were to be had within. The weather being hot I entered, and found the master of the establishment to be an Italian. I never ate better ices at Grange's."[28]

A place of entertainment of another variety was Hamilton's White Swan Inn, on Front Street East. An early Natural History Museum drew numerous persons to the hostelry, and Dr. Scadding outlines its rise and fall:

"The corner we approach after passing the Market Square was occupied by an inn with a sign-board sustained on a high post inserted at the outer edge of the footpath, in country roadside fashion. This was Hamilton's, or the White Swan. It was here, we believe, or in an adjoining house, that a travelling citizen of the United States, in possession of a collection of stuffed birds and similar objects, endeavoured at an early period to establish a kind of Natural History Museum. To the collection here was once rashly added figures in wax of General Jackson and some other United States notabilities, all in grand costume. Several of these were one night abstracted from the Museum by some over-patriotic youths, and suspended by the neck from the limbs of one of the large trees that overlooked the harbour."[29]

Of a similar nature was a travelling museum which

[27]Scadding, *Toronto of Old*, pp. 94-5.

[28]Thomas Hamilton: *Men and Manners in America*. 1833. Vol. II, p. 385.

[29]Scadding: *Toronto of Old*, p. 49. Charles Fothergill once received a grant of land in support of a projected museum in York.

visited York in 1826, stopping for a few days at Frank's Hotel:

"New Museum—Just arrived from the Southard, a new, curious and pleasing collection of wax figures, large as life, consisting of some of the most extraordinary characters the world has produced for centuries; among which are Duncan Bradley, the Yorkshire Giant, eight feet seven inches high, and well proportioned; Mr. Daniel Lambert, who weighed 739 lbs., 10 feet four inches round the body, three feet one inch round the leg, etc., who lately died in London. Also natural and artificial curiosities, paintings, electricity, etc., etc. Good music on different organs, tambourine, etc. N.B.—The above may be seen at C. Frank's in York, on the Market Square, every day from nine o'clock a.m. till nine p.m. during its stay in town. Admittance is 3d. Small children half price. York, August 19th, 1826."[19]

Somewhat more pretentious than those forerunners of the Royal Ontario Museum were the works produced by the York Artists and Amateur Association, described as follows by Dr. Scadding in his outline of the beginnings of artistic endeavour in the town:

"Looking up Parliament Street we are reminded that a few yards westward from where Duke Street enters it lived at an early period Mr. Richard Coates, an estimable and ingenious man, whose name is associated in our memory with the early dawn of the fine arts in York. Mr. Coates, in a self-taught way, executed, not unsuccessfully, portraits in oil of some of our ancient worthies. Among things of a general or historical character, he painted also for David Willson, the founder of the Children of Peace, the symbolical decorations of the interior of the Temple at Sharon. He cultivated music likewise, vocal and instrumental; he built an organ of some pretensions in his own house, on which he performed; he built another for David Willson, at Sharon. Mr. Coates constructed besides, in the yard of his house, an elegantly-finished little pleasure yacht of about nine tons burden.

"This passing reference to infant Art in York recalls again the name of Mr. John Craig, who has before been mentioned in our account of the interior of one of the many

[19] *U. E. Loyalist*, August 19, 1826.

successive St. Jameses. Although Mr. Craig did not himself profess to go beyond his sphere as a decorative and heraldic painter, the spirit that animated him really tended to foster in the community a taste for art in a wider sense.

"Mr. Charles Daly, also, as a skilful teacher of drawing in water-colours and introducer of superior specimens, did much to encourage art at an early date. In 1834 we find Mr. Daly promoting an Exhibition of Paintings by the York Artists and Amateur Association, and acting as Honorary Secretary when the Exhibition for the year took place. Mr. James Hamilton, a teller in the bank, produced, too, some noticeable landscapes in oil.

"As an auxiliary in the cause, and one regardful of the wants of artists at an early period, we name, likewise, Mr. Alexander Hamilton; who, in addition to supplying materials in the form of pigments and prepared colours, contributed to the tasteful setting off of the productions of pencil and brush by furnishing them with frames artistically carved and gilt.

"Out of the small beginnings and rudiments of art at York, one artist of a genuine stamp was, in the lapse of a few years, developed—Mr. Paul Kane; who, after studying in the schools of Europe, returned to Canada and made the illustration of Indian character and life his specialty. By talent exhibited in this class of pictorial delineation he acquired a distinguished reputation throughout the North American continent; and by his volume of beautifully illustrated travels, published in London, and entitled *Wanderings of an Artist Among the Indians of North America*, he obtained for himself a recognised place in the literature of British Art."[2]

Paul Kane spent his boyhood in York, and, though at much later periods it was possible to catch pike, bass and an odd maskinonge off the wharves, the days he recalled when he had seen "as many as 100 light-jacks gliding about the Bay of Toronto"[3] were not to be repeated, for fish-spearing from birch canoes was characteristic only of the pioneer period. In the eighteen-thirties Kane was following

[1] Scadding: *Toronto of Old*, pp. 202-3.
[2] Paul Kane: *Wanderings of an Artist among the Indians of North America*, 1859, p. xii.

the business of "Coach, Sign and House Painter" at 158 King Street. His father was a soldier who kept store on the west side of Yonge Street between King and Adelaide. His sign, "Kane, Spirit Store", was for some years familiar in that locality.

The private diversions of citizens varied with their wealth, inclinations and capabilities. Formal calls (leaving cards, of course,) were as fashionable then as in more recent times. It was a time when many people participated in the aristocratic sport of riding horseback, while picnics, boating, sleighing and skating were enjoyed in season. Among the socially select Family Compact set "there were dinners given by Sir John Colborne and other prominent people. There were 'Readings', 'Musicales', and private theatricals at Hazelburn, S. P. Jarvis' house; and at the close of the season the more elaborate and unique event of the Fancy Dress Ball given by the Sheriff and Mrs. Jarvis at Rosedale".[32] In less exclusive circles there were less elaborate "parties", but at the lower end of the social order, among the poverty-stricken, there was but little to divert the mind from life's cares except the crude and demoralising pleasures of tavern and saloon and their usual accompaniments—brawling, cock- and dog-fighting, gambling and prostitution.

Travellers visiting Toronto at this time—just after the creation of the city—were not favourably impressed with the facilities for social intercourse and cultural advancement. In 1837 Mrs. Anna Jameson found that there was a commercial news-room, but that this was "absolutely the only place of assembly or amusement, except the taverns and low drinking-houses. An attempt has been made to found a Mechanics' Institute and a literary club; but as yet they create little interest, and are very ill supported".[33] Four years later Sir Richard Bonnycastle was in Toronto and learned that there had been "various attempts to get up respectable races, to establish a theatre and a winter assembly for dancing", but without much success; he also states that a national Literary and Philosophical Society was organised with difficulty, but lasted only about a year.[34]

[32] A. Meredith: *Mary's Rosedale and Gossip of Little York*, pp. 155-6.
[33] Jameson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 213-4.
[34] Sir Richard Bonnycastle: *The Canadas in 1841*. 1842. Vol. I, p. 163.

While learned societies received but scant support, the advancement of music was no greater. In 1837 Mrs. Jameson found that Archdeacon Strachan was collecting subscriptions to provide a $1,000 organ for St. James' Church in Toronto, and that "an intelligent musician" had trained a good choir; but she learned that the conductor had received so little encouragement "that he is at this moment preparing to go to the United States".[24]

"Respectable races" had, in spite of Sir Richard Bonnycastle's comment, been held in York from very early times, though the Turf Club dates only from 1837. The gentlemen of the town and garrison formed steeplechase and other semi-private racing clubs, and had a race-course, previous to the War of 1812, at the commencement of the peninsula leading to what is now the Island. This was a straight track, and its location was chosen largely because the peninsula was a popular resort for those who enjoyed the pleasures of walking, riding and driving; particularly did the military engage in these pursuits so characteristic of English watering-places. The importance attached both to the race-course and the other facilities for pleasure on the peninsula may be seen from the attempt to build by private subscription in 1822-23 two bridges over the Great and Little Don. Though these causeways were partially constructed, there was not money enough to complete them until 1825, and then only with the aid of a subsidy from the military chest, made available through the interest of Lieutenant-Governor Sir John Colborne. Their opening was an occasion of gratulation no less than that in modern Ontario when a stretch of paved highway is officially inaugurated; but in this instance the old-world pomp and ceremonial was reminiscent of a lord mayor's installation.

In September, 1837, there were three days of racing at Runnymede, "Mr. Scarlett's Simcoe Chase Course", in the Humber Valley. This meet probably inaugurated formal racing in Toronto, the Upper Canada Turf Club having just previously been organised as a result of interest aroused in military races on the Garrison Common. In the early forties another track was in operation on the Boulton property in the rear of The Grange, to be followed by Mait-

[24]Jameson, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 274.

land's track east of the Don, and Gates' near the corner of Danforth and Broadview. Several other race-courses were constructed in the late fifties, and from time to time in after years.

Tandem and carriole clubs were other organizations dependent upon horses, the membership of these societies being largely restricted to officers. The Toronto Tandem Club was organized in the winter of 1839-40, and the activities included weekly drives in sleighs and cutters to the Peacock Inn or some other favourite resort, where gay dinners not infrequently drew forth poetical effusions from the more gifted members. Concerning winter sleighing parties Mrs. Anna Jameson wrote:

"I stood at my window today, watching the sleighs as they glided past. They are of all shapes and sizes. A few of the carriage sleighs are well-appointed and handsome. The market sleighs are often two or three boards nailed together in form of a wooden box upon runners; some straw and a buffalo skin serve for the seat; barrels of flour and baskets of eggs fill up the empty space. Others are like cars, and others called cutters are mounted upon high runners like sleigh phaetons. These are sported by the young men and officers of the garrison, and require no inconsiderable skill in driving, as I am assured that they overturn in the snow not above once in a quarter of an hour, and no harm and much mirth ensues. But the wood sleighs are my delight: a large platform of boards is raised upon runners, with a few upright poles held together at top by a rope; the logs of oak, pine and maple are then heaped up to the height of six or seven feet. On the summit lie a couple of deer frozen stiff, their huge antlers projecting in a most picturesque fashion, and on these, again, a man is seated with a blanket round him, his furred cap drawn down upon his ears, and his scarlet woollen comforter forming a fine bit of colour. He guides with a pole his two patient oxen, the clouds of vapor curling from their nostrils into the keen frosty air."[27]

During the same period many another sport saw its inception in Toronto. Though the first Curling Club was

[27] Anna Jameson: *Sketches in Canada and Rambles among the Red Men.* 1839. 1852 Edition, p. 7.

not organised until the winter of 1836-37, the Scottish inhabitants of the district were playing "the roarin' game" on the Don River at least as early as 1829, and matches between the curlers of Toronto and those of Scarborough Township were being held in the thirties. In later years it was customary for devotees of the besom and stane to keep the snow off sections of ice between the wharves in the Bay; while other groups were curling on Grenadier Pond and the Humber River. Annual bonspiels which drew curlers from all parts of the province were long notable events; but of famous teams none could approach the Toronto Red Jackets, who won seventy-five successive matches against picked teams before suffering their first defeat.

Cricket developed in York in the early thirties as a result of the enthusiasm of G. A. Barber, one of the first masters at Upper Canada College. In 1834 the Toronto cricketers defeated Guelph in a match played at Hamilton, each team having to make an all-day journey to and from the match. In September, 1840, a remarkable hoax on someone's part led to the unexpected arrival in Toronto of a team of New York cricketers. The ensuing match was, however, the forerunner of others with several American cities. Many of those who played cricket were also enthusiastic lawn bowlers, the green being located near the Cuer Howell grounds just west of University Avenue.

Baseball, developing in the United States in the late forties, reached Canada some ten or fifteen years later. Just as, in the opinion of many, cricket and lacrosse were "gentlemen's games" ("A cricketer", says the *Patriot*, "as a matter of course detests democracy"),* so baseball, like football, was early relegated to the "rude mechanicals". In the seventies and eighties, however, baseball became more and more popular, though the element of professionalism which gradually entered the sport was objectionable to many.

Lacrosse, however, was not an important pioneer sport. The Indian game, called *baggattaway*, was played with a deerskin ball filled with hair, and the goal posts were frequently a mile apart. Adapted for Canadian athletes in Montreal at the middle of the century, the game was first

*The *Patriot*, July 16, 1858.

played in Toronto in the sixties. Hockey, the winter counterpart of lacrosse, developed from "shinny" many years later.

From the earliest years of the town the officers of the Garrison enjoyed sailing on the Bay, and as time passed, the birch canoe and bateau, early used in spearing fish by jack-light, were superseded by sailing yachts. In the thirties and forties sailing races, in which yachtsmen from Cobourg, Hamilton and other towns participated, were occasionally held, most of the boats being owned by retired naval officers or other gentlemen. In later years the regattas along the waterfront were of a more elaborate nature, and were accompanied by fashionable balls and other select social activities.

Rowing was early popular in Toronto, but even as late as 1870 there were no oarsmen in America who could compete with the best English scullers. Born in 1855, Ned Hanlan, son of a hotel-keeper on the Island, was rowing in the early 70's, champion of Ontario in 1876, and defeated all-comers everywhere until 1884, when his supremacy was ended. He usually won with ease, sometimes, like the modern Bob Pearce, making his opponents look foolish.[28] The Tinning brothers, Richard, John and Thomas, attained as oarsmen something more than local fame about twenty years earlier. In 1858 they were members of a crew which defeated Chicago for "the championship of the Lakes" and a purse of $2,000.

The city of Toronto of the late eighteen-forties was just commencing to lose the characteristics of a town. Public amusements at that time were still comparatively few. The members of the Mechanics' Institute might read books or papers by gas light at their club rooms, and William Wakefield's auction room was a favourite evening resort for many because of the entertainment and humour provided. Stock companies in primitive theatres were attractive to some people, while itinerant circuses and other shows visited the town from time to time. L. J. Privat's horse-boat transported picnic parties to the island (then a peninsula), but, apart from Privat's Hotel, on the site of the present Eastern

[28] An outline of Hanlan's chief contests may be found in Middleton, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 311-12.

Dominion Illustrated Press THE INTERNATIONAL REGATTA ON TORONTO BAY, 1873 F. M. Bell Smith.

Though most of the events were won by Americans it was nevertheless considered a most successful regatta. The old Union Station may be seen in the background of the upper sketch.

Reproduced by Courtesy of T. A. Reid, Esq.

CRICKET MATCH AT TORONTO, SEPTEMBER 2ND AND 3RD, 1872

The Cricket Grounds were situated just south of College Street, west of University Avenue. This match was between "twelve of the Gentlemen of England and twenty-two of the Toronto Club".

Reproduced by Courtesy of the Maple Leaf Gardens Ltd.

"THE FASTEST IN THE WORLD"
PROFESSIONAL HOCKEY—CHICAGO BLACK HAWKS VS. TORONTO MAPLE LEAFS

13,500 fans at the Maple Leaf Gardens, Toronto, November 12, 1931. Modern professional sports provide "thrills" equal to Spanish bull fights—and in other respects, too, they have much in common.

Gap, the island contained only two or three fishermen's huts at the West Point. C. C. Taylor recalled that a favourite place for a swim was off Rees' Wharf, nearly opposite the Parliament Buildings, and at other quiet spots along the shore of the Bay:

"Here, on a fine summer's morning, many of the leading merchants and clerks from King Street might be seen indulging in the healthy exercise. The only restriction was as to time, there being none as to dress. No person was allowed to bathe after seven o'clock, before which time it was perfectly legal. By those of us who had been accustomed to 'disport beneath the crested wave' on the Atlantic Coast, *in puris naturalibus*, the privilege was highly appreciated and enjoyed.

"One morning the writer chose a spot in front of the Commissariat Depot, which was always guarded by a sentry, who, with fixed bayonet, 'walked his lonely round' in front of his box. These sentries appeared to be authorised to enforce the rule as to time. Not knowing it was past seven o'clock I had quite prepared for a dip when the sentry advanced a few paces and, in a very decided tone, said if I went into the water he 'would do his duty'. Not liking the look of the cold steel, and thinking that in this case discretion was the better part of valour, I quickly dressed and, apologising for having mistaken the hour, beat a retreat."[44]

As early as 1812, it may be explained, the Magistrates forbade bathing in front of the town between sunrise and sunset. Another favourite "swimmin' hole" was that section of the beach south of Sir Richard Bonnycastle's residence, near the south-west corner of Front and Peter Streets. The boys of Upper Canada College were frequently to be found swimming there in the eighteen-forties. When the Bay was unsuitable because of cold weather those who wished might patronize the Royal Baths of Angus Blue. This popular resort was located on King Street, west of Lamb's Hotel, and extended to the rear of a small frame building where the keeper lived. The *Examiner* in 1844 contained the announcement that "the baths (opposite Stone's Hotel), King Street, for ladies and gentlemen, are now open. Hot and cold baths can be had at all hours from

[44] C. C. Taylor: *Toronto Called Back*, 1888, p. 77.

6 a.m. to 10 p.m. Entrance for ladies on King Street. Entrance for gentlemen on the lane leading to the Racquet court."[41] Baths were not, however, the commonplace institution which they have become since the great development of plumbing accessories, for the first bathtub in Canada is said to have been that installed in a Toronto home in 1844.

At all seasons, but especially on Saturday nights, when those most closely associated could conveniently be present, fires could be depended upon to provide some excitement, particularly for the volunteer Fire Brigade, and for the carters racing with puncheons of water to secure the prizes for early arrival. Perhaps, too, one might have his likeness taken by Eli Palmer, Daguerrean Artist, successor to Mr. and Mrs. Cook, portrait-painters of the late eighteen-thirties, and of the silhouette-cutters who travelled about making profile likenesses in paper. (The name, by the way, originated in Paris, the economy of detail in this type of portrait suggesting to frivolous Parisians an unpopular parsimonious Minister of Finance, Etienne de Silhouette). The ladies of the period passed a great deal of time pleasantly perusing the styles in the current *Godey's Lady's Book*, or imitating the latest "fashion dolls" from Europe or the United States—the Butterick patterns of that day. And if all else failed, a person might at least watch the arrival of passengers and mail at Weller's Stage Coach Office, at the intersection of Front, Wellington and Church Streets; the arrival of the English mail once a fortnight was an outstanding event for many citizens.

The general attitude towards the theatre in the early forties was not unlike that of the editor of the *Examiner*:

"We are glad to learn that Messrs. Dean & Co. of Rochester are about to establish a respectable theatre in this city. We have of late been so completely over-run with pseudo-professors of every description that the public are very naturally becoming disgusted with public exhibitions. Since, however, performers of a higher order have chosen to come among us, we trust their efforts will be greeted with the cordiality which they merit, and their endeavours to introduce the legitimate drama to Toronto be not only ap-

[41] The advertisement is quoted in Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 444.

preciated but rewarded by a liberal patronage. From having seen them play at Hamilton we are enabled conscientiously to declare that their performances are highly creditable, and calculated to gratify every true lover of the drama."[45]

The buildings which served the stage during the early years of the city were at first little improved over those of the eighteen-thirties. Dorring's was a barn-like building at the corner of Scott and Wellington Streets, near the Ontario House; another, on William Street above Queen, had originally been a barn; while a third was the old coach-house on King Street West near Government House. Theatrical companies staged in these rather crude buildings such plays as *The Golden Farmer*, *The Happy Cobbler*, *The Brigands*, *The Swiss Cottage* and *Contentment vs. Riches*. In 1848, however, the Royal Lyceum, Toronto's ninth (or tenth) theatre, was the first to be erected for the purpose. This building was located on the south side of King Street, between Bay and York, and was the city's most popular theatre until it was burned in the early seventies. Until 1853 it was "a queer little theatre. There were (for boxes) little holes in the wall fringed with pink curtains, but so arranged that their occupants faced the audience instead of the stage".[46] John Nickinson, long a notable figure in Toronto's theatrical life, became manager at that time, however, and rearranged the interior. Using gas to provide the illumination, this excellent actor and producer was responsible for several seasons of fine plays at the Royal Lyceum. A contemporary publication gives an interesting, if not particularly flattering account of the theatre and Nickinson's company of 1858. The Royal Lyceum, "although small and, since the hard times commenced, has not met with the encouragement its management merited, is an exceedingly pleasant resort". The manager, Mr. Nickinson, was himself "a first-rate actor", and he was ably assisted by others "equally good in their line", notably Mr. Petrie, Mr. Marlowe, Mr. Lee, Mrs. Marlowe and Miss Frost. The "general run of pieces" were well presented by

[45] *The Examiner*, September 7, 1842.

[46] See Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 482-3, for a full account of the Royal Lyceum.

this stock company, and we are glad to learn that "the performances are always characterised by morality and good breeding".**

The restricted area of the Toronto of the forties is apparent when it is remembered that apart from Church and Yonge Streets, there were practically no buildings north of Queen Street. The important suburbs of Brockton, Parkdale, Seaton Village, Riverside and Leslieville did not exist at that time, and Yorkville had but a few scattered houses, of which the best was Mr. Bloor's. An old resident gives an interesting account of pleasant walks in the vicinity of the city, though his enjoyment was somewhat tempered by memories of the flora of the Old Land:

"Our first tour of exploration in the outskirts was along Carlton Street from Yonge, then a clay road without houses or sidewalks. Having got as far as the present Homewood Avenue, we found a small gate-house, and on entering the wicket discovered a natural pathway through a thick pine grove. Proceeding north we reached the house now occupied by Homer Dixon, Esq., and finding further progress that way, or egress, impossible, retraced our steps.

"Our next adventure was along Bloor Street, east to the present cemetery fence, and thence backwards again; and these for a time constituted our only recreation grounds, except the College Avenue.

"In taking a morning or an afternoon walk, there was the absence of many pleasing objects so familiar in former everyday life. The 'wee crimson-tippit' flowers that covered the pasture fields like a carpet; the banks of primroses, buttercups and violets, abounding by every roadside; the double line of hawthorns whose blossoms perfumed the air with their delicious fragrance, and the honeysuckle and wallflowers in every lane; the meadows, thick with May flowers,—all were missed during this first summer in Toronto. For the hedgerows we found the unsightly snake fence, and for the evergreens of holly, laurel, and ivy, the everlasting, monotonous pines, good for use but not very ornamental.

"The study of this class of flora no doubt might be in-

**Descriptive Catalogue of the Provincial Exhibition, 1858. Second edition, 1860, p. 78.

teresting to those who studied the subject from a utilitarian point of view, and the smaller species might have been discovered by an adventurous descent down the ravine to where the River Don flowed in its native beauty; and some ferns and beautiful wild flowers might have been discovered, very interesting to students in botany; but to the casual observer these beautiful objects were at that time conspicuous by their absence.

"Along Church Street, any summer's afternoon, especially in a swamp at the south-east corner of the present beautiful Normal School grounds, could be heard the music of a frogs' concert, accompanied at a short distance with the tintinnabulation of the bells on the necks of the cows which roamed through the browny-green pastures and amongst the thick bush which prevailed east of Church and north of Queen Street. These sounds were further augmented by the cackling of flocks of geese, which, in their amphibious character, had their choice of both native elements. The song of the lark, the thrush, the blackbird and goldfinch, so familiar before, was no more heard; the buzz of the bumblebee and the whirr of the numerous insects that abounded in the bush being the only substitute."[45]

In a more cheerful strain W. H. Pearson recalled[46] that in his boyhood days he "gathered strawberries on the site of the Roman Catholic Cathedral, and beechnuts on what is now the Normal School Square, and shot a wild pigeon near the corner of Gould Street. In the forties and well on in the fifties, during the summer months, immense flocks of pigeons in their migration flew over the outskirts and sometimes the city itself, and everybody who had a gun took advantage of the opportunity to shoot them. I have seen quite a number of men and boys firing at them near Mr. Allan's property on what is now Shuter Street, since there was then no prohibition against discharging firearms in the

[45] Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 50-51.

[46] W. H. Pearson: *Recollections and Records of Toronto of Old*. 1914, pp. 61-2. The shooting of mosquito hawks on the streets of York and near the bay is said by Lieutenant R. T. Coke in his *The Subaltern's Furlough* (1833) to be "the chief diversion of young men", though one hesitates to accept this exaggerated generalization; and Major T. W. Magrath describes the excellent woodcock-shooting available during the summer months. (See *Authentic Letters from Upper Canada*, 1833.)

city. One of the amusements of the day was shooting nighthawks, and the foot of Church Street was quite a popular place for this sport."

Both women and men were fond of visiting their friends and associates, and such calls, especially on New Year's Day, were frequently of a very formal nature. Sunday was the favourite day for calling,—after church was over, of course. Of interest concerning church services is C. C. Taylor's description:

"On Sundays, generally, three carriages could be seen at St. James' Cathedral, and, as a good deal of rivalry existed between the owners of two out of three, in the style of the appointments, the coachmen's livery, and horses and harness, their appearance on driving from church was a standing topic at almost every dinner table, the dresses of the ladies coming in for a full share of the criticism, of course of a good-natured character.

"On enquiry we found, rather to our surprise, that there were two churches having organs, something we had not expected to find: one was in the old Cathedral and the other in the Richmond Street Wesleyan Church. On being introduced to Rev. Messrs. Cooney and Harvard by letters, the former took us with pride to see the new church on Richmond Street. It then stood on an almost vacant lot, there being no buildings between it and Bay Street. On entering he pointed with a good deal of satisfaction to the fine organ, which stood behind the pulpit at the time. We attended divine service on the following Sunday, when Mr. Cooney preached, and were much interested. The musical portion of the service was very pleasing and effective. A well-known alderman of the city at the present time was leader of the tenors, and the writer has a distinct recollection of his flexible voice as he glided from tenor to counter-tenor, and occasionally appeared imperceptibly to run into a falsetto, which added much to the harmony and contributed very greatly to the general effect.

"We were equally pleased in the old Cathedral. The beautifully composed and impressively delivered sermons of the Rev. Mr. Grassett were such as should never be forgotten, while the music was of a high order."[47]

[47]Taylor, op. cit., pp. 48 and 50.

Canadian Illustrated News. A. Jackson Patterson.

TOURNAMENT AT THE TORONTO LAWN TENNIS CLUB, FRONT STREET, 1881

Canadian Illustrated News.

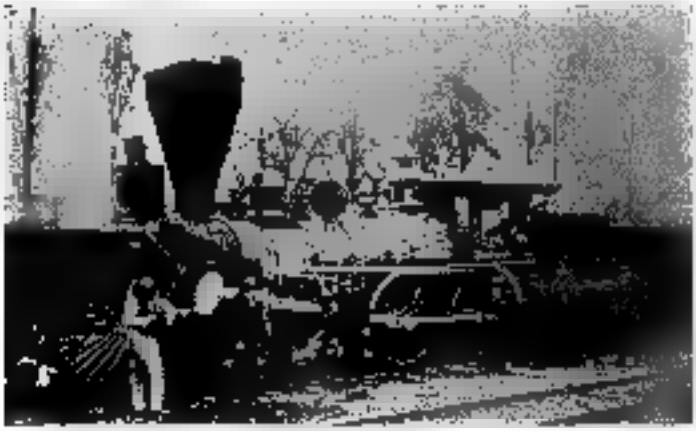
AT THE BEACH IN THE SEVENTIES

There were no bathing beauties in those days!

Reproduced by Courtesy of T. A. Reed, Esq., and the Canadian Pacific Railway.

THE AMPHITHEATRE, OCTOBER 15, 1853

The illustration shows Lady Elgin turning the first sod of the Ontario, Simcoe and Huron Union Railroad, on the Bay Front near Simcoe Street.



THE TORONTO, FIRST LOCOMOTIVE BUILT IN CANADA, 1853

It was constructed in Good's Foundry, Yonge Street near Queen, opposite the present Eaton store.

Characteristic of the days of great changes, and just as popular today, were ceremonial celebrations inaugurating buildings, railroads and bridges. We have an account, for example, of the laying of the corner-stone of York's new Town Hall in April, 1824:

"On Saturday, the 24th instant, his Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, attended by his staff, was met by the Honourable the Members of the Executive Council, the Judges of the Court of King's Bench, and the Gentlemen of the Bar, with the Magistrates and principal inhabitants of York, in procession, for the purpose of laying the foundation stone of the new Jail and Court House about to be erected in this Town. A sovereign and half sovereign of gold, and several coins of silver and copper, of the present reign, together with some newspapers and other memorials of the present day, were deposited in a cavity of the stone, over which a plate of copper, bearing an appropriate inscription, was placed; and after his Excellency had given the first blow with a hammer handed to him for the purpose, the ceremony concluded with several hearty cheers from all who were present. If the question were of any real importance, we might have the curiosity to inquire why the deposit was made in the south-east, rather than in the north-east corner of the building."[10]

A quarter century later occurred the inauguration of Ontario's first steam railway—the Ontario, Simcoe and Huron Union, from Toronto to Machell's Corners (Aurora). It was first attempted to finance the Company by an elaborate lottery, but more orthodox means were finally employed. One who lived in Toronto at the time outlines the activities at the turning of the first sod:

"On October 15th, 1851, the first sod of the Northern Railway was turned by Lady Elgin, assisted by Mayor Bowes, nearly opposite the Parliament Buildings. Mayor Bowes was in full official costume—cocked hat and sword, knee breeches, silk stockings, and shoes with steel buckles. The earth dug by her ladyship with a beautiful silver spade was taken by His Worship a short distance in an oak wheelbarrow, the whole ceremony creating great interest.

"Mr. F. C. Capreol had so far seen his much-ridiculed

[10]*The Canadian Review*, July, 1824.

scheme carried into effect. No longer laughed at and spoken of as 'Mad Capreol', as the writer has often heard him called, he had shown great method in his madness. Having been a fellow-passenger with him when crossing on his visit to England to raise the necessary capital—at first by a kind of lottery scheme, and afterwards in the legitimate way—I saw his determination to carry on his plans, and the clear prospect he had of the future of the undertaking."[40]

The mention of a lottery recalls their prominence in early times. The *Toronto Herald* of December 30, 1841, contains the following item:

"We invite attention to Mr. McConkey's advertisement of a Lottery for plum cakes, sweetmeats, etc., the Tickets for which we hope will be readily disposed of. The principal prize is a mighty cake of some 120 weight, the largest, we suppose, ever made in 'these diggings', and it is well deserving of a visit of inspection."[41]

Among eight other lotteries advertised in the same issue of the *Herald*[41] are the Sylvester Lottery, the Virginia Monongolia Lottery, the Virginia Leesburg Lottery and the State of New Jersey Lottery,— all of them American. The extensive advertising which they were able to pay for shows how deep-seated was the gambling spirit and also how profitable such enterprises were—in spite of the fact that the prizes ranged up to $40,000.

Militia parade day, on June 4th, birthday of George III, was never the crude holiday in Toronto that was usually characteristic of the event in other parts of the province. A dignified parade of the garrison and militia, including a *feu de joie* and possibly an inspection on the old Fair Green by the Governor, and a grand ball in the evening, provided a celebration of a type not usually found elsewhere in Upper Canada. The *feu de joie* was performed in the following manner: Each man of the company fired in succession, the fire running continuously and quickly down the front rank from right to left and up the rear rank from left to right. This is done three times, and, on the completion of each burst of fire, a portion of a national air is played by the band.

[40]Taylor, op. cit., p. 90. [41]The *Toronto Herald*, December 30, 1841.

The honour of establishing a holiday on Queen Victoria's birthday is said to belong to Toronto citizens. It was first suggested in 1847, when political and social unrest in Europe was endangering many thrones, but a celebration did not occur until May 24th of the following year. Soon afterwards many other towns followed Toronto's example, and a legal holiday was created. The events of the day have long been associated chiefly with fireworks for the amusement of the children, but in earlier times they usually included activities of a military nature. A notable celebration occurred on May 24, 1854, while the Crimean War was in progress. Escorted by Colonel Denison's troop of Provincial Cavalry, a procession composed of officials, the fire brigade, the National Societies, and other citizens passed from the City Hall along King Street to Government House, a number of elaborate triumphal arches having been erected *en route*. A public meeting at which the Mayor presided adopted an address to the Queen. Over 5,000 people were present on this occasion, and cheers for Victoria, the Emperor of the French, and the Turks were given amid the greatest enthusiasm.

Some years earlier an interesting holiday celebration occurred in Toronto. This rather unique affair took place on April 1, 1840, in honour of Queen Victoria's marriage on February 10th. A peculiar account of the event says that "one ox roasted whole . . . . was brought into the centre of the Market Square in Procession. . . . Every person, Man, Woman and Child who intended to partake of this banquet was requested to come cleanly attired, each with a 'Knife, Fork and Plate'. The City was beautifully illuminated from 8 o'clock to 11. There was also a display of Fire Works and Balloons".[41]

William Hellwell, who was present at the celebration, recalled in 1896 many details of the event; though, unless there were two such occasions, he confuses the time by referring to it as in honour of Victoria's Coronation, which occurred on June 28th, 1838. In describing the arrangements for the festival he says:

"To carry out the celebration several tables were placed in the Market square or court. The butchers' stalls were

[41] The *Mirror*, April 3, 1840.

vacated, decorated with evergreens, and converted into booths where tea, coffee, etc., were served to the citizens. The tables were loaded with all kinds of eatables—beef, mutton pudding, pies, etc., contributed by the people, the most notable gift being a huge plum pudding furnished by Charles Daly, who was then Clerk of the Council. This pudding weighed over 100 pounds, was two days in boiling, and turned out satisfactory.

"There was also an entire ox roasted, the cooking being done in the basement of Judge Sherwood's house, which stood then where the Board of Trade building now stands on the corner of Yonge and Front Streets. On Coronation Day the ox was well cooked and placed on a sledge, which was drawn by four horses, gaily decorated, and driven by a prominent citizen noted for his loyalty—Mr. James Browne, the wharfinger. On arriving at the Front Street entrance of the market the four gates were simultaneously opened, and two military bands, stationed on the balconies overlooking the square, struck up *The Roast Beef of Old England*, when the expectant crowd marched in, and the good things provided were served by Messrs. George Percival Ridout, Thomas D. Harris, and other gentlemen of the town.

"Everyone contributed his mite. The hardware stores lent knives, forks and spoons; the crockery stores, plates and dishes. Beer was supplied by Messrs. Hellwell, and it is creditable that, although everyone was free to eat and drink as he pleased, there was no abuse of the privilege. In the evening there were fireworks and a general illumination, and every window in the town and its suburbs had a light of some kind. The festivities were kept up to an early hour of the morning, a day of rejoicing without accident that will be remembered by many of our citizens who are still to the fore."[*]

"Illuminations" were long popular as a means of celebration. Originally consisting of candles in every window in town, the festival was gradually developed by the use of fireworks, which in time became the most prominent part of the celebration—and they have never lost their popu-

[*] William Hellwell's reminiscences are to be found in Robertson, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 1038.

larity. Early in January, 1842, the information reached Toronto of the birth of an heir-apparent to the throne some seven weeks before. The 4th of January was the day appointed, though the *Examiner* states that many citizens were against the idea of an illumination, preferring instead that the money be spent upon "an Asylum for the houseless poor". The illumination, however, was carried in public meeting "by the Orange bullies", and the celebration took place. The *Examiner*, while claiming that of those desiring the illumination, "nine-tenths were influenced by a desire to have a little amusement on the occasion, to get drunk and [illegible] through the city breaking windows and creating disturbances",—yet felt constrained to admit that the rejoicings were conducted "in a manner highly creditable to the city. The illuminations were most brilliant, and quite equal to those on the occasion of the Royal nuptials. . . . King Street was so crowded with people that it was almost impossible for the sleighs to pass. Everything was conducted in a perfect good humour, and we are not aware that any accident occurred."[93]

Whenever royalty or the highest officials of the country honoured communities with a visit, the occasion was always a memorable one. The progress through Canada in 1860 of the Prince of Wales, later Edward VII, was punctuated by a series of enthusiastic receptions and balls wherever he went, marred only by a few partisan demonstrations arising out of the strong religious prejudices of the times. Triumphal arches were everywhere erected, and the inhabitants lost no opportunity to show the popular prince everything of interest along his route. His visit to Toronto was the occasion of the most notable celebration the city had seen. C. C. Taylor, who was present, gives a good summary of the magnificent reception:

"The Prince disembarked at the western extremity of the Esplanade. Here a splendid pavilion was erected facing the city; the hangings were of crimson, blue and white, and the building was adorned with green leaves and festoons of flowers. The whole was surmounted by a Royal crown, on all sides protected by flags.

"The greatest charm was the entrance arch, which

[93] The *Examiner*, January 5, 1842.

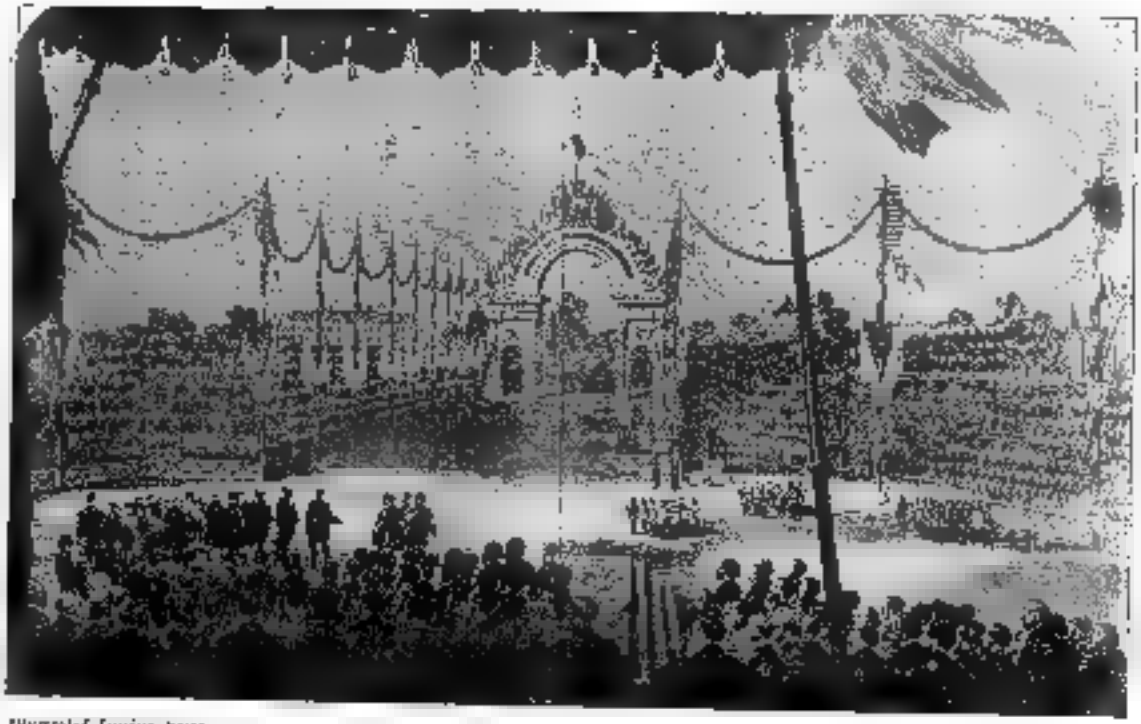
spanned the street and was really magnificent. It was of the Grecian order, but exceedingly rich in ornament, and stood sixty feet high. The pillars were massive, palmated at the top. The interior of the arch was adorned with beautiful fresco paintings, and the whole surmounted with a shield bearing the Royal Arms and a Royal crown supported on each side by a fine display of flags. A semi-circular platform was erected, with tier upon tier of seats, and was ornamented with shields and banners, and more than 10,000 people were in position on it.

"In the open space was a troop of cavalry, and in the centre was a great level platform, with the dais and throne under a gorgeous canopy. Here the Prince was received by the Mayor, Corporation, Judges, Members of Parliament, Officers of the Army and Volunteers, etc. After the reading of the address the National Anthem was sung by 5,000 children, under the leadership of Mr. John Carter, the Cathedral organist.

"It is impossible to do justice to the imposing spectacle presented when the vast assembly stood up and united in one tremendous burst of cheering which lasted several minutes, the ladies waving their handkerchiefs, and men nearly killing themselves with shouting the loyal hurrahs, while several bands played the National Anthem. The Prince was intensely affected at this glorious welcome, which was so hearty and magnificent.

"A procession of militia, firemen and national societies filed past, drooping banners and cheering vociferously. The Prince's carriage followed the procession through the principal streets, cheered by the people, while flowers were strewed before him. Night having come on by this time, the city was most brilliantly illuminated, and the whole formed a spectacle which for magnificence was never surpassed in Canada. The Prince and suite were entertained during their stay at Government House.

"On Sunday the party attended divine service in St. James' Cathedral, and were met at the door by Bishop Strachan, Rector Grasett, and other clergymen. The sermon was preached by the Bishop from the text, 'Give the King Thy judgment, O God, and Thy righteousness unto the King's son'. The demeanour of the Prince during the



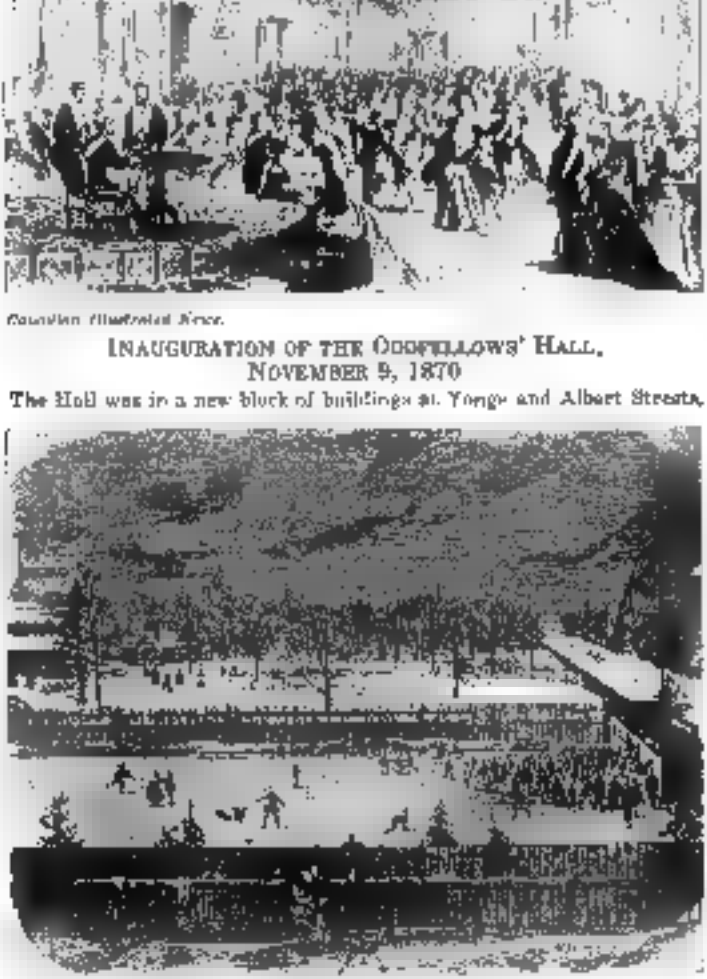
Illustrated London News.

RECEPTION OF H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES BY THE INHABITANTS OF TORONTO, C.W., 1860

Canadian Illustrated News.

INAUGURATION OF THE ODDFELLOWS' HALL, NOVEMBER 9, 1870

The Hall was in a new block of buildings at Yonge and Albert Streets.



Canadian Illustrated News, April 4, 1863.

THE VICTORIA SKATING RINK, MARCH 7, 1863

The location was the south-west corner of Gerrard and Sherbourne Streets. The Horticultural (Allan) Gardens, and forest land beyond, may be seen to the northward. Prizes were awarded on this occasion.

service was what might have been expected. He joined heartily in the responses, and his entire manner might be copied by some church-going young men with decided advantage.

"The Orangemen had erected a splendid arch at the intersection of Church and King Streets, with a large painting of King William III in a conspicuous position. Instead, however, of the party driving under the arch along King Street, the carriage went down Church to Wellington, and [illegible] to the Government House. It transpired that this was done by the positive order of the Duke of Newcastle.

"During the week the Prince visited all the principal objects of interest, and planted a tree in the Horticultural Gardens, at the same time opening the rustic arbour then recently erected. He also planted an English silver oak [illegible] the Queen's Park, which stands to the east [illegible] the guns, and laid the foundation stone of the statue to the Queen, surrounded by civic, provincial and other dignitaries; and in addition to all he turned the first sod of the Toronto, Grey and Bruce Railway.

"He attended a public ball given in his honour in the Crystal Palace, wearing the uniform of a colonel of the British Army, unattached, and led off the dance by taking the hand of the accomplished wife of Mayor Wilson, one of the present Justices of Ontario. The ball was a brilliant scene, and wound up the entertainments given in honour of the Prince in Toronto."[24]

One incident which was not on the official program showed the disappointment of Orangemen because their demonstrations were in vain:

"The only untoward event which occurred during the Prince's stay was a foolish escapade by a few young hotheads who assembled on Colborne Street and burnt in effigy the Duke of Newcastle and Sir Edmund Head. The objects of the demonstration having set their faces against the exuberant Orange decorations at Kingston and Belle-

[24]Taylor, op. cit., pp. 136-9. An excellent account of the Prince's visit to Toronto appeared in the London *Times* of September 26 and 27, 1860, and much of it is quoted in Middleton, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 274-8. The Horticultural (Allan) Gardens, in which the Prince planted a tree, were developed as a result of the munificence of the Hon. G. W. Allan, who donated the land to the city in 1860.

ville, the effigy-burners resorted [redacted] this method of expressing their dissatisfaction."[15]

Eighteen years earlier the Governor-General, Sir Charles Bagot, received a welcome in Toronto that was redolent of the pageantry of other times, and which for splendour and magnificence has never been excelled. The procession in his honour was organised as follows:

Two Police Constables—Mounted
(With their Staves)
Band
Marshall of the day—Mounted
Fire Companies
(In order of precedence)
St. Andrew's Society
(With Banners)
St. Patrick's Society
(With Banners)
[redacted]. George's Society
(With Banners)
The Mechanics' Institute
Two Police Constables—Mounted
(With their Staves)
The Corporation
(In Carriages)
The Bishop—The Mayor
The Governor
The Chief Justice
Judges and College Council
The Sheriff—The Warden
Members of the Learned Professions
(In Carriages or Mounted)
Other Inhabitants generally
The High Bailiff—Mounted
(With his Baton)

"As soon as the Government Steamer heaves [redacted] sight the town Bells will be rung to give notice of the approach of His Excellency, and the procession will then be immediately formed in front of the City Hall."[16]

On the second day of his visit a levee was held, and

[15] *History of Toronto and the County of York*, 1885, Vol. I, p. 270.
[16] The *Examiner*, April 20, 1842.

various associations and bodies, including Indians and a group of Toronto's negro citizens, presented addresses and were welcomed by His Excellency. In the evening a Grand Ball was held in Government House. St. George's Day, the third of the Governor's visit, was particularly colourful owing to the ceremony of the laying of the corner-stone of King's College. An elaborate procession was formed on "the pretty lawn of Upper Canada College". The Principal, Dr. McCaul, addressed His Excellency "in a well-written Latin speech", and fortunately Sir Charles was able to reply "in a happy and eloquent manner" in the same language. Marshall Gurnett then "uncoiled a dense and never-ending column" of Dragoons, pupils of the Grammar School and Upper Canada College with their teachers and attendants, the Medical Profession, Barristers, Clergy (in full Canonicals), the College Masters in their Academic garb, the Council and Visitors ("mostly in legal costume with Bedels, Verger, and the Esquire Bedel"); after all of whom came the Governor-General, supported on either hand by the Lord Bishop and the Chief Justice, "both in full dress, the latter clothed in Judicial ermine". Lest you should think this was the end, however, it must be recorded that "a countless host, Staff, Officers Military and Naval, Members of Parliament, Mayor and Corporation, Judge, Sheriff, Warden, Societies of St. George, St. Patrick and St. Andrew, Masonic Lodges, Fire and Hook-and-Ladder companies, and another detachment of Dragoons" brought up the rear as the *cortège* passed up Graves (Simcoe) and Lot (Queen) Streets to the "long and beautiful Avenue of the University", which at that time merited the following description:

"A fine hawthorn hedge, a great rarity in this Province, skirts the bounds. Between it and the spacious gravel walk is a deep shrubbery on both sides, planted with the choicest trees—the gentle waving acacia, the graceful horse-chestnut, the flowering catalpa, the variegated locust, the dark green balsam, and the elegant cypress."

Innumerable banners, the martial music of regimental bands, the picturesque variety of costume, the dazzling brilliancy of officers and high officials contrasted with the grave and classic robes of the professors, churchmen and lawyers—all combined to form over a mile of pageantry

perhaps unequalled before or since that day. And at the grounds to which the procession led were gathered all the rank, beauty and fashion of Toronto, there to see His Excellency lay the corner-stone of King's College. Cheers from 16,000 throats preceded the return of the great parade to the Upper Canada College grounds, and the masters of that institution later entertained the Governor-General and a select party "at a very elegant collation set out in the College Hall".[67]

In the same year Charles Dickens paid a short visit to Toronto, and an equally brief account of his stay in the city is recorded in the press:

"Mr. and Mrs. Dickens left this city on Friday in the steamer *City of Toronto*, Captain Dick, for Kingston. The very short stay made by 'Boz' prevented any public demonstration of respect, but all the leading persons in the city left their cards at his hotel, the Honourable the Chief Justice entertained him at dinner, and a large party was invited in the evening to meet the distinguished strangers."[68]

Meanwhile, at the middle of the century, the chief places of public resort for no small section of the population appear to have been the 152 taverns and 206 beer shops which dotted the city in 1850—the inhabitants then numbering about 30,000. Many men "loaded up" every Saturday night (if not oftener), and spent the week-end drunk. One of the more pretentious establishments—the Apollo Saloon and Concert Room on King Street—staged nightly a cheap burlesque show comprising two men who impersonated a negro and an Irishman; and a contemporary publication assures its readers that "the place is well worthy of a visit". For a modest charge—a York shilling (12½c.)—patrons were entitled to "a smoke or a drink" as well as the performance.[69] Another restaurant-saloon, the Terrapin, located near the site of the present King Edward Hotel, is advertised as "the largest and most magnificent restaurant west of New York". Carlisle and McConkey were the pro-

[67] *Ibid.*, April 27, 1842. The interesting description of University Avenue is from Thomas Ralph: *A Brief Account . . . . of the West Indies and the United States . . . . ; together with a Statistical Account of Upper Canada*, 1836 (pp. 178-9.

[68] *Examiner*, May 11, 1842.

[69] *Descriptive Catalogue of the Provincial Exhibition, 1855*, p. 79.

prietors, and it is announced that "green turtle soup and steaks" may be had daily.[11] Apart from these two establishments the saloons of the city in the eighteen-fifties were in general little more than miserable dens of dissipation, vulgarity and fighting.

In other respects, however, Toronto was beginning to assume characteristics of city life more attractive and conducive of better citizenship. In April, 1851, the St. Lawrence Hall was opened, and for twenty years provided, particularly for the middle and upper classes, a place of public assembly. In addition to balls, soirées, festivals and dinners connected with lodges, regiments, the National Societies and similar organisations, there were frequent public lectures, panoramas, concerts and musicales, in which appeared the best local and foreign talent; while itinerant companies occasionally provided in this hall the less exclusive amusements generally associated with minstrels, magicians, and similar entertainers.

An event of special interest occurred in St. Lawrence Hall prior to its completion. On August 8, 1850, some two hundred prominent men and women of Buffalo visited Toronto on the invitation of the City Council. The *Chief Justice Robinson*, one of the palatial steamers of the day, was chartered for the occasion and met the guests at Lewiston. In spite of rain the city was elaborately decorated, and a salute of cannon and a procession of welcome in the manner characteristic of the times made the Buffalonians feel at home. A band, the national societies of St. George, St. Andrew and St. Patrick, and the various fire companies in their regalia, escorted the visitors to the North American Hotel where dinner was served; and in the evening a Grand Ball was held in the partially completed St. Lawrence Hall. Evergreens, flowers and flags decorated the ballroom, which was "brilliantly lighted with gas laid for the occasion"; while a canvas passage led 500 feet to the old City Hall, where a midnight supper was served. The Governor-General and Lady Elgin, the Speakers of both Houses of the Legislature, and the Mayors of the two cities were among the prominent guests. The toasts were many, including the Queen, the President of the United States,

[11] Alfred Sylvester: *Guide to Toronto*, 1853, p. 102.

General Washington and the Duke of Wellington, who was still living at that time. Mr. Justice Sill of the Supreme Court of New York was one of the speakers, but perhaps he was difficult to hear, for we learn that the remarks of Mayor Gurnett passed unheard owing to "the popping of champagne corks and the excitement created by so large an assembly busily engaged in showing their appreciation of the good things of this life".[10] The accommodation being insufficient, many partook of the banquet while standing, and afterwards dancing was resumed with spirit.

The great event had a somewhat bitter aftermath, however. A military review on the following morning was followed by a garden party given by Lord Elgin at his residence, Elmsley House, near the corner of College and Yonge Streets, at which no members of the City Council were present because they were not invited. At the next meeting of that body a strong protest was embodied in a lengthy resolution of which the sum and substance was that such an action on the part of the Governor-General could not be considered as anything but "a wanton and intended insult or a gross neglect towards them as a body and towards those whom they represent". Though some portions of the press were inclined to treat the matter as a good joke on "their worships", yet it was a most unpleasant occurrence in an otherwise well-planned and nobly executed gesture of goodwill towards the citizens of Buffalo. But the Governor's *fête* was none the less enjoyable to those present, and we learn[11] that "as the night advanced, gas illuminations in elegant devices and covering two sides of the villa were lit up and threw a brilliant light over the grounds. Fire-

[10] See Middleton, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 216–6, and the *Globe*, August 10, 1850.

[11] This quotation is from the *Globe* of August 10, 1850, which contains a description running to three columns of fine print. Lord Elgin's attitude no doubt resulted from the somewhat cool reception which he had been accorded by the City Council of Toronto on October 3, 1849, when he had just recently signed the Rebellion Losses Bill. Perhaps his political urgency would have been more appreciated in the United States, for one of the fair ladies of Buffalo was sufficiently attracted by him to suggest in somewhat gushing language that, if he would only enter American politics and take the stump for the Presidency, she was confident he would sweep every state of the Union! For further interesting material concerning these events see Samuel Thompson: *Reminiscences of a Canadian Pioneer*, 1884, pp. 263–73 and 244–3.

works followed soon after, and still later one of the bands was withdrawn from the lawn and placed at the services of the dancers. . . . Few persons present will fail to remember with pleasure for many years to come Lord Elgin's Fête to the Citizens of Buffalo."

Many of the more celebrated events which took place in the St. Lawrence Hall are described in the previous chapter, but some account will be given here of entertainments of a distinctly lighter nature.[11] Among the travelling organisations which visited the Hall in the fifties and sixties was that featuring "General" Tom Thumb. On one occasion the advertisement stated that he was accompanied by "his beautiful little wife, the fascinating Queen of Beauty, and Commodore Nutt, the $30,000 Nutt, (so called because he received that amount from P. T. Barnum for three years' service), and Effie Minnie Warren, the smallest lady of her age ever seen—all four weighing but 100 pounds". As an extra attraction it is announced that Tom Thumb's wife "will wear the identical wedding costume as worn at Grace Church on February 10, 1863, when $60 was offered for a ticket to the wedding; here the same thing can be seen for a trifle". Before the show commenced there was—as has long been customary with circuses and minstrel shows—a street parade.

Previous to the days of motion pictures there were numerous attempts to give graphical representations of popular subjects, usually with an accompanying lecture, or with music on the tambourine or some sort of "musical machine". There were figures in wax as well as illustrations of other kinds. Large numbers of pictures illustrative of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* comprised one entertainment, while others consisted of panoramas of Biblical themes, the Holy Land, and kindred subjects.

Another performance, "sure to inculcate a high moral tendency and to warn every young man, and older one, too, who has commenced to tamper with the intoxicating glass", was Verey's Zographicon, consisting of a lecture accompanied by 150 views from *The Pilgrim's Progress* and Arthur's *Ten Nights in a Bar Room*. The allegorical repre-

[11] The attractions outlined in the next few paragraphs were advertised on various occasions in the eighteen-sixties.

sentations and striking scenes were given "full and very often touching and vivid explanations", and were of a character "calculated to give an elevated tone to the morals of the community".

It was early considered—and it still holds true—that concerts, lectures and shows were more attractive to patrons if they were advertised as from London or New York. Friend's *Panorama of the British Isles* was heralded as "direct from St. James' Hall, London, England", and the work is described as "a moving panorama painted by Mr. Friend himself on over 50,000 feet of canvas". The exhibitor is referred to as "the celebrated artist, vocalist, musician and entertainer", who "will sing melodies, accompanying himself on different instruments, including a Grand Euphonium Piano". Performers and lecturers of this kind may be assumed to have been neither better nor worse than those of today; the best of them must have contributed greatly to the education and enjoyment of those who attended.

It has always been characteristic of showmanship to advertise productions in a most bombastic and exaggerated manner. To this was added in the pioneer period, and later, an evident intention of attracting people to performances by announcing them in huge, almost unpronounceable words; possibly this was a recommendation in a day when education was not so generally diffused. We find, for example, the Papyrotamia, or gallery of paper cuttings, which was shown in Meighan's Ball Room, York, in 1827; and in the sixties a magician advertised his show as "the Grand Thaumaturgic Psychomanteum", and himself as "the celebrated artist and arch-magician, Professor Anderson, known throughout the civilised Globe as the Wizard of the North, and an Illusionist, Physicist, Thaumatist and Traveller", whose "Soirés de Prestidigitation constitute the most marvellous entertainment in which, at any time, the attempt has been made to blend the highest science with the most genial amusement".

The same high-sounding names were still further developed in the advertisements of circuses and menageries of the sixties. J. B. Lent's show was travelling through Canada West in 1862 under the name "Hippozoonamadon",

which was described as "the largest exhibition in the world", a combination of three circuses, a hippopotamus and elephant exhibition, and an aquarium. A word large enough to frighten the most learned savant is used to describe a part of the Hippozoonamadon—the Athleokympimantheum—in which Mlle. Artane Felecia from Paris formed the main attraction, for she is described as "the most beautiful, graceful, daring and dashing equestrienne in the world". Numerous other features, including the Grand Opera Band, were offered as a part of the Hippozoonamadon—and all for a mere twenty-five cent piece!

In the following year J. B. Lent came around again, probably with the same show; but he had been able to invent for it a new name—Equescurriculum. In addition to the "unparalleled combination of three circuses" there was "a troop of acting bears, the educated sacred Indian bull, leaping buffaloes and performing dogs and monkeys". The whole formed "a magnificent phalanx of exhibitions—perfection in every detail"; and, as before,—all for a quarter of a dollar.

Several organizations of minstrels were playing in Canada West in the early sixties, among them being Christy's and Sharpley's; a similar performance was given by Kelly's Theatrical Troupe. Some minstrel shows had a repertoire of "stock" plays, particularly of the more emotional and humorous types, and many of them had brass bands. With its light program of vaudeville and burlesque, broad comedy and sentimental melodrama, the minstrel show is a type of entertainment which has retained its popularity with the average amusement-seeker, for it does not require the same capabilities and attention that are necessary for the proper appreciation of the higher operatic and dramatic performances.

There were, however, many entertainments of a higher type in the Toronto of seventy-five years ago. Instrumental and vocal concerts by both local and foreign talent, and including the most famous operatic stars of the day, were not infrequent, while many citizens took an active part in the Philharmonic Society, the Toronto Vocal Music Society, the Toronto Musical Union, and the Metropolitan Choral Society, which were at one time or another prominent in the

musical life of the city.[64] Until the mid-sixties most concerts were held in St. Lawrence Hall, but immediately thereafter operas and comic operas, as well as comedies and farces, were being produced in large numbers at the Royal Lyceum Theatre. *Robert Macaire*, *Il Trovatore*, *Aladdin* and *The Doctor of Alcantara* were among the operatic performances, while the farces included *Dombey & Son*, *A Thousand Milliners Wanted*, *The Débutante*, *Slasher and Crasher*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *The Streets of New York* and *Nobody's Daughter*. At this time Toronto audiences were being educated in the proper theatrical etiquette *à la* New York, for we find on the playbills that "the audience is respectfully requested not to call the artists before the curtain, excepting on their benefit nights, being a custom long discontinued in all first-class theatres".[65]

The Royal Theatre was erected on the site of the Lyceum in 1874, and about a week later the Grand Opera House was opened on Adelaide Street just west of Yonge—now a parking space. The inauguration of this playhouse on September 28, 1874, was under the distinguished patronage of Lord and Lady Dufferin, and the opening play was Sheridan's *The School for Scandal*, particularly appropriate since the Governor-General was a descendant of the playwright. Some memories of these theatres, and of the days when Sheppard Street, now buried amid office buildings, was a quiet residential street of roughcast cottages where many an actor and actress lived, are recalled by a 77-year old Canadian actor:

"About 1872 the Holman Opera Company was in full swing at the old Royal Lyceum Theatre. I myself joined the Holman Company about 1879 to appear in *H.M.S. Pinafore*, and I remained with them for some time at the New Royal Opera House on King Street. Miss Amelia Shaw, a pretty young blonde, lived in her father's cottage on the east side of Sheppard Street, next to Robert Bond's

[64] See Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 272-87, for a comprehensive account of Toronto's musical life. See also Chapter XXIII of the present work.

[65] For considerable material on early Toronto theatres the author is indebted to John Ross Robertson's invaluable *Landmarks of Toronto*, Vol. I, pp. 472 *et seq.*

livery stable near the corner of Richmond Street. Bond ran the first sight-seeing turnout with four horses, or 'rubber-necks' as they were called. Anyway it was a 'swell turnout'.

"Next, towards Adelaide Street, was a new red brick house built and lived in by A. E. Irving, wholesale news-dealer and publisher of 'Irving's Sheet Music', a cheap edition of all the popular songs of the day. Next to his place, in one of two cottages in the rear of the lot, lived George Burton, a versatile actor and very clever.

"Nearly all the married actors of the Holman Company lived on Sheppard Street. My mother and her sister lived in the next two cottages on the front of the lot now occupied by the Bell Telephone building. On the corner of Adelaide, facing Sheppard Street, there was a row of two-storey white-brick houses. In the corner one Mrs. White kept a boarding house where some of the actors lived. Her son was assistant carpenter at the new Royal Opera House about 1879.

"On the west corner of Adelaide and Sheppard there was a big red-brick house that a doctor lived in. I just cannot remember his name now. Next, going north on the west side of Sheppard Street, there were two two-storey rough-cast houses. In the first a stage carpenter of the old Royal Lyceum lived. He had served in the American war and when he came back he erected a flagpole in the back-yard with the flags of all nations, I think, strung down the sidelines or stays. It could be seen from the lane at the side of the house. Next there was a large cottage in the rear of the lot, and then a two-storey roughcast house nearly opposite the Shaw house, where Allen Halford and his family lived. Allen Halford was the matinee idol of the Holman time."[20]

As the years passed, still better theatres were erected in Toronto. The first Grand Opera House was destroyed by fire on November 29, 1879, but in little more than two months' time the new Grand Opera was ready for the opening performance. Replacing old St. Lawrence Hall as the fashionable centre of musical and operatic entertainment,

[20] Reminiscences of R. L. Milligan, Harriston, Ontario, in a letter appearing in the Toronto *Mail and Empire*, February 6, 1934.

the two Grand Opera Houses long attracted the *élite* of the stage. The new theatre had a seating capacity of 1,750, and in the long list of operatic and dramatic stars who appeared there in the eighties were Adelaide Neilson, Henry Irving, Ellen Terry, Adelina Patti, Albani, E. H. Sothern, Fanny Davenport, Modjeska, Rose Coghlan, Lillian Russell, Tom Keene, Clara Morris and Sara Bernhardt, several of whom retired from the stage only in recent years. The earlier stock companies of the drama had long since given way to the travelling company, usually organised in New York, and Toronto audiences saw the best performances of the times; and until recent years dramas and girl-and-music shows provided Toronto's typical theatrical entertainment. But the "movies", the "talkies" and the radio have combined with depressed business conditions to cripple the legitimate stage, and its society devotees—the "first-nighters"—have consequently become almost a thing of the past.

Musical education of a valuable type became available to many men as a result of the organisation of brass bands, so frequently in demand for processions, holidays and similar celebrations. There was a "York Band" at least as early as 1824, and others were later formed in imitation of those usually provided by the garrison units. Writing in 1884 C. C. Taylor outlines the development of bands after the last regular regiment left the city in 1867:

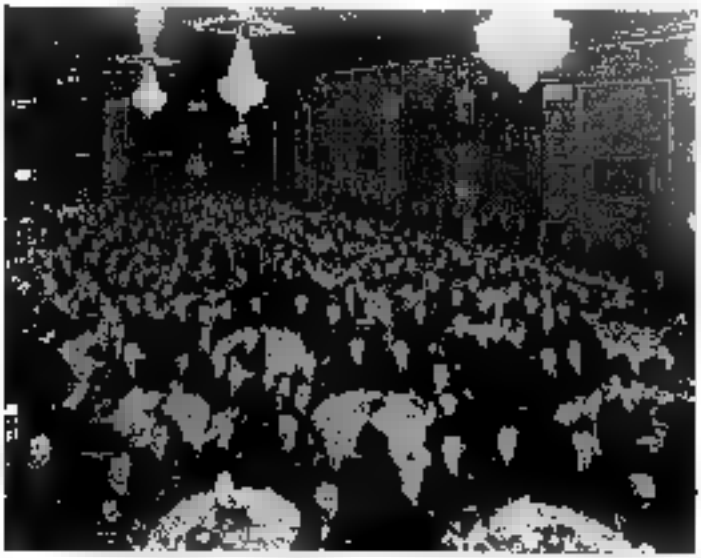
"The removal of the regular troops from Toronto by the English Government caused the want of a military band for several years, the last being that of the 13th Hussars, under command of Colonel Jennings. That want has been well supplied of late years by the splendid bands of the volunteers: the Queen's Own, Mr. Bayley bandmaster, and Royal Grenadiers, with Mr. Toulmin, also the Governor-General's Body Guards, and the Garrison Battery of Artillery. Besides the fine band of C Company, Infantry School, which completes the list of military bands, there are the bands of Heintzman & Co., the Massey Manufacturing Co., and the Christian Brothers, all of which contribute to the pleasure of the citizens, and show a wonderful development of musical talent in our midst."[27]

[27]Taylor, op. cit., pp. 286-7.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

VETERANS OF 1812
ON SHERIFF JARVIS' LAWN, "ROSEDALE", OCTOBER 23, 1861

The ten men in this notable group are, from left to right, Colonel George Duggan, Rev. George Ryerson, William Ross, Jacob Snyder, Rev. James Richardson, Joseph Dennis, William J. Woodal, James Ross, Colonel Bridgeford, George Ridout.



Reproduced by Courtesy of the King Edward Hotel.

OFFICIAL CENTENNIAL LUNCHEON, MARCH 6, 1934

This historic gathering took place in the Crystal Ballroom of the King Edward Hotel.

Reproduced by courtesy of Alfred Dawson, Esq.

His Majesty's Airship R-100 Flying Over Toronto, August 11, 1930

A building as lofty and beautiful as the Canadian Bank of Commerce—apart altogether from the airship soaring above it—would have been beyond the imagination of the citizens of early Toronto.

In the realm of "popular" music we find that the latest pieces which could be purchased at A. & M. Nordheimer's in 1855 included a number reflecting the times of the Crimean War, and others more suitable to the dance. The following list contains the "biggest hits" of that day: *The Queen's Letter; Mother, is the Battle Over?; Sebastopol is Ours; Sebastopol is Won; The Battle of Alma; Barnum's Baby Show Polka; Cupid's Polka;* and *Victoria Polka-Mazurka.* The nearest approach in those discreet days to *Gather Lip Rouge While You May* or *Pettin' in the Park* appears to have been *The Rat-catcher's Daughter.* Among dances recently introduced were the highly-admired "Esmeralda Gallopade and Zingarella Mazurka, and Mr. Robertson, 64 King West, was a prominent teacher of the latest steps.

Lodges and fraternal societies have always provided facilities for social intercourse—which indeed, is their chief attraction for the majority of members. The Masons, Orangemen, and a number of other associations date their origin upwards of a century ago, while other organizations have been of a more ephemeral nature. Of special significance were the National Societies of St. Patrick, St. George and St. Andrew, which were long prominent in social life in the towns and persist in some instances to the present, though greatly changed in spirit and importance from the organizations of even half a century ago.

Though the National Societies in Toronto date from 1835-36, yet in earlier times prominent citizens frequently met at dinner on St. George's, St. Patrick's or St. Andrew's Day. In 1822, for example, the "Sons of St. Andrew residing in York celebrated the anniversary of the Saint by giving a dinner to the principal gentlemen of the place on the 30th ult. The company, consisting of nearly forty persons, sat down to an elegant dinner at Forest's Hotel".[*]

In 1835-36, however, the three societies were more firmly established, and on April 23, 1934, the Toronto St. George's Society held its 101st annual banquet. The numerous meetings, processions and balls held by these organizations during the first half century of their history were illustrative of a close feeling of fellowship, characteristic

[*] *Upper Canada Gazette*, December 12, 1822. Similarly a St. George's Dinner was held in 1824, but the Society dates from 1835-6.

of the times when many had but recently come from the Old Land. The round of toasts and songs—including *The Fine Old English Gentleman, When I a-Courting Went* and *Old King Cole*—was, perhaps, more attractive in a day of social drinking. Similarly the St. Andrew's Society of old enjoyed *The Scottish Thistle, Who wad na fecht for Charlie, The Miller of Fife, Scotland Yet* and *The Laird o' Cockpen* until the wee sma' hours o' morn; and their brethren of St. Patrick were regaled by the songs and stories of Auld Ireland.

In 1841 many members of the St. Patrick's Society broke away because it was "managed on party principles". The seceders, some 200 in number, formed the St. Patrick's Benevolent Society. A press account describes the celebration of "the day" in 1842, and in many respects it may be taken as typical of the festivals of the National Societies in Toronto:

"The anniversary of Ireland's Patron Saint was duly celebrated by the two National Societies. We have copied from the *Mirror* an account of the proceedings of the St. Patrick's Benevolent Society, whose muster was larger than any ever made in this City on a similar occasion. The St. Patrick's Society was as usual accompanied to the Cathedral by the Sister Societies of St. George and St. Andrew, where an excellent sermon was delivered by the Chaplain, Dr. McCaul, a gentleman who stands deservedly high in public estimation. In the evening the members of the Society dined together at the Ontario House, Ald. Dixon, President of the Society, in the chair, Ald. Dr. King acting as Vice-President. The Presidents and Vice-Presidents of the St. George's and St. Andrew's Society were present as guests, and several of the officers of the Garrison.

"The dinner went off well. No disturbances took place during the day. Owing to the inflammatory articles published by a portion of the press the Orangemen showed some intention of making a party display in the forenoon, and we were shocked to hear that Allan, the misguided individual from whose house the murderous fire proceeded on the day of Messrs. Dunn and Buchanan's chairing, had the temerity to display an Orange flag. This was immediately removed by order of His Worship the Mayor, who deserves

great credit for his unceasing exertions throughout the day to preserve peace and harmony.

"It is gratifying to be able to state that everything passed off in the most perfect good feeling, and we venture to hope that in future the only rivalry between the two Societies will be in acts of benevolence to their countrymen."[10]

It seems that the Society applied to Mayor Sherwood for permission to use the City Hall on St. Patrick's Day, but the request was refused on the grounds that their activities did not constitute "a general interest". The *Examiner* suggested that if this was a bar to admission all applications would be refused, for "it is notorious that the Hall has been granted to various Companies of Actors whose performances were disapproved of by a portion of the citizens as injurious to public morals. For a long time the congregation of Saint James' Church attended Divine Service in the Hall, the Methodists have had tea parties there—in fact, as the address states, all sorts of uses have been made of the building".[11]

The St. Andrew's Day celebration in the same year consisted chiefly of a dinner. Eleven main toasts, with accompanying speeches and band music, were followed by fourteen "Voluntary Toasts and Sentiments", which varied from the health of diverse personages to the success of the Press, the City, the Bench and Bar, and the Curling Club.[12]

But the elaborate dinners and processions of other days are no more, and the associations have in reality become merely a "high festival of once a year", a change due largely to the development of national feeling in Canada, and a corresponding diminution in the importance attached to original nationality after the passing of the earlier generations who had come directly from the Old Land. Even in 1858 the societies were in some quarters considered to have outlived their usefulness, a writer observing that, while they were still frequently of great assistance to newly-arrived immigrants, yet "our National Societies, formed for a purely benevolent purpose, may be considered to have

[10] The *Examiner*, March 29, 1842.
[11] *Ibid.*, March 16, 1842.
[12] See *ibid.*, December 7, 1842.

seen their day, and violence would not be done to the most sensitive feeling were they allowed quietly to fall into desuetude. . . . We are all, or ought to be, Canadians, and whether of English, Irish or Scotch descent, it signifies very little to society unless we make ourselves good citizens".[25] Until almost the end of the century, however, they retained much of their original significance.

Two other organisations long important in Toronto's social life came to an end in the seventies or eighties—the volunteer Fire Brigade and the Mechanics' Institute. At first all citizens were expected to protect property endangered by fire, but in 1826 York had its first organised fire company. For thirty-five years the members, gradually increasing in numbers, worked their hand fire-engines, held at least monthly meetings, and provided social intercourse by means of processions, balls, competitions and other entertainments. The introduction of the steam fire-engine in 1862 was the beginning of the end of volunteer fire companies, though a diminished membership remained for some years longer.

The Mechanics' Institute was instituted in York in 1831, and was long important in providing educational facilities for "the middle classes, working men and intelligent mechanics", as a contemporary publication[26] denominated them. In addition to a library and courses of lectures, the Toronto Institute held occasional exhibitions of fine and decorative arts, designing, fancy work and other crafts. The Free Libraries Act of 1882 did much to replace the activities of the Institutes by public libraries, and the Toronto association came to an end in the following year.

As the century drew to a close the social life of Toronto was in its essence not greatly different from that of the present, though developments in transportation, and equally great changes in attitude towards social status and the conventions, have considerably altered outward appearances. The Island had become a noted centre of aquatic sports, carrying along the tradition of yacht clubs of the fifties and before; while the numerous debating, oratorical and literary societies which followed the one organised by

[25] [G. P. Ure]: *The Handbook of Toronto*. 1858, pp. 181-2.
[26] *Cobourg Sentinel*, January 17, 1863.

Dr. Strachan in 1831 appealed to many of the more highly educated. In 1879 a writer outlined the social clubs of Toronto in terms which, with some amplification, might apply today:

"Toronto literary and journalistic life has not as yet developed its club; though the growing professional status, and the increasing emoluments of writers for the press, will no doubt see it rise at an early date to that dignity. Special interests of a social, professional, or commercial character combine, however, to support one or two city clubs. The Royal Canadian Yacht Club, we have already mentioned, has its habitat on the Island. The National Club, situated on Bay Street, has a large membership drawn from the professions, and from the captains of industry and commerce. The Toronto Club, on York Street, draws its membership from much the same source, with a sprinkling of the more leisured class, and some few sticklers for caste. The United Empire Club, which, as the headquarters of Liberal-Conservatism in the city, styled itself the Canadian Carleton, has recently disappeared. Its building, centrally situated on King Street West, might be secured for a much-needed Merchant's Exchange, or, better still, a Free Public Library. The various societies, national and benevolent, have their respective lodge-rooms and halls in almost every section of the city. There are also a number of rowing and swimming clubs, curling and skating-rink organisations, with several gymnasia, and that latest craze of athleticism, a Bicycle Association."[14]

The following description of the winter sports of the period of the semi-centennial has also a modern ring:

"The winter enjoyments consist of skating, curling, tobogganing, and ice-boating, and for all of these the facilities are unlimited. The bay in front of the city, with its thousands of skaters, with numerous rinks in all parts of the city, which, under cover of splendid glass roofs, with comfortably heated dressing-rooms, and every convenience, might well excite the envy of skaters who, for want of

[14] G. M. Grant (Ed.): *Picturesque Canada*. 1879. Vol. I, p. 423. The clubs of Toronto in the eighteen-eighties, as well as "the Secret and Other Societies", receive individual mention and extensive comment in C. P. Mulvany: *Toronto, Past and Present*. 1884. pp. 110-141.

better, hasten to the 'Serpentine' in London when ice has formed, and continue to use it long after it has lost its native purity, and when it would not tempt any small boy in Toronto to skim on its dark surface. Canada is indeed beautiful in her winter aspect.

"One cannot imagine how animated and brilliant is Toronto when she puts on her snowshoes, and gets herself up on runners and fills all the air with the chimes of the sleigh-bells. There is an endless variety in design, and pattern, and colour of sleigh, and robe, and bell, and plume, and the streets look like Christmas as long as the snow lasts. Even the street cars feel the infection, and mount themselves on bobs (short runners), and jingle the loudest bells, and take the best half of the street.

"Robert J. Burdette, after a visit, asks: 'Who are these in blanket suits? It is pleasant to tarry among people whose girls wade through the snow. Our fair Canadian cousins have no dread of discomfort. The snow has no terrors for them. They dress prettily; and if there is a prettier figure on the North American Continent than a daughter of Canada apparelled for the ice or the toboggan-slide, herself a part of the snow-drifted landscape, a picture of health and comfort that fairly softens the piercing wind into a sense of warmth, I have not seen it. She dresses in perfect harmony with the winter landscape. She has a complexion clear as the ice of Ontario, and her warm blood shines through it rich as the flushes of the Aurora, graceful and free in every movement'."[15]

In modern times, however, the population of Toronto has so greatly increased that social life has become infinitely more complex. Amateur and professional sports have developed through commercialisation, and many people who have never played a game delight to gather in stadium and arena to observe others. The rising standard of living has enabled the spending of much more money by the average person, and the great development of public entertainment since the invention of the motion picture, together with the new accessibility resulting from the use of motor-cars,

[15] Taylor, op. cit., pp. 213-4. The best description of the semi-centennial celebration of 1884 is to be found in Henry Scadding and J. C. Dent: *Toronto, Past and Present: Historical and Descriptive*, 1884, pp. 302-320.

makes it possible for people to congregate quickly and enjoy themselves in a manner which would have been beyond the comprehension of our pioneer citizens—though the modern development of radio has proven equally effective in eliminating the necessity of leaving home in search of amusement. For now one may experience some of the "thrills" of the featured football or hockey classic, or, without moving from his own fireside, he may listen to "Amos 'n' Andy", the Romanellis or Eddie Duchin, Toronto's Mary Pickford, Toscanini or Al Jolson—who was once, by the way, a bell-boy in the old Iroquois Hotel, York Street. Apart altogether from the entertainment value of the radio and the motion picture they have become strong forces for educational and cultural advancement; and they have aided in decreasing the rigidity of class distinctions and in creating that democratic feeling which, while by no means universal, characterises modern social life to a degree which would have astonished—even alarmed—the chief citizens of Toronto of old.

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Publications of the Canadian National Exhibition.
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The *Toronto Municipal Handbook*.
Papers and Records of the Ontario Historical Society, the York Pioneer and Historical Society, and the Women's Canadian Historical Society of Toronto.
Miscellaneous clippings, scrap-books, etc., in the Toronto Public Library, the Toronto Transportation Commission Library, and the various newspaper libraries have also been consulted.

Newspapers

In most cases the files of Canadian newspapers are only partial, and in many instances but few copies—if any at all—have come down to us. A survey of existing files of the following newspapers, all of which are quoted in the work, has provided much invaluable material. Unless otherwise noted they were published in Toronto.

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Empire.
Evening News.

Evening Telegram.
Examiner.
Financial Post.
Globe.
Gore Mercury.
Mail.
Mail and Empire.
Mirror.
New Outlook.
Patriot.
Patriot and Farmers' Monitor.
Times. (London, England.)
Toronto Albion.
Toronto Commercial Herald.
Toronto Daily Star.
Toronto Herald.
Toronto World.
Upper Canada Gazette, or American Oracle. (First published at Niagara, later at York. For a time known as the *York Gazette*, and by other names).
Upper Canada Herald. (Kingston.)
U. E. Loyalist.
Weekly Leader.

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The extensive bibliography which formed the basis of *Early Life in Upper Canada* is similarly, to a very considerable extent, the foundation of the present work. The following list, however, is composed of works which, with but very few exceptions, have directly contributed by quotation or citation to the text of this volume:

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KEY TO THE INDEX

An exhaustive index has been compiled, but attention to the principles upon which it is based will enable the most effective use:

1. Except where confusion might occur, persons are listed only under their surnames and Christian names. Those whose names occur only as proprietors of taverns, stores, factories, entertainments, etc., are so indexed, and are not repeated as individuals unless their Christian names or other information concerning them makes such additional listing of value.

2. All buildings of importance are indexed every time they occur, so that anyone interested in any particular aspect of local history may follow the references throughout the book.

3. To eliminate continual repetition and avoid confusion the following subjects are indexed in one place only and appear under these general heads:

Cabs
Dramas and Operas
Ferries
Inns, Taverns and Hotels
Regiments
Sailing-Ships
Songs, Dances, Marches and Oratorios
Steamships

4. Cross-references have been provided whenever considered valuable.

5. Individual churches are indexed under their denominational names.

6. Societies and other organisations are indexed under the names by which they are commonly known, the word "Toronto" being omitted unless it appears to be an integral part of the name.

7. Newspapers and periodicals are indexed under their names, and the place of publication of newspapers is given if it is outside Toronto.

8. All authors cited or quoted in this work are indexed under their names, but the source of the reference is not repeated. Artists and their works are listed in the foreword but are not repeated in the index.

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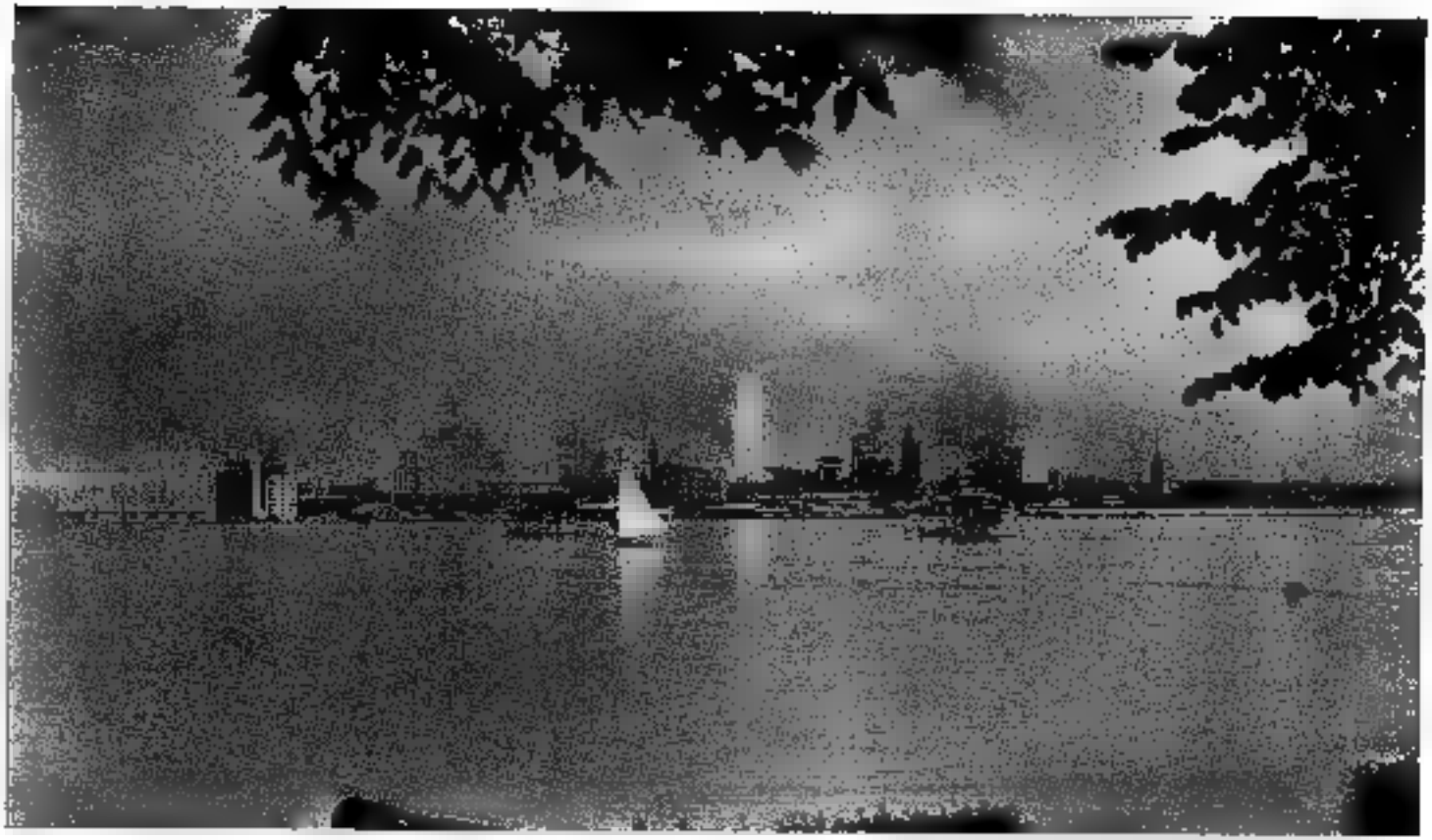

TORONTO FROM THE ISLAND

TORONTO
FROM
TRADING POST TO GREAT CITY

By

EDWIN C. GUILLET, M.A.
Author of "Early Life in Upper Canada."

With 167 illustrations
selected and arranged by the Author.

"I never saw a more beautiful, pleasant place in all my life than Little York is."
—*Letter of Sophia Hill, 1835.*

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To

A. H. U. COLQUHOUN, B.A., LL.D.

Deputy Minister of Education,
Ontario.

FOREWORD

By Colonel the Honourable Herbert A. Bruce,
R.A.M.C., M.D., L.R.C.P. Lond., F.R.C.S. Eng., F.A.C.S., LL.D.
Emeritus Professor of Surgery, University of Toronto.
Member, Board of Governors, University of Toronto.
Knight of Grace of the Order of St. John.
Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario.

In the year 1842 Charles Dickens described Toronto as a city "full of life and motion, bustle, business and improvement," and it is the measure of Mr. Edwin Guillet's accomplishment as a historian that he has succeeded in reproducing not merely the life of the past but its liveliness, and has set in motion not the all too customary marionettes of history books, conveniently labelled and dated for students, but the living, breathing men and women who laboured and fought, played games and danced, hunted and fished, skated and rode in sleighs, quarrelled and made friends, voted at elections, cooked meals, attended concerts, built schools, endowed churches, opened stores, and by strenuous faith built a great city.

For over one hundred years the site on which Toronto stands has been a stage trodden by the feet of generations, —a stage across which has marched an unbroken succession of men and women in search of a new life in a new country. As the years pass and as the drama is unfolded, with interludes of frank comedy, the stage becomes larger, more crowded. There are many entrances and exits; the actors are forever changing. And because of the indefatigable energy of the community of people who form its *dramatis personæ*, the very scene of all this activity appears to change, although it is but the erection and substitution of new "properties" necessitated by the swift growth of the hamlet, the town, the city, by the inflowing tide of immigrants, by commercial development, and by all those exigencies of unpredictable circumstance of which these pages are so moving a record.

The skill with which the author has extracted from historical sources the quintessential facts, that succession

of events which gives body and texture and form to this history, will be all the more adequately appreciated by the reader, who is also the privileged spectator of these events, when he glances at the bibliography which is an informing appendix of this book. For it is a tribute not only to his industry in historical research, but indubitable testimony also to his merit as a historian that Mr. Guillet has sought to write not an easy, romantically coloured narrative which is plausible and ingratiating because it has a certain historic verisimilitude, but he has succeeded in the far more difficult task of presenting an authentic and authoritative marshalling of facts. The result is that once again truth proves to be more interesting than fiction. Far from depriving his story of that glamour which a free use of the imagination is commonly supposed to give, the fidelity with which the author mirrors Toronto's past invests his work, as the reader will see, with an urgency, a freshness, an inevitability of cause and effect which make it a vital record of millions of British subjects who, at one time or another, have made the city of Toronto their home.

Therein lies the considerable feat which Mr. Guillet has accomplished. For it is given to but few historians, and they only the best, to recapture and preserve between the covers of a book the men and women of the past without, in the process, crushing the very breath of life out of them. Without that life they would appear to the reader as but a dull catalogue of names and descriptions, a number of wooden automatons dusty with age, colourless, and motivated by nothing more than the ascertained facts of history.

I congratulate the author, therefore, upon the success with which he has unearthed a dead past and presented it to us as a living spectacle. By so doing he has made not only an extremely valuable contribution to Canadian history, but he has produced a book of extraordinary interest.

Innkeepers and taverns; fire brigades and military garrisons; merchants; the coming and going of canoes and sailing-ships, schooners and steamships in the harbour; sidewalks and bridges and ferries; the old town pump, and the Island when it was still a peninsula; Orangemen and immigrants; soap and candle factories; horse-drawn boats and street cars; squatters and Indians; schools and forts

and blockhouses; pioneers and the streams that were often their only roads—the story of these is told in these pages. It is the story of more than a century, during which Toronto came into being and attained its present stature in this the one-hundredth year of its incorporation.

Finally, as a visual aid to the imagination of all those who in these pages will relive the past, there are nearly two hundred illustrations. They are most happily chosen. Looking at them, the reader is afforded those glimpses of the past which illuminate and are in turn illuminated by the author's written account of persons and places and incidents of old. No verbal or written description, of course, can hope to rival in precision and compactness the presentation of the past in pictorial form—whether that form be etching, drawing or contemporary photograph. And it was doubtless the consciousness of this that led Mr. Guillet to make his story even more graphic by the inclusion of illustrations which alone and in themselves constitute a historical record of great value and absorbing interest. Outstanding among them are a large number from a publication of an earlier generation—the *Canadian Illustrated News*. As a result of research into the dusty pages of these rare volumes the author has been able to include fascinating sketches of those elements of city life which were so seldom recorded in pictorial form prior to the days of photography and the motion picture. Grand balls, soirées and receptions, partisan processions, riots and notable conflagrations are here depicted with remarkable fidelity, and they are reproduced in this volume for the first time.

I cordially invite the reader to raise the curtain and gaze upon "the swelling scene".

PREFACE AND INTRODUCTION

THE recording of local historical material is a field which the enthusiast has largely to himself, for the professional historian, though in general a more highly-trained research worker, does not often delve deeply into local history. While such records may properly be considered as the basis of national history there is a disposition in some quarters to regard them as trivial, and perhaps at times they are. But a nation is a collection of cities, towns and villages plus a great mass of rural inhabitants, and the development of any one district is perforce a cross-section of life as a whole; to which may be added in connection with Toronto that it has for more than a century been the capital as well as the most important city of Ontario, and its history is consequently something greater than merely an example of town life. Several million people have at one time or another lived in Toronto or have been closely connected with the city in political, economic or social relations, and more Canadian citizens are familiar with it than with any other city in the Dominion.

Toronto is fortunate in having had among its inhabitants a very considerable number of men for whom the collection and compilation of records was a hobby in which they persisted with unlimited enthusiasm; and though in that connection one thinks immediately of the Rev. Henry Scadding and John Ross Robertson, whose records of the past are the most extensive and valuable, yet there have been many others, among whom the editors of newspapers, directories, guidebooks, and other publications of the kind are in the front rank. Those, too, who, in an official capacity or otherwise, have been careful to preserve manuscripts, handbills, pamphlets and other fugitive material deserve the thanks of subsequent generations. In spite, however, of the large amount of historical information available, there are many subjects in which our knowledge is deficient, and in almost every instance the work of combining the present material into co-ordinate relation has been most difficult, a fact borne out by the mere recital of the numerous sources.

The files of newspapers, when such exist, form the backbone of local history. Many modern publications elaborate upon lurid and sensational news items, but early newspapers, while containing a large amount of foreign news from two to five months old, often ignored local events which would now be featured in headlines. They did, however, contain market reports and merchants' "announcements", and they usually recorded in great detail the most important social events—such as the celebrations accompanying the visits of royalty and other distinguished personages, the parades and festivities connected with the Firemen's organisations, the National Societies and other lodges, and the proceedings upon the occasion of the inauguration of important public buildings. From these accounts and from other obscure sources the writer has drawn a large amount of fascinating material, almost all of which has never been available before; and much new matter has similarly been obtained from early travel literature and from unprinted records of the City Council and the various departments connected therewith. The printed sources are in almost every instance scarce if not rare. As also applied in connection with the compilation of *Early Life in Upper Canada*, it has been an important part of the plan of this book to quote copiously from the original sources. This is undoubtedly valuable in itself, and at the same time reproduces material compiled by the enthusiasm of earlier writers whose works, if printed at all, are all but inaccessible to the general reader; and while acknowledging our debt of gratitude by citing their work, we at the same time frequently add life and romance to subjects not inherently vivid. Though in many instances quoted material could be greatly improved from a literary point of view, no change has been made in any of it except in the matter of paragraphing and punctuation, which has been modernised where necessary. A considerable number of errors in earlier publications have been discovered, but it is not claimed that none will be found in the present work; for, since many of the sources of information used by former writers have long since disappeared, there is in most instances no means of checking the material, and we are forced either to take it or leave it.

In presenting this volume to the citizens of Toronto the author wishes to express his indebtedness to some two hundred earlier writers whom he quotes, and whose labours have so enriched our city's heritage of the past. Yet, although much has been written, the historical material hitherto published has in general been arranged in chronological, topographical or biographical divisions, and but little effort has been made to assemble all available information in a topical arrangement. It is intended in this volume, consequently, to present—insofar as the scattered and often meagre records will allow—comprehensive accounts of some of the more important aspects of the development of the city, and, in other chapters, to describe in some detail the social, educational, cultural and religious life of its inhabitants; and as it is the first work in which an extensive bibliography and detailed references have been provided, readers and research workers will be able to locate the sources with a minimum of effort.

During the preparation of the work many persons have co-operated in providing material or in offering suggestions concerning subjects upon which they are recognised authorities. Colonel the Honourable Herbert A. Bruce, Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario, has kindly written a foreword for the book, and others to whom the author is indebted for courteous assistance are Dr. George Locke, Miss Staton, Miss Smith and staff of the Toronto Public Library; Mr. Arthur Wilgress, Miss King and staff of the Legislative Library of Ontario; Mr. T. A. Reed; Dr. A. H. Young; Mr. James W. Somers, City Clerk; Mr. R. C. Harris, Commissioner of Works; Mr. V. M. Roberts, Librarian of the Toronto Harbour Commission; Mr. D. W. Harvey, General Manager of the Toronto Transportation Commission; Mr. Edward J. Tucker, Assistant General Manager and Secretary of the Consumers' Gas Company; and Mr. H. C. Powell, Chief Statistician of the Toronto Hydro-Electric System. A number of individuals and corporations have permitted the reproduction of illustrations, and in each case they are so credited where they appear. The Public Library, particularly, has afforded every facility for the use for that purpose of the John Ross Robertson Collection and of rare items of Canadiana. My wife has again aided in

compiling the index and seeing the book through the press, and the publishers, engravers and printers have co-operated fully in its technical production; Mr. T. Wilbur Best, in particular, has contributed greatly to the volume, not only as its publisher but by suggestion and enthusiasm arising from his well-known interest in Canadiana.

As for the book itself it is based upon the same general plan as *Early Life in Upper Canada*, which met with the approval of the critics and the general public: the annotations and references in each chapter are independent of all others, and the bibliography and index have been similarly compiled. Since extensive treatment was given so recently to the American occupation of York and to Toronto's part in the Mackenzie Rebellion these subjects are not repeated in detail in the present work. Much miscellaneous material, it may be of value to point out, has been included within the confines of the first and last chapters, the contents of which alone are of a somewhat general nature. The illustrations, many of which have never been reproduced before, are largely contemporary with the scenes portrayed, or have been faithfully drawn from the most accurate plans and descriptions available. The attempt has been made to produce a work comprehensive without being in any sense exhaustive; to be informative and accurate in statistical facts, but at the same time to elaborate upon material with strong human interest; to record the activities of the poor and humble as well as the life of citizens in high places; and to catch something of that public spirit and initiative which has always characterised the inhabitants of Toronto, and which, in the face of natural obstacles by no means small, has resulted in the great developments of the past century and a half.

E. C. GUILLET,
Toronto, May, 1934.

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TORONTO
FROM TRADING POST TO GREAT CITY

CHAPTER I

Two Centuries of Progress

When the first explorers visited the interior of America they followed the great waterways which had for centuries been the highway of the Indian. Well-defined portage trails supplemented river and lake where it was necessary to avoid waterfalls or make a short-cut between river systems, and one of the most noted of these was the Humber-Holland portage or, as it was long called, "the Carrying-Place of Toronto". After the middle of the seventeenth century the portage was largely an Iroquois route, but its earliest use by a European appears to have been in 1615 when Etienne Brûlé passed southward from Lake Simcoe on a recruiting expedition for Champlain and his Huron allies. In after years, when the fur trade with French, Dutch and English posts developed on a large scale, *le passage de Toronto* was extensively used by Indian and trader, explorer and *voyageur*, and was coveted by each nationality. The site of Toronto was for over one hundred years, therefore, characterised chiefly by traffic with the Indians—particularly in liquor.

The appellation "Toronto", which was variously spelled, was probably first applied to Matchedash Bay, later to Lake Simcoe and, through faulty maps, to the Trent System generally, and finally to the district of which the trading post near the mouth of the Humber was the commercial outlet. Authorities do not agree upon the derivation of the name, but the Indian equivalent of "place of meeting" is most generally accepted, both from their traditional employment of the peninsula (now the island) for that purpose, and from circumstances of the same nature arising from the continual use of portage and post by Indians and traders; it is quite probable, indeed, that the more general suggestion of "carrying-place" better suits the name's significance.

There is some evidence that a French trader was located near the Seneca village Teialagon ("a crossing") as early

as 1668, and Joliet's map of 1673 marks the village's site as upon the east bank of the Humber near its mouth—its exact location was undoubtedly the district now called Baby Point. Again about 1720 a trading post, the *Magasin Royal*, was established by Sieur Douville. It is thought to have been at Teiaiagon, and was in successful operation for some ten years. Further official recognition of the importance of the district[1] as a centre of Indian trade arose from the fact that British merchants at Chouéguen (Oswego) were attracting much of the commerce which had formerly passed to Detroit, Niagara and eastern posts; it was therefore considered advisable by the French Government to establish a palisaded fort at a point which would protect the harbour as well as the trade route. The first fort which resulted from correspondence between the officials in Canada and the French Colonial Minister, Rouillé, was a small structure mounting four guns, erected in the summer of 1750, on the east bank near the mouth of the Humber; and it was succeeded in 1751 by a more elaborate fortification comprising several buildings, but located some two miles eastward, at the foot of the present Dufferin Street.

Though never a first-class trading post, Fort Rouillé, or Toronto, as it was more commonly called, carried on an annual trade of some 35,000 *livres* ($5,833), and its staff in 1754 numbered an officer, five soldiers, two sergeants and a storekeeper. During the early part of the Seven Years' War it was frequently in danger of attack by the British, and in 1759 the French burned the post to prevent its capture. The remains of the works were distinguishable for over a century, but in modern times the encroachments of the lake wore away portions of the site.[1] In 1878 the ground was levelled and a pillar erected to mark the spot.

The change of ownership of the land did not end trading

[1]The most notable researches into the history of the Toronto Carrying-Place have been made by Mr. Percy Robinson, who published in 1934 an exhaustive and scholarly work, *Toronto during the French Régime, 1615-1793*. This volume contains so much that is new that it entirely supersedes all partial accounts hitherto available.

[2]A summary of the correspondence relating to the establishment of these posts, as well as travellers' references to Fort Toronto or its ruins, may be found in E. C. Guillet: *Early Life in Upper Canada*, 1933, pp. 80 *et seq.* The documents are in the Public Archives of Canada, Correspondance Générale, Volumes 91, 93, 95 and 97.

activities at Toronto. Almost immediately after the destruction of the fort several independent traders were established near the mouth of the Humber. One of these, Jean Baptiste Rousseau, commonly called St. John, had a post on the east side of the mouth of the river, which was on that account long called St. John's Creek. In the early seventeen-sixties at least two others—Messrs. Bâby and Knaggs—were debauching the Indians by the rum trade, and in 1763 British troops under General Gage seized Knaggs and his supplies. Among the most interesting descriptions of a journey across the Toronto Carrying-Place is that of the famous fur-trader, Alexander Henry, who tramped over the portage in 1764 while virtually a prisoner of the Indians. After a short stop on the north shore of Lac aux Claies (Simcoe), the expedition continued southwards:

"On the 18th of June we crossed Lake aux Claies, which appeared to be upward of twenty miles in length. At its further end we came to the Carrying-Place of Toronto. Here the Indians obliged me to carry a burden of more than a hundred pounds' weight. The day was very hot, and the woods and marshes abounded with mosquitoes; but the Indians walked at a quick pace, and I could by no means see myself left behind. The whole country was a thick forest, through which our only road was a foot-path, or such as, in America, is exclusively termed an Indian path. Next morning at ten o'clock we reached the shore of Lake Ontario. Here we were employed two days in making canoes out of the bark of the elm tree, in which we were to transport ourselves to Niagara. . . . On the 21st we embarked at Toronto, and encamped, in the evening, four miles short of Fort Niagara, which the Indians would not approach till morning."[3]

In 1787 the British Government recognised the importance of the trade route by buying a considerable amount of the land from the ruins of Rouillé northward, the tract being the second district in Upper Canada to be purchased from the Indians, though the sale was not entirely completed when the first palaver was held at the Carrying Place, Bay of Quinté. On August 1, 1805, a second meeting with the Indians took place on the Credit River, when

[3]Alexander Henry: *Travels and Adventures in Canada and the Indian Territories, 1760-76*. 1907. pp. 179-80.

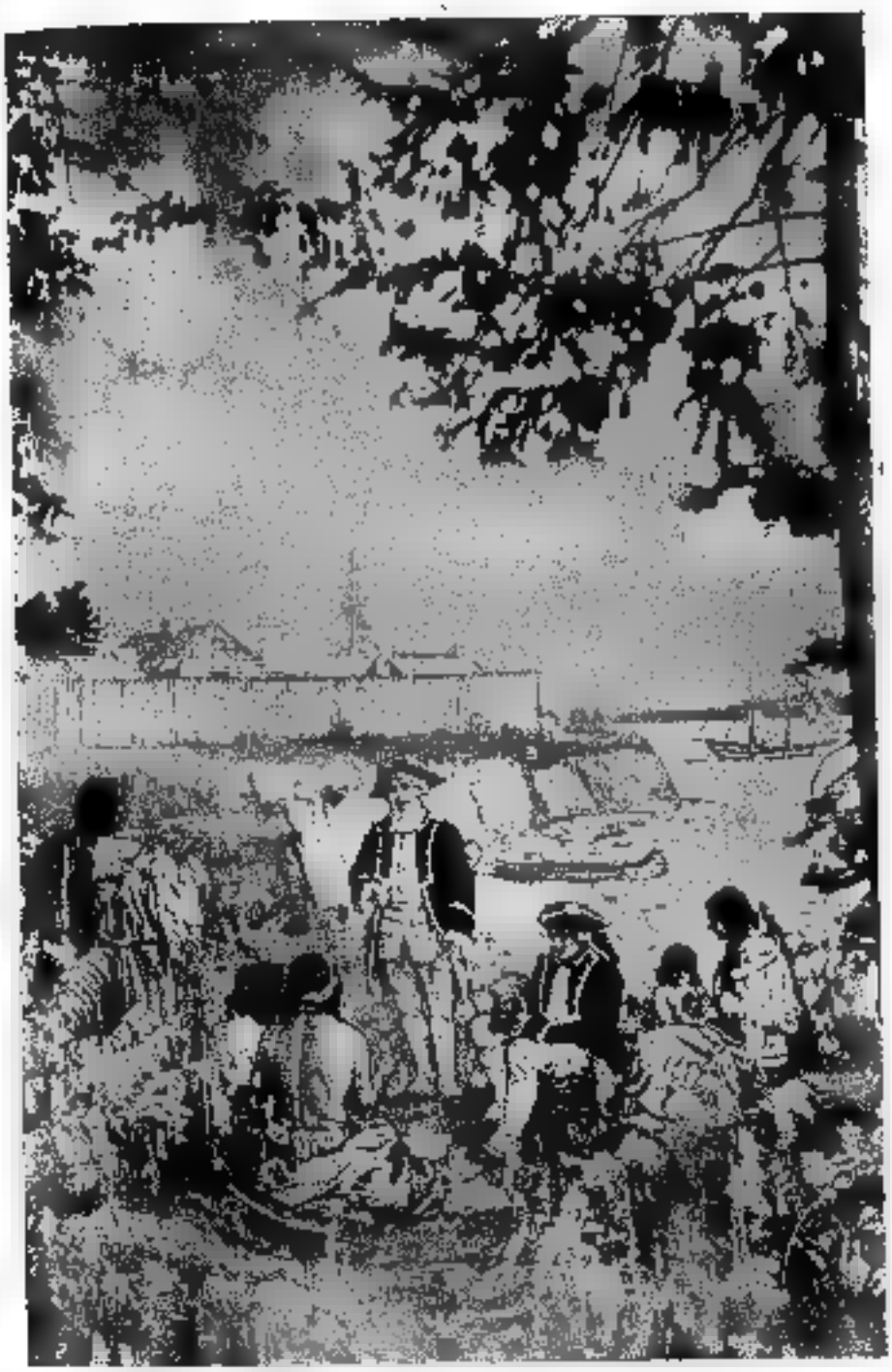
250,808 acres, made up largely of York, Etobicoke, Vaughan and King Townships, was transferred to British control for £1,700 sterling in cash and goods.

Some years prior to the creation of the Province of Upper Canada the British Government had decided to establish a town at Toronto. In 1788, in fact, a site was surveyed by Alexander Aitkin at the order of Lord Dorchester, and later in the same year Captain Gother Mann made similar investigations. Nothing resulted from these activities and plans at that time, but three years later Surveyor Augustus Jones was busy examining the same district. The first capital of the province, however, was Niagara (Newark), although Kingston desired the honour, and the Lieutenant-Governor himself would have preferred the present site of London when he learned that Fort Niagara, close by the infant capital, was in United States territory and about to be garrisoned by American troops. This choice of Simcoe's, "Georgina-upon-Thames", was made during his first tour of the Western District in February, 1793; but the Governor-General disallowed it, and Simcoe had to content himself with Dorchester's choice of Toronto—at first intended to be merely an arsenal.

When Surveyor Joseph Bouchette visited the Bay of Toronto in 1792 he noted that only two familles of Indians dwelt in the dense forests which then covered the entire shore.[4] The wigwams in which these Mississaugas lived had probably been constructed many years earlier, and had been used by various Indians passing back and forth over the trade route; for there is no record of a permanent Indian settlement on the site of Toronto, though references to the Indian village Teiaiagon, mentioned previously, are found in accounts of travel written in the last quarter of the seventeenth century by such men as Hennepin and La Salle, both of whom visited the village on the Toronto River.

From Mrs. Simcoe's diary we obtain a knowledge of the Governor's arrival at Toronto, and of early life there, that was not available when Dr. Scadding wrote his *Toronto of Old*. On May 2, 1793, the Governor, accompanied by seven officers, made his first visit to Toronto, the expedition fol-

[4] J. Bouchette: *The British Dominions in North America*, 1831, Vol. I, p. 89 fn. Bouchette's survey is dated November 15, 1792.



Reproduced by Courtesy of the Artist F. S. Challener, R.C.A., O.S.A.

FORT ROUILLÉ, 1751-1759

This fort, at the foot of the present Dufferin Street, was the third French military post in the vicinity of Toronto.

THE "OLD MILL" ON THE HUMBER

The Indian village Teindagon was in the right background.

THE MOUTH OF THE HUMBER RIVER

In Indians days the River Tau-a-hon-ate; in the French Period the Toronto River; and in trader Rousseau's time called St. John's Creek. The Carrying-Place ended at the French fort (later the site of Rousseau's post), where now is situated the Silver Slipper Dance Hall.

lowing the shore line in a bateau around the head of Lake Ontario. Governor Simcoe was immediately impressed by the fine harbour, and set his men to work developing the site of the future capital. On May 13th Mrs. Simcoe wrote in her diary: "Colonel Simcoe returned from Toronto, and speaks in praise of the harbour, and a fine spot near it covered with large oaks, which he intends to fix as a site for a town."[3]

On July 29th Mrs. Simcoe sailed to Toronto on the sloop *Onondaga*, and the party camped in tents just east of the present Old Fort. While the soldiers were clearing away the trees and preparing the "canvas houses", the Governor's wife "went in a boat two miles to the bottom of the bay, and walked through a grove of oaks, where the town is intended to be built".[4] Soon after, Augustus Jones surveyed a series of lots on the shore of the lake from St. John's Creek (the Humber) eastward, leaving spaces for proposed roadways. In his notes he mentions "the Blacksmith's old house", which Dr. Scadding suggests was a forge near the ruins of Fort Rouillé where the Indians and traders had repaired their implements and guns.[7]

For the first few weeks after its establishment the town was known as Toronto; but on August 26th the Governor changed the name to York, and at noon the following day a salute was fired in commemoration of the change, which was made to honour the Duke of York who had won a notable victory over the French. Some people objected to Simcoe's policy of anglicising the place-names of Upper Canada: for instance, Isaac Weld, who travelled in Upper Canada in 1796, wrote: "It is to be lamented that the Indian names, so grand and sonorous, should ever have been changed for others. Newark, Kingston, York are poor substitutes for the original names of the respective places Niagara, Cataraqui, Toronto." Weld also mentions that before he arrived in Niagara "orders had been issued for the removal of the seat of government from Niagara to Toronto" (Weld would not use the new names!); and he

[3]*Diary of Mrs. John Graves Simcoe*, May 13, 1793.

[4]*Ibid.*, July 30, 1793.

[7]Henry Scadding: *History of the Old French Fort at Toronto, and its Monument*. 1887. p. 29.

says that "the projected change is by no means relished by the people at large".[8]

The first official plan of York harbour, drawn in 1793 by Alexander Aitkin, shows the townsite to the west of the Don, the proposed battery on Gibraltar (now Hanlan's) Point, and the barracks to the east of the present Exhibition grounds; this was very different from the plans in the survey of 1788. Simcoe tried to prevent York from becoming a straggling village by setting aside the entire waterfront of the western section of the Bay as a Garrison Reserve, and to his action we owe the availability of the land for the great Fair over three-quarters of a century later. Until modern times the island was a peninsula, joined to the mainland at the foot of the present Woodbine Avenue. The small sandy connection was gradually weakened, and in 1858, when the waters of Lake Ontario broke through during the course of a heavy wind, the island was created.

Apart from the military works, no buildings were erected in York until 1794, when the first homes of officials were built. In Simcoe's time the boundaries of the town were George Street on the west, Ontario Street on the east, Duchess Street on the north, and Palace (Front) Street on the south. The main thoroughfare was King Street. Ontario Street appears to have followed the course of the trail leading to the canoe landing, where it was usual to carry small boats across the narrow neck of land between the lake and the bay. Palace Street was so called because of the plans to erect a residence for the Governor there, though the structure became the Parliament Buildings; and from 1797 to 1824 the seat of government was at the corner of Parliament (now Berkeley) and Palace Streets.

We owe to Mrs. Simcoe's artistic ability the only pictures of York before 1800, and from her diary we catch a glimpse of life there during the first years of the town.[9] She describes rides she took on the peninsula, and along the north shore of the lake "till we were impeded by large trees on the beach"; of rowing in "Mr. Grant's (the surveyor's) boat to the highlands of Toronto. They appeared so well that we

[8]Isaac Weld: *Travels through the States of North America*. 1799. p. 296.

[9]John Ross Robertson, the editor of Mrs. Simcoe's diary, reproduced most of her Canadian sketches.

talked of building a summer residence there and calling it Scarborough".[10] On another occasion she "walked two miles to the old French Fort, but there are no remains of any building there".[11] One day some Ojibway Indians "brought the Governor 'a beaver blanket to make his bed', as they expressed themselves; . . . . and invited him to visit their country".[12] On September 11, 1793, Mrs. Simcoe "rowed six miles up the Don to Coons', who had a farm under a hill covered with pine".[13] The diary contains a detailed account of the Governor's trips northward to Georgian Bay and westward to Detroit, expeditions which were made by canoe, or on sleds in winter.[14]

During the spring of 1794 Castle Frank, a combined summer residence and Government House, was built; it was a frame building, on the heights overlooking the Don Valley, just beyond the northern boundary of the present St. James' Cemetery. The location was very dear to the Simcoes, but after they left Canada the building was but little used, and in 1829 was burned by a fire left by careless fishermen.

The first bridge over the Don was known as Playter's because it was on land granted to Captain George Playter, an early Loyalist settler in York. The bridge was located at the foot of Winchester Street, and Mrs. Simcoe thus describes it: "I passed Playter's picturesque bridge over the Don; it is a butternut tree fallen across the river, the branches still growing full leaf. Mrs. Playter being timorous, a pole was fastened through the branches to hold by. Having attempted to pass it I was determined to proceed, but was frightened before I got half way."[15] Mrs. Simcoe had another adventure in June, 1796, when she and and her little daughter Sophia accompanied the Governor on a lake trip during a severe storm. They were proceeding east from Burlington in a canoe and were surprised how well their frail boat rode the waves; but Mrs. Simcoe felt much more at ease when they landed at the mouth of the

[10] *Diary*, August 4, 1793.
[11] *Ibid.*, August 5, 1793.
[12] *Ibid.*, August 9, 1793.
[13] *Ibid.*, September 11, 1793.
[14] *Ibid.*, September 25, 1793, *et seq.*
[15] *Ibid.*, July 6, 1796.

River Credit, where "numbers of Indians resort to fish for salmon".[16]

Governor Simcoe wished York to be a very English town, but under his *régime* it developed chiefly as a military establishment. The garrison of some 200 Queen's Rangers formed the great bulk of the population, and these men were set to work constructing buildings and opening up roads, especially Yonge and Dundas Streets. The fort of Simcoe's day was on the bay shore, with Garrison Creek on two sides of it. As will be described shortly, the military works were quite extensive; but none of them survived the American occupation of 1813, the present structures having been erected at various times after the close of the War of 1812.

Advertisements in Upper Canada's first newspaper give us some knowledge of the early development of York. In the Niagara *Upper Canada Gazette, or American Oracle* of July 10, 1794, appears the following: "Wanted—Carpenters for the public buildings to be erected at York. Applications to be made to John McGill, Esq., at York, or to Mr. Allan MacNab, at Navy Hall."[17] John Ogden visited York, "called by the natives Toronto", and observed the preparations: "A town is here in great forwardness, and should the seat of government be removed from Newark thence, as is contemplated, it will soon become a flourishing place".[18]

The first few years of the town were filled with activity, and the soldiers did the greater part of the work. A landing-pier and a canal or navigable opening into Garrison Creek was also being constructed, a warrant being signed by the Lieutenant-Governor authorising the Commissioner of Stores, Mr. McGill, "to supply from time to time from the Government stores such quantities of rum as may be required to be given to the men (Queen's Rangers) employed on the wharf and canal at York".[19]

[16] *Ibid.*, June 16, 1796.

[17] *Upper Canada Gazette*, July 10, 1794.

[18] John Ogden: *A Tour through Upper and Lower Canada*. 1799. pp. 100-2.

[19] Quoted in Henry Scadding: *Memoirs of Four Decades of York, Upper Canada*. 1884. p. 21.

From a report[20] concerning public property in Upper Canada, issued by the Hon. Peter Russell in 1799, we learn the extent of the first military works at York. A saw-mill had been erected on the Humber to supply boards and other materials. Round log huts were constructed in 1793 and 1794 as quarters for the Queen's Rangers, as well as a similar structure in the latter year for the commissary of stores. Canals, locks and wharves were built at the Garrison to aid in landing provisions and supplies safely, and to provide a shelter for the three bateaux. A bridge was also constructed there, and a roadway pushed westward as far as the Humber, presumably as part of Simcoe's projected highway, Dundas Street.

In 1795 a powder magazine of squared hemlock logs was erected, and the intervals between the log huts were gradually stockaded; a similar protection was raised in front of the huts on the Parade, and gates with locks and bars were put up. A large blockhouse barracks was also constructed and occupied by the soldiers, and a storehouse of two storeys for the Indian presents. The Hon. Peter Russell states that 40,000 bricks had been supplied at one time or another for the building of new barracks, chimneys and ovens.

Two one-storey brick buildings, originally intended as the wings of a residence for the Lieutenant-Governor, were erected in the town. They were each twenty-five feet by forty, and were about 100 feet apart. The houses in their rear were advanced to the front as guardhouses, and some of them were later incorporated into a sort of gallery or passageway between the brick wings; here it was that the sessions of the second parliament of Upper Canada were held, and the building served also as a court of justice.

In 1795 La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, a French duke, found about twelve houses in York, chiefly located along the Bay near the Don. One of these was the Scadding cottage, erected in 1796 on the east side of the Don; this is the York Pioneers' log house now located in Exhibition Park. The Duke shared in the love of his nation for the United States, and consequently grasped the opportunity to cast a slur on

[20]Report concerning public property in Upper Canada, 1799. This valuable document is in the Toronto Public Library.

William Berczy's settlers in Markham Township, who had in the previous year abandoned the Pulteney settlement across the lake, in the Genesee River district, and had come to Upper Canada. In describing York he says: "The inhabitants do not possess the fairest character. One of them is the noted Baty, the leader of the German families. . . . In a circumference of 150 miles the Indians are the only neighbours of York."[21] The reference was undoubtedly intended, therefore, to apply to the German settlers up Yonge Street, though it must be admitted that there were some inhabitants of York to whom it would have been more applicable.

When the Simcoes left York on the *Onondaga*, on July 21, 1796, Mrs. Simcoe felt so badly that she wept all day, for the town was about to take on a new importance as the capital of Upper Canada, the climax of the plans of the Lieutenant-Governor and his wife who had so thoroughly enjoyed themselves in the little garrison settlement in the wilds; they had been the founders of the town which was soon to be variously called "Little", "Muddy", or "Dirty" York.

One of the noted achievements of Governor Simcoe was the opening of Yonge Street to Lake Simcoe. The road had been commenced both by the Rangers and by Berczy's settlers in 1794, but it was not open for the whole distance until February 16, 1796. Augustus Jones was the surveyor in charge of this work, as of many other early surveys in Upper Canada. Simcoe's dream of a highway across the province from east to west was not realised until long after his death, though a start was made in 1793 on some sections of Dundas Street west of Burlington Bay.

After Simcoe's departure, Acting-Governor Russell wrote from Niagara to an official in York that, as the legislature would meet there on the 1st of June, "You will therefore be pleased to apprise the inhabitants of the town that twenty-five gentlemen will want board and lodgings during the session, which may possibly induce them to fit up their houses and lay in provisions to accommodate them".[22] The

[21]La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt: *Travels through the United States of North America*, 1799. Vol. I, p. 269. "Baty" is presumably a translator's error for "Berczy".

[22]Scadding, *Four Decades of York*, p. 28.

officials of the government sailed in the *Mohawk* for York, at the end of May, 1797. Perhaps they were not all taken care of satisfactorily, for a traveller who visited the town in 1798 described it as "a dreary dismal place, not even possessing the characteristics of a village. There is no church, schoolhouse, nor in fact any of the ordinary signs of civilisation. There is no inn; and those travellers who have no friends to go to, pitch a tent and live there while they remain".[22] It would appear, however, that Abner Miles' Inn was in operation at that time, but the accommodation was not extensive.

In 1797 York consisted of twelve city blocks immediately north of the Parliament Buildings, which were located close to the waterfront at the foot of Parliament (now Berkeley) Street. Six of these blocks were on the north and six on the south of the present King Street, and most of the street names were in honour of the Royal Family. At that time even Church Street was remote from the business district of York, while the present corner of King and Yonge Streets was not even a cross-road! Upper Yonge Street was approached by a trail along the route of the present Parliament Street, the section of Yonge Street below Yorkville having fallen into disuse soon after it was opened by Surveyor Jones. Hospital (Richmond) Street and Lot (Queen) Street were the usual routes by which one entered the town. Russell Abbey, the residence of the President of the Provisional Government of Upper Canada, was located at the corner of Palace and Princes (now Princess) Streets.

In the early years of the new century all the buildings in York were of wood except the parliament buildings and Quetton St. George's general store; and almost all were of log construction, though frame clap-board houses were occasionally found. John Ross Robertson states that St. George's brick store was erected in 1807, but, as in his reference to the government buildings' being of wood, he is mistaken in saying that the bricks brought by St. George from the United States were the first used in York. George Heriot states that the government (parliament) buildings

[22]Memoirs of Mrs. Breakenridge, daughter of Dr. W. W. Baldwin, quoted in William Canniff: *History of the Settlement of Upper Canada*. 1869. pp. 530-1.

were of brick, and if further proof is necessary it is supplied by the journal of David Thomson, the first settler in Scarboro Township. Thomson was employed as mason and brick-layer in York in 1797, and noted in his account book on July 26th that he began "to wall the government brick houses"; and he also stated that 53,500 bricks at 17s. 6d. per thousand were used, the cost totalling $46 16s. 2d. The government house, or residence for the lieutenant-governor, must not be confused with the parliament-house which in early times was always referred to as "the government buildings". Russell Abbey, where the Hon. Peter Russell lived—and died, was erected in 1798, and George Heriot considered that it was "sufficiently commodious for the present state of the province".[24]

The material development of York during the next few years was very gradual, but many events are of interest in that they form the very foundation stones of a great city. "Our Town of York", as the governors called it in their proclamations, remained a very small settlement for a quarter of a century. Officials, merchants and tradesmen gradually occupied the original townsite and spread westward along the shore towards the Garrison, but at no point did the straggling town extend northward more than a few hundred feet. Dr. Scadding describes the course of development as commencing at the government buildings, "the Westminster of the New Capital", and spreading along its "Strand" towards the fort: "Growing slowly westward it developed, in the customary American way, its hotel, its tavern, boarding-house, wagon factory, tinsmith shop, bakery, general store, its lawyer's office, printing office, and places of worship."[25]

In 1797 George Street was the western boundary of the town, but in June of that year, D. W. Smith drew up a *Plan for the Enlargement of York* by which Peter Street was the new boundary. For some years, however, comparatively few of the inhabitants lived west of George Street. A small wharf stood at the foot of Frederick

[24]George Heriot: *Travels through the Canadas*. 1807. p. 138. See also, in connection with the references in this paragraph, John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Canada: What Art has done for Canadian History*. 1917, p. 84. David Thomson's account book is quoted in David Boyle: *The Township of Scarboro*. 1896. p. 37.

[25]Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old*. 1873. p. 28.

Street, and above the beach, on an embankment some ten or fifteen feet high, was a path often used as a promenade. The shores of the Bay were in most parts well covered with a growth of small cedars, while the waters abounded with rushes and seaweeds. Mosquitoes were consequently very numerous, and the inhabitants of York were frequently stricken with intermittent fever carried by the mosquitoes and aggravated by the general dampness of the climate, which also led to severe colds, or agues as they were long called. At the mouth of the Don was an extensive marsh, and early plans of the town note that the inhabitants are permitted to cut the hay in these beautiful meadows.

Soon after York replaced Niagara as the capital the official publication of the government was transferred to the town. The original name of the newspaper was *The Upper Canada Gazette, or American Oracle*, and the first number to be printed in York appeared on October 4, 1798. Another result of the increased importance of York was that a post office was established there in 1799. The public mail was brought at infrequent intervals by couriers or other travellers on foot, horseback or in sailing-ship, though a purely governmental service by Schenectady boat began in the summer of 1794 and was carried on weekly during the season of navigation. The York postmaster appears to have had his share of troubles, and announces his resignation in 1801:

"To prevent disappointment and trouble, the public is requested to take notice that some time ago Mr. Willcocks resigned his place as Postmaster for York, his reasonable charges for the rent of an office, stationery, fire, candles, and a servant to attend being disputed; although by his assiduity and attention the revenue was productive beyond expectation, as appears by the accounts he rendered and the money he remitted to the Postmaster-General at Quebec."[26]

The inhabitants of York at the close of the century consisted largely of the garrison and the official class. In addition to the merchants and tradesmen to be found in any town, there were also a few members of the professions and a number of negroes, some of whom were

[26] *Upper Canada Gazette*, December 19, 1801.

slaves of the officials, while others had escaped from the United States. Among the earliest families to settle in or near York were the Denisons, Baldwins, Allans, Ketchums, Crookshanks and Playters; while the official class included Peter Russell, John McGill, John Small, Thomas Ridout, Captain Lippincott, William Jarvis and William Willcocks. One of the first lawyers in York was Dr. Baldwin, who added that profession to those of medicine and teaching, which presumably had not proven sufficiently remunerative. He was admitted to the bar in 1803, and carried on all his professions for some years. In 1800 Chief Justice Elmsley presided over the Court of King's Bench, and he was assisted by Mr. Justice Powell and Mr. Justice William Henry Alcock.

Many other aspects of early life in York are treated separately and need not be repeated here; but it may be said that in general the town was a mere police village in size, and it was for many years governed by the township meeting, supplemented in respect to the issuance of licences and the enforcement of law by the Court of General Quarter Sessions of the Home District, of which it was the only town. Some interesting details of activities in York may be obtained from the minutes of this court. The arbitrary appointment of citizens to the position of Constable, Collector of Taxes, Pathmaster, etc., was not always appreciated by the recipient of the office, and frequently was refused on conscientious or other grounds. In 1800, for example, Samuel Marther said "he would never serve the office of Constable", and Robert Willson also declined serving.[27] They were given two days to provide substitutes or pay the fine, which was usually £2. On one occasion an official benefitted financially by this system of compulsory public service and alternative fines. The Court records show that "in 1816 the Magistrates appointed John Murchison Town Clerk without consulting him. On his modestly pleading that he did not consider himself capable of holding that exalted office they fined him £2 for contempt and appointed Jonathan Cawthra instead. The latter, on refusing, was also fined £2. Then Jonathan Post was ap-

[27]Minutes of the Court of General Quarter Sessions, April 23, 1800. See *Report of the Archives of Ontario, 1932*, p. 5.

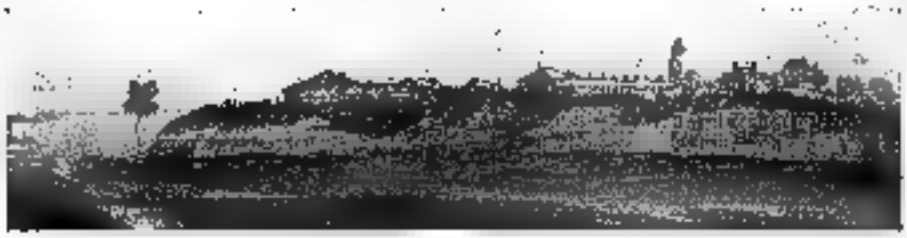
John Ross Robertson Collection. Mrs. John Graves Simcoe.

THE GARRISON AT YORK, 1796

Reproduced by Courtesy of the Imperial Life Insurance Company. E. Turner.

THE OPENING OF THE SECOND PARLIAMENT OF UPPER CANADA, AT YORK, 1797

Toronto's first Parliament Buildings were small brick structures at the foot of Parliament (now Berkeley) Street.



John Ross Robertson Collection. James Hamilton.

Old Fort, York, 1832

Until 1858 the only entrance to the harbour was from the west, and the fortifications were built to protect the approach to the town. The barracks and blockhouses may be seen in this illustration.

Reproduced by Courtesy of the Artist. J. D. Kelly.

The Birth of Toronto's Waterborne Trade

For over a century the name Toronto applied to the Humber-Holland Carrying-Place, and the mouth of the Humber was a centre of the fur trade.

pointed and in turn fined £2 for refusing. Finally one Wm. Barber was called in and accepted. He got his reward in the next month by being allowed to keep the three fines in addition to his salary".[28]

A pound in which to place wandering hogs and other animals was early established in York. In 1800 the members of the Court ordered "that the Pound in the Town of York do contain the one-eighth of an acre, that it be a square of 52 feet each side, and that it be divided, for the present, into three Compartments".[29] Poundkeepers were entitled to receive the following fees for impounding animals:

For each horse	2s. 6d.
For each ox	2s.
For each pig or hog	1s.
For each sheep	1s.

At the next meeting, however, it was stipulated that the poundkeeper should be entitled "to ask and to receive the sum of Five Shillings for each and every Hog he shall take up and empound".[30] Ten years later it was decided to apply to the Lieutenant-Governor for a piece of ground opposite the Gaol for the purposes of a pound. Hugh Carfrae agreed to erect the enclosure "at the rate of 1s. Halifax Currency per picket, and to be six feet from the ground and pointed, to be completed this fall, and agrees to wait 'till April for his pay, with interest thereon".[31] Very stiff penalties were enforced against anyone guilty of "pound-breach" (stealing impounded animals), and fines imposed upon those who failed to keep their swine at home. John Murchison, when called before the Court for allowing his hogs on the street, made the unique plea "that the swine by *undermining* its stye forced his way out";[32] and even though not particularly grammatical it was successful in enabling him to escape a fine.

Hugh Carfrae, gaoler in 1810, also placed pickets around the gaol of the Home District, receiving for the

[28]J. Edmund Jones: *Pioneer Crimes and Punishments in Toronto and the Home District*, 1924, p. 151.
[29]Minutes, April 28, 1800. See *Report*, p. 6.
[30]*Ibid.*, July 6, 1800. *Report*, p. 7.
[31]*Ibid.*, September 1, 1810. *Report*, p. 168.
[32]Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

work 1s. 10½d. per picket. The agreement made between him and the magistrates stipulated that "each picket is to be squared and joined close together and to be placed four feet in the ground; that those pickets which can afford to make two are to be sawed by Carfrae for that purpose, and paid for exclusively by the Court; and also that the nails and spikes requisite, for putting up said pickets as well as rib-band for strengthening the work are to be paid for or found by the District; and lastly that Hugh Carfrae do perform and completely finish the said undertaking on or before the first day of June, 1810".[33]

In the following year the gaol had to be repaired, and, as there were no spike nails available in York apart from those in the King's Stores, application was made to the Lieutenant-Governor requesting that he direct that a requisite number be furnished from that source. Upon the Clerk of the Peace making an official call upon the Hon. Francis Gore he issued an order for 1500 spike nails for the purpose.[34] Times have greatly changed since the day when one visited the highest official in the province on such business.

There has been criticism of the Toronto Gaol in recent years, but conditions are greatly improved over those described by the Sheriff in 1811. He wrote to the Court "that the Prisoners in the Cells of the Gaol of the Home District suffer much from Cold and Damp, there being no method of communicating heat from the Chimnies, nor any Bedsteads to raise the Straw from the Floors, which lie nearly, if not altogether, on the ground". The Sheriff suggested, therefore, "that a small Stove in the Lobby of each range of Cells, a rough Bedstead for each Cell, together with some Rugs or Blankets, will add much to the Comfort of the unhappy Persons confined". After the matter was thus brought to their attention the Magistrates ordered "that the Treasurer do procure two small Mettle Stoves, and pipes, and direct them to be put up in the Lobby of each range of Cells, and furnish such Bedsteads, Blankets or Rugs as may be found necessary for the Prisoners".[35]

[33]Minutes, November 1, 1809. *Report*, pp. 148-9.
[34]*Ibid.*, May, 4, 1811. *Report*, p. 186.
[35]Sheriff John Beikie's letter to the Court may be found in the Minutes of December 4, 1811. *Report*, pp. 208-4.

The days of slavery in Canada seem very remote, but in early York they were a reality. Two items in Court records concern the slaves of William Jarvis, who was, by the way, Chairman of the Court. On January 16, 1801, Kitty, a negress, was brought before the magistrates for sentence, having previously pleaded guilty to a charge of assault. Upon the application of her master, however, she was dismissed and ordered to return to her duty, "on which condition the punishment of whipping has been remitted"; but she replied she was not guilty and would not return to Mr. Jarvis, whereupon she was remanded to prison.[26] In 1811, when Thomas Ridout was Chairman of the Court, William Jarvis informed the magistrates "that a Negro Boy and Girl, his Slaves, had the Evening before been committed to Prison for having stolen Gold and Silver out of his Desk", and he prayed that some action might be taken against them and against one Coackley, "a Free Negro also committed to Prison on suspicion of having advised and aided the said Boy and Girl in Eloping with their Master's property". It was decided that the boy should be committed to prison, the girl sent back to her master, and Coackley discharged.[27]

A pleasant description of York as it appeared in the early years of the century is given by George Heriot, Deputy Postmaster-General, who wrote that the town, "according to the plan, is projected to extend to a mile and a half in length. . . . The advancement of this place to its present condition has been effected within the lapse of six or seven years, and persons who have formerly travelled in this part of the country are impressed with sentiments of wonder on beholding a town which may be termed handsome, reared as if by enchantment in the midst of the wilderness". Viewed from a point near the Don, "the scene is agreeable and diversified; a blockhouse, situated upon a wooded bank, forms the nearest object; part of the town, points of land clothed with spreading oak trees, gradually receding from the eye one behind another, until terminated by the buildings of the garrison and the spot on which the governor's residence is placed, compose the objects on the right. The left side of the view comprehends the long

[26]Minutes, January 16, 1801. *Report*, p. 14.
[27]*Ibid.*, March 1, 1811. *Report*, p. 17d.

peninsula which encloses this sheet of water, beautiful on account of its placidity, and rotundity of form; the distant lake, which appears bounded only by the sky, terminates the whole".[38] The following additional details are quoted from a book published in 1805:

"The society of the place is highly respectable, and its hospitality is experienced by every visitor. . . . The town is not large, but well furnished with every necessary convenience, and the market is well supplied. . . . There are several respectable private stores, but goods are rather high. . . . The River Don empties itself into the harbour a little above the town, running through a marsh which, when drained, will afford most beautiful and valuable meadows. This has already been effected in a small degree. . . . The long beach or peninsula affords a most delightful ride or walk, and is considered as so healthy by the Indians that they frequently resort to it when indisposed."[39]

Yet "Little York", as it was often called, was little better than in the wilds at the opening of the nineteenth century, for there were occasional visits of bears and wolves. Bay Street is said to have once borne the name Bear Street because Mr. Justice Boulton's horses attacked a bear in their pasture in the vicinity. Joseph Willcocks' letters contain descriptions of similar events. On November 3, 1800, he wrote: "There was a great depredation committed the night before last by a flock of wolves that came into the Town. One man lost 17 sheep; several others lost in proportion".[40] He also describes how "two great bears . . . . took away two pigs. They carried the pigs in their arms and ran on their hind legs".[41] In 1809 Lieutenant Fawcett of the 100th Regiment killed a bear in George Street by cleaving its head with his sword!

At the close of 1803 the town plot of York measured

[38]Herlot, *op. cit.*, pp. 138-9.

[39]D'Arcy Boulton: *Sketch of His Majesty's Province of Upper Canada*. 1805. pp. 45-6. The last two sentences appear to have been copied from the notice of the town in D. W. Smith: *A Short Topographical Description of His Majesty's Province of Upper Canada*. . . . 1799.

[40]Joseph Willcocks to Richard Willcocks, November 3, 1800, quoted in W. R. Riddell: *Life of John Graves Simcoe*. 1927. Notes to Chapter XX, p. 292.

[41]*Ibid.*, August 31, 1800.

420 acres, and there were 456 inhabitants within its limits. The total value of the property was $14,871, and the taxes collected reached the staggering total of £62, a sum which would nowadays hardly pay a month's salary to a minor civic official; but it is a far cry in every respect from the York of the early years of the century to the Toronto of modern times. By 1805 the inhabitants had increased to 474, and the population slowly advanced in succeeding years; but such progress as the town had made prior to the War of 1812 was largely nullified by the two American occupations of 1813.[42] The population of the capital at that time was a mere 700, and but little preparation had been made by the British Government to place the town in a state of defence. On April 28th a large fleet of American warships appeared at the harbour entrance and landed some 2000 men to the west of the fortifications. Momentarily halted by a small Canadian force under Major Givins, the Americans were soon in possession of the town, but not before a large number of them had been killed or wounded when a British powder magazine was fired. General Sheaffe's regulars, meantime, were on the way to Kingston, leaving wounded in various farmhouses as they retreated along the Danforth Road.

The soldiery engaged in this raid were of a comparatively low calibre, and the plundering of the town was restricted only by continual exertions on the part of the Rev. John Strachan, who was also prominent during the capitulation negotiations. Whether the Government Buildings were burned by Americans or by disaffected Canadians is not certain, but it would appear probable that drunken American sailors set the fire without orders from their superiors. The Provincial Treasury suffered a loss of some £2000, and the town library and St. James' Church were entered. Numerous inhabitants, especially women, fled up Yonge Street for safety, some of them finding upon their return that their homes had been ransacked. Other ladies engaged in patriotic activities during the occupation. John Ross Robertson obtained reminiscences from Mrs. Charles Seymour, and wrote that in less than a year after the

[42]For a detailed account of the occupation of York see Guillet, *Early Life in Upper Canada*, Section V, Chapter 3.

Seymours' arrival at York "war was declared between the two countries, and Mrs. Seymour, although at the time not quite six years of age, has still a distinct remembrance of the taking of York by the American troops.

"Mrs. Grant Powell, her mother, had issued invitations for a party to be held on the 27th April. Mrs. Seymour says she well remembers the guests were slow in arriving. One or two ladies came, but not a gentleman, and all present were feeling excited and uncomfortable, dreading they knew not what. The suspense was at last ended by the hurried entrance of her father who informed them that the American fleet had been sighted. He told his wife to take the child and maid-servants and go at once to Mrs. McGill's cottage, which stood in the centre of the now Metropolitan Church square. This they did without loss of time. Dr. Powell also said that what was most required by the Canadians was food, they not having been prepared for the attack. Consequently the following morning, Mrs. Seymour says, all the ladies at Mrs. McGill's were hard at work preparing provisions for the troops, some making bread, while she and Bishop Strachan's son, James, were first sent out to pick up chips to keep the fire alight while the provisions were being cooked. The following morning Mrs. Powell went with her mother and nurse to their home, which they found a scene of desolation. The supper table, which had given her so much pleasure to admire the night before, had evidently been well appreciated by the invaders. The house had been ransacked by the Americans, who, she presumed, were looking for public papers, mistaking it for that of her grandfather, Chief Justice Powell".[47]

The Americans had all re-embarked by May 2nd, and the townspeople were left to repair the damage as best they might. A few weeks later, however, there was another raid on York, though in the attack of July 31st the Americans remained long enough merely to open the jail, seize flour and other provisions from warehouses, and parole the male inhabitants. Several public storehouses were ordered burned before the invaders withdrew. Many years elapsed

[47]John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*, 1894-1914. Vol. III, pp. 283-9.

before the town recovered from the misfortunes of 1813.

A few months after the American occupation Dr. William ("Tiger") Dunlop was despatched to York, as he relates, "to take charge of my own men, who were in general hospital in that garrison. Toronto, then a dirty straggling village, contained about sixty houses. The church—the only one—was converted into a general hospital".[44] Soon afterwards the Loyal and Patriotic Society of Upper Canada provided funds to the extent of £2,000 for the establishment of the York General Hospital, the construction of which was commenced in 1820 on land set aside for the purpose by the government; the site was the corner of King and John Streets, where the Arlington Hotel now stands, and to Archdeacon Strachan is due the credit for the hospital's erection.

Lieutenant Francis Hall visited York shortly after the close of the War of 1812, and was not favourably impressed. His opinion of the harbour appears particularly unjustified in the light of later developments:

"York, being the seat of government for the upper province, is a place of considerable importance in the eyes of its inhabitants; to a stranger, however, it presents little more than about 100 wooden houses, several of them conveniently—and even elegantly—built, and I think one, or perhaps two, of brick. The public buildings were destroyed by the Americans; but as no ruins of them are visible we must conclude either that the destruction exceeded the desolation of Jerusalem or that the loss to the arts is not quite irreparable. I believe they did not leave one stone upon another, for they did not find one. Before the city a long flat tongue of land runs into the lake, called Gibraltar Point, probably from being very *unlike* Gibraltar. York, wholly useless either as a port or a military post, would sink into a village, and the seat of government be transferred to Kingston, but for the influence of those whose property in the place would be depreciated by the change."[45]

Robert Gourlay, who walked from Montreal to York and continued by way of the Talbot Settlement to Niagara

[44]William Dunlop: *Recollections of the American War*, 1905, p. 89.
[45]Francis Hall: *Travels in Canada and the United States in 1816-17*. 1818. pp. 214-5.

during the early summer of 1817, wrote[46] that York's population was then about 1,200. An interesting picture of the town as it was two years later has been recorded by Bishop Bethune:

"We crossed the Don over a strong wooden bridge, and after half a mile's drive alighted at Mr. De Forest's Inn, the best in the place, though Jordan's, nearly opposite, notwithstanding its low shabby exterior, was the more popular one. There were a few scattered houses on King Street as far up as the residence of the Lieutenant-Governor, and on Front Street, at long intervals, they reached nearly to the old Garrison. There were also a few on Duke, Yonge and Queen Streets. There were but three brick edifices in the town, and exclusive of the military the population was about 1,200. Though inferior in size and condition to many of our present (1870) villages, York took a high rank as to social position, ... having not less than twenty families of the highest respectability—persons of refinement, and many of high intellectual culture. To these were added a small sprinkling of military. For the size of the place there was a large amount of hospitality exercised, and on a handsome and bountiful scale."[47]

Soon afterwards E. A. Talbot visited York, being impressed more by its swampy site than by such material improvements as its thirteen hundred citizens had contrived to make:

"It now contains 1,336 inhabitants, and about 250 houses, many of which exhibit a very neat appearance. The house in which the Lieutenant-Governor resides is built of wood; and, though by no means contemptible, is much inferior to some private houses in the town, particularly to that of the Honourable and Reverend Dr. Strachan. . . . The streets of York are regularly laid out, intersecting each

[46]Robert Gourlay's opinions upon the economic condition of the province may be found in his *Statistical Account of Upper Canada*. 3 volumes. 1822. Reference to this much-persecuted Reformer recalls an interesting study in impressions: Archdeacon Strachan considered Gourlay to be "a wicked and malignant person who has no regard for the truth"; while Gourlay was equally complimentary concerning his ultra-Tory critic, describing him as "a monstrous little fool of a person—rogue would have been nearer the truth".

[47]A. N. Bethune: *Memoirs of the Right Rev. John Strachan*. 1870. p. 61.

other at right angles. Only one of them, however, is yet completely built; and in wet weather the unfinished streets are, if possible, muddier and dirtier than those of Kingston. The situation of the town is very unhealthy; for it stands on a piece of low marshy land, which is better calculated for frog-pond or beaver-meadow than for the residence of human beings. The inhabitants are, on this account, much subject, particularly in Spring and Autumn, to agues and intermittent fevers; and probably five-sevenths of the people are annually afflicted with these complaints. He who first fixed upon this spot as the site of the capital of Upper Canada, whatever predilection he may have had for the roaring of frogs, or for the effluvia arising from stagnated waters and putrid vegetables, can certainly have had no very great regard for preserving the lives of his Majesty's subjects."[44]

The editor of the *Gazette* was early sensible of the unhealthful location of York, and we find that in 1808 he published directions which he hoped would maintain the physical condition of his subscribers:

"As the month is fast approaching which in this part of the country is understood to be the ague and lake fever season we publish the following select medical advice, wishing that if followed it may prove a useful preventive, viz.: Use great regularity and moderate abstemiousness in diet, avoiding fat substances, matters which encourage superfluous bile. Two gentle emetics and a mild proportion of cathartic medicine, previously taken, are sufficient."[45]

During the eighteen-twenties York did not make much progress in population, the number of citizens in 1827 being only 1,817. It was still a very small town in every respect,

[44]E. A. Talbot: *Five Years' Residence in the Canadas*. 1824. Vol. I, pp. 100-2. Though Edward Talbot was in general unappreciative of Upper Canada and its inhabitants, his opinion of York is similar to that of several other travellers. John Howison, for example, was impressed with "the natural unpleasantness of its situation", and noted that it was "nearly defenceless" and "not at all calculated for the seat of government". He found that York's trade was "very trifling", and was of the opinion that the town owed "its present population and magnitude entirely to its being the seat of government, for it is destitute of every natural advantage except that of a good harbour". (See John Howison: *Sketches of Upper Canada*, 1821, pp. 55-6.)

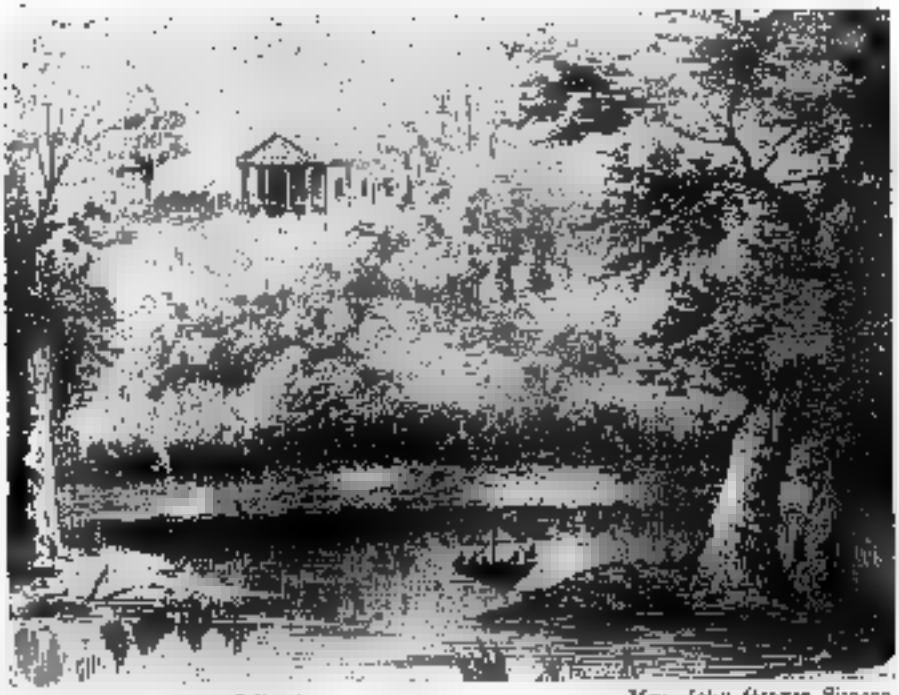
[45]*York Gazette*, August 13, 1808.

but a public well had been sunk at the market-place, a volunteer fire company organized, and itinerant theatricals and circus performances were not unusual. After 1825 the open space in front of the Jail and Court House was the "public place" of the town, and crowds gathered there to hear election harangues from William Lyon Mackenzie and other politicians of the day—their reception varying from popular enthusiasm to mob violence.

In July, 1827, Captain Basil Hall visited York, "formerly called Toronto,—a name which it was a sin to change"; but he was more interested in the cordial reception accorded him by certain of the inhabitants than in a survey of the material aspects of the town. As he points out, "There is a bright charm in the renewal of old friendships; but at the same time, on a long journey in a distant foreign land, there is a fine sparkling sort of freshness in the active hospitality of new acquaintances of whom all that we know is from what we see; and, as that is full of kindness to us and of anxiety to supply our wants, there is a fairy-tale kind of animation cast over incidents which, if enacted in the tranquil life of home, would probably possess little or no romantic character". Captain Hall experienced in York "one of the truest pleasures of travelling":

"Our dinner was laid under the fly of a tent, on the rich greensward of a dressed piece of ground, sloping gently towards the lake. We sat on the eastern side of the house, so that by five o'clock the shadow fell on us. The deep sea-blue surface of old Ontario was now quite smooth; for the morning breeze had fallen, except where a few straggling catspaws, as we call them, here and there breathed on the face of the calm mirror and straightway disappeared. . . . The air had become deliciously cool and more grateful than I can describe, after the sultry day to which we had been exposed. The wine was plunged into a large vessel filled with ice, close to the table; but the water cooled in a goblet, or unbaked earthen pitcher, brought from Bengal; the sight of which, with drops like dew oozing from its sides, carried my thoughts far back to times when, with friends now all gone or scattered never to meet more, I first learned the luxuries of a hot climate."[50]

[50]Basil Hall: *Travels in America in 1827 and 1828*. 1829. Vol. I, pp. 262-3.



John Ross Robertson Collection. Mrs. John Graves Simcoe.

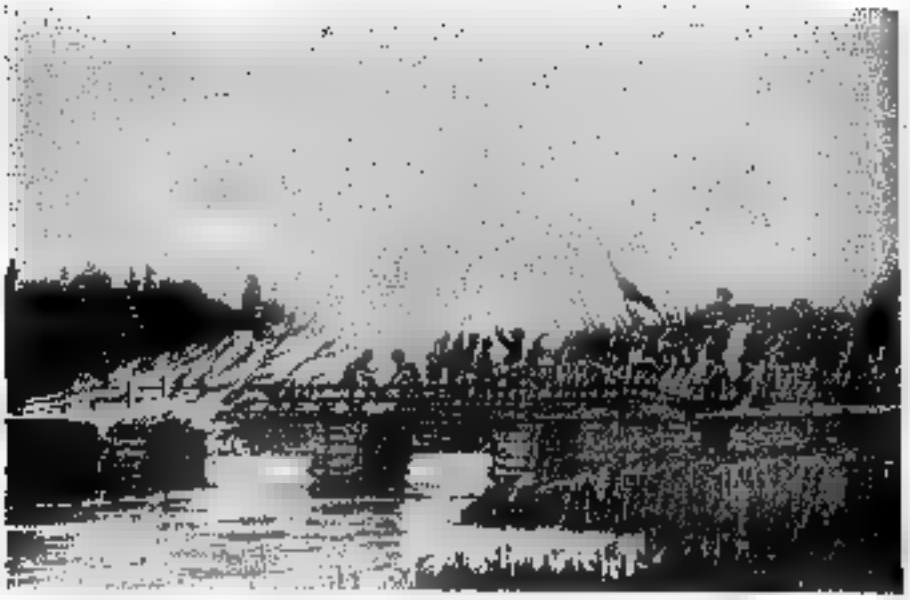
CASTLE FRANK IN 1796

This is one of Mrs. Simcoe's best sketches, and depicts a building dear to her heart.

Royal Ontario Museum. Paul Kane.

SPEARING SALMON BY TORCHLIGHT

"In my boyish days I have seen as many as 100 light-jacks gliding about the Bay of Toronto and have joined in the sport."—PAUL KANE.



Isaac Halliday.

BRITISH TROOPS BURNING THE DON BRIDGE AT THE TIME OF THE AMERICAN OCCUPATION OF YORK, 1813

The reputation of General Sheaffe was not enhanced by his speedy retreat eastward on this occasion.

Scadding's *Toronto of Old.*

YORK HARBOUR FROM THE DON BLOCKHOUSE, 1810

This interesting fortification did not survive the American occupation of the town.

There were several cemeteries in old York, but all trace of them has, of course, long since disappeared. The earliest was an ancient Indian burying-ground at the Sandhill, to the west of Yonge Street, in the vicinity of the present St. Michael's College. Dr. Scadding describes the locality as "a moderate rise, showing where, in the woods here, at the top of the rise, on the west side, was the 'Indian's Grave', made noticeable to the traveller by a little civilized railing surrounding it. The story connected therewith was this: When the United States forces were landing in 1813 near the Humber Bay, with the intention of attacking the Fort and taking York, one of Major Givins' Indians concealed himself in a tree, and from that position fired into the boats with fatal effect repeatedly. He was soon discovered, and speedily shot. The body was afterwards found and deposited with respect in a little grave here on the crest of the Sandhill, where an ancient Indian burying-ground had existed, though long abandoned. It would seem that by some means the scalp of this poor Indian was packed up with the trophies of the capture of York and conveyed by Lieutenant Dudley to Washington. From being found in company with the Speaker's Mace on that occasion, the foolish story arose of its having been discovered over the Speaker's chair in the Parliament Building that was destroyed".[51]

Farther northward, on the north side of Bloor Street, and extending from Yonge Street almost to Avenue Road, was the Potter's Field, the gates of which, and the keeper's lodge, were long a familiar sight. Those who declined the use of St. James' Churchyard and the other burial grounds found a place in this cemetery, officially called The York General or Strangers' Burying Ground. Walton's *Directory for 1834* contains the following concerning it:

"This institution owes its origin to Mr. Carfrae, junior. It comprises six acres of ground, and has a neat sexton's house built close by the gate. The name of the sexton is John Wolstencroft, who keeps a register of every person buried therein. Persons of all creeds and persons of no creed are allowed burial in this cemetery: fees to the sexton, 5s. It was instituted in the fall of 1825, and in-

[51] Scadding, *Toronto of Old*, p. 399.

corporated by Act of Parliament, 30th January, 1826. It is managed by five trustees, who are chosen for life; and in case of the death of any of them a public meeting of the inhabitants is called, when they elect a successor or successors in their place. The present trustees (1833) are Thomas Carfrae, jun., Thomas D. Morrison, Peter Paterson, John Ewart, Thomas Hetliwell."[52]

The five trustees named were, respectively, Collector of Customs, doctor, iron merchant, builder and brewer, all of them prominent citizens in early York. Concerning the later history of the cemetery Dr. Scadding says:

"A remote sequestered piece of ground in 1825, the Potter's Field in 1845 was more or less surrounded by buildings, and regarded as an impediment in the way of public improvement. Interments were accordingly prohibited. To some extent it has been cleared of human remains, and in due time will be built over. Its successor and representative is the Toronto Necropolis, the trustees of which are empowered, after the lapse of twenty-one years, to sell the old burying-ground."[53]

In another direction, west of Spadina Avenue, was the ancient military cemetery, "a clearing in the thick brushwood of the locality, of an oblong shape, its four picketed sides directed exactly towards the four cardinal points. The setting off of the neighbouring streets and lots at a different angle caused the boundary lines of this plot to run askew to every other straight line in the vicinity. Over how many a now forgotten and even obliterated grave have the customary farewell volleys here been fired!—those final honours to the soldier, always so touching; intended doubtless, in the old barbaric way, to be an incentive to endurance in the sound and well; and consolatory in anticipation to the sick and dying.

"In the mould of this old cemetery, what a mingling from distant quarters! Hearts finally at rest here, fluttered in their last beats far away, at times, to old familiar scenes 'beloved in vain' long ago; to villages, hedgerows, lanes, fields, in green England and Ireland, in rugged Scotland and Wales. Many a widow, standing at an open grave here,

[52]George Walton: *York Commercial Directory for 1834*. 1833. p. 131.
[53]Scadding, *ibid.*, p. 409.

holding the hand of orphan boy or girl, has 'wept her soldier dead', not slain in the battlefield, indeed, but fallen, nevertheless, in the discharge of duty, before one or other of the subtle assailants that, even in times of peace, not unfrequently bring the career of the military man to a premature close. Among the remains in this ancient burial-plot are those of a child of the first Governor of Upper Canada, a fact commemorated on the exterior of the mortuary chapel over his own grave in Devonshire, by a tablet on which are the words: 'Katharine, born in Upper Canada, 16th Jan., 1793; died and was buried at York Town, in that Province, in 1794'."[44]

While upon the subject of landmarks in York and vicinity it will be appropriate to describe the eight blockhouses, one or two of which still remain—interesting survivals of other days. The first was located in the south section of the enclosure of the fortifications as erected by Governor Simcoe. The second was farther westward, about the centre of the parade-ground. A third was on Gibraltar Point (now Hanlan's): this blockhouse, which had one or two guns, was erected in 1794 and demolished in 1818. The point upon which it was located was later dredged out, and ferry docks erected near by; and in the early eighteen-nineties the remains of the blockhouse, as well as some small cannon balls, were uncovered during dredging operations.

To the north-west of the fortifications was located a fourth blockhouse, but it disappeared in the early eighteen-twenties. The remaining blockhouses were scattered about at a considerable distance from one another. One was located on the west side of the Don River, near the mouth, just south of the site of the first Parliament Buildings. It was destroyed during the American occupation of 1813. At the corner of Sherbourne and Bloor Streets, on the east side, stood a sixth blockhouse, and a seventh of similar construction occupied the north-east corner of Spadina and College Streets, where an office building recently replaced the church known as Broadway Tabernacle. The eighth blockhouse stood on the east side of Yonge, opposite the present Belmont Street. The structure was built of logs and covered an area of 100 square feet. It was erected by

[44] *Ibid.*, pp. 64-5.

the Provincial Government in 1838, presumably in anticipation of further advances upon Toronto similar to those which characterised the rising of the previous year. Before its demolition in 1866 several families had occupied it as a residence.

All the blockhouses were very similar in construction and adaptability for defence. The Bloor-Sherbourne and College-Spadina structures were almost exactly alike, being built of squared pine logs about a foot in diameter, and the interstices were filled with mortar. They were two storeys in height, about twenty-five feet square, and were entered by a flight of steps from the ground to the upper storey. Loopholes for muskets enabled defending troops to command every approach on all four sides. The buildings would accommodate about fifty men, twenty of whom could be stationed at the loopholes at one time.

A military memory of another nature is provided by the low log buildings which long stood on the Garrison Common. They were controlled by the Indian Department, and in one of them was a forge in charge of Mr. Higgins, armourer; here the Indians were able to have their fishing-spears, axes, knives and tomahawks sharpened. Another building in this group later provided a schoolroom for the children of the locality. Before returning to the progress of the town itself it will not be out of place to mention that an interesting reminiscence of the Davenport Road district relates to the earliest ice-houses in the vicinity of York, "rude buildings of slab, thickly thatched over with pine branches",[53] where spring-water ice obtained from near-by mill-ponds was first stored in large quantities about 1829-30 by one Richards, a negro.

In July, 1833, the population of the town proper was given as "4,001 males and 3,472 females". But added to this was "Macaulay Town, 558; from Osgoode Hall, where Macaulay Town ends, to Farr's Brewery, Lot Street, about 400; and Windmill, about 300";[54] making a grand total of 8,731 people. Just prior to its advance to city status York did not extend even into localities which have long been considered the centre of Toronto. A writer notes that

[53] *Ibid.*, p. 410.
[54] Walton's *Directory*, facing p. 125.

"Albert Street, now the most densely-built portion off Yonge Street, was in 1834 known as Macaulay Lane, and described by Walton as 'fronting the fields'. From this point a long stretch of fine forest-land extended to Yorkville; the fields which Macaulay Lane fronted were the improvements around Dr. Macaulay's abode. The white entrance gate to his house was near where now a street leads into Trinity Square. Dr. Macaulay's clearing on the north side of Macaulay Lane was, in relation to the first town-plot of York, long considered a locality particularly remote, a spot to be discovered by strangers not without difficulty. In attempting to reach it we have distinct accounts of persons bewildered and lost for long hours in the intervening marshes and woods. Mr. Justice Boulton, travelling from Prescott in his own vehicle and bound for Dr. Macaulay's domicile, was dissuaded, on reaching Mr. Small's house at the eastern extremity of York, from attempting to push on to his destination, although it was by no means late, on account of the inconveniences and perils to be encountered; and half the following day was taken up in accomplishing the residue of the journey. A quarter of a century sufficed to transform Dr. Macaulay's garden and grounds into a well-peopled city district."[67]

On one occasion at least there was some remarkable wild pigeon shooting in the town. An account contemporary with that pioneer sport says that "some two summers ago a stream of them took it into their heads to fly over York; and for three or four days the town resounded with one continued roll of firing, as if a skirmish were going on in the streets,—every gun, pistol, musket, blunderbuss, and fire-arm of whatever description was put in requisition. The constables and police magistrates were on the alert, and offenders without number were pulled up,—among whom were honourable members of the executive and legislative councils, crown lawyers, respectable staid citizens, and last of all the sheriff of the county; till at last it was found that pigeons, flying within easy shot, were a temptation too strong for human virtue to withstand; and so the contest

[67] J. Timperlake: *Illustrated Toronto, Past and Present*. 1877. pp. 102-3.

was given up, and a sporting jubilee proclaimed to all and sundry".[48]

A glimpse of the life of a class of citizens which does not figure largely in the pages of historical works is afforded by the following enthusiastic letter[49] of Sophia Hill, an immigrant of but a few months:

"Little York, Upper Canada.

Dear Father and Mother:—I have to inform you that John and I are living at his aunt Carpenter's, and we are very comfortably settled indeed. John has plenty of work, and we are doing very well indeed, for John is getting 7s. 6d. a day of our money; and his aunt is very kind to me, and I am just as comfortable as I was at home, indeed more so, for I never knew the want of victuals or drink since I entered my aunt's house, and while I am writing this we have a bottle of good old port wine on the table; and I was wishing that you could enjoy yourselves with the same. But if you were all here, to enjoy yourselves altogether, it would be more comfortable; and if you were here you would find it a great deal better than you do in England, for you do not hear any complaint or any begging here. I should like to fly over to Frome to see you all, but if you would give me all the birds' cages you have got I would not stop there, for I never saw a more beautiful, pleasant place in all my life than Little York is. I shall not persuade you to come, you can use your own mind; there are plenty of your tools used here for combing flax.

"Please to tell my brother Frank there is hatting business carried on here, and if he had a little money he might soon be a gentleman. Tell Frederick shoemaking is an excellent trade, and so is glazing. Please to tell my brother Richard that gardening is one of the best of trades here, for people are too independent to raise their own garden-stuff, and a cabbage is sold for 4d. in the market; a good gardener is wanted here very bad indeed. Please to tell

[48] *Sussex Emigrants for Canada*, 1833, pp. 56-7. The description, however, is evidently taken from Dr. William Dunlop's *Statistical Sketches of Upper Canada* (1832), so that the event chronicled probably occurred in 1830.

[49] Printed in the *Quarterly Review*, September, 1835, in the section devoted to "Emigration—Letters from Canada", pp. 426-7.

my dear sister Eliza if I had hearkened to her I never should have been in America; but I only wish she had my spirit to come here too,—she would not want to go back again. Ask her if she knew Nancy Poolman, in Wine-Street, who used to play with Edith Sheppard so much, and tell her I am living with her, and am as happy as the day is long; and I should have been ten times more so, had it not been for the loss of my poor child, who died soon after we came here—she had every attention paid her.

"We were five weeks coming from Bristol to Quebec, and eighteen days to Little York; we had a very pleasant passage on the ocean, but very rough up the rapids, and that is the reason Mrs. Carpenter wished me to come New York way. Give my kind love to Little Jane and tell her I wish she was out here, as she could get as much work as she could do, and good work too—it is 2s. 6d. for making a shirt, without any stitching, and I have as much in the house as I can do. Please to tell Mr. and Mrs. F— that I think they were foolish in going back again, for I am sure they might have done very well here; but that is the way of some people, they just come and look round and run back again before they know anything about it, and give it a bad name; but I speak as I find it: I have never known the want of anything since I landed in America; and wearing apparel is just as cheap as it is at home; I have bought a very handsome leghorn bonnet for 19s., a new hat for John, a pair of shoes each, two new gowns and aprons, a very handsome black silk shawl, and a pair of new trousers for John, and I have a pound to spare; and this is more than I should have had in Frome in a year, therefore I do not repent leaving it; but if I had you all here I should be happier. Do not delay writing, for I long to hear from you.

From your loving Son and Daughter,

John and Sophia Hill."

Another of the immigrants of the early thirties who so greatly increased the population of Upper Canada wrote from York in 1832 that he had not enough capital to take up farming, "so I thought I had better give up all thoughts of land and go on with shoemaking, which I think is the

most profitable trade here; the journeyman's wages are very high; if you put out the best top-boots to make, they are £1 5s. making: Wellington boots, 14s.; and common boots that people wear instead of high shoes are 7s. 6d. making; women's low shoes, 8s. I have got more work than I can do myself. I am happy to tell you I never had a better chance in my life to do well".[90]

The town in which these tradesmen's families were doing so much better than they could ever hope to in the Old Land was described by a contemporary traveller as standing "in a level and marshy country. The place is prosperous, and the price of building-ground struck me as very high. . . . The public buildings are just what they ought to be—plain and substantial. . . . The Government House is of wood—rather a singular circumstance, since brick is a common building material in town".[91] When the Rev. Isaac Fidler, for a time Anglican missionary at Thornhill, arrived at York in 1832 after a five-day passage across the lake by sailing-vessel, he immediately "went in quest of lodgings; but emigrants had begun to pour in by hundreds daily, and all places where boarders were admitted were already occupied. The Archdeacon's son, on learning my difficulty, accompanied me to two or three houses, at the last of which we obtained lodgings for eight dollars a week—about one-third what they had cost us in New York. . . . The number of brick and wood buildings in progress of erection was quite surprising. All over the town were building lots on which masons and carpenters were busy. The saw, the axe, the chisel, the hammer, and the trowel resounded on every side".

In addition to private buildings, the Rev. Mr. Fidler noticed that "a capacious market-house of brick" and the Houses of Parliament were being constructed. The corner-stone of the new St. James' Church was laid during his stay in York, and such a large crowd was attracted by the event that most of the ladies could not obtain admittance. Observing that the circumstance proved "how strongly the spirit of independence exists in Canada", he noted that "the Arch-

[90] Letter of Humphrey Cooper, October 25, 1832, quoted in *Sussex Emigrants for Canada*, pp. 47-8.

[91] Thomas Hamilton: *Men and Manners in America*. 1833. Vol. II, pp. 334-5.

deacon's lady and daughters, with some other ladies, ascended to the belfry (*i.e.*—of the old church), but the room was already so crowded with spectators that admission to the windows was impossible unless some of the others would resign their place. I interceded for the ladies, but those who were already on the vantage ground refused to resign it, and the ladies were consequently debarred".[62]

A formal description of York at this period of its history notes that "it is well situated on the north of an excellent harbour on Lake Ontario, and contains the House of Assembly, Government House, Provincial Bank, College, Court House, Hall for the Law Society, Gaol, Barracks, Churches and other places of worship, with several other public buildings; the streets are spacious and regular; many of the houses are built of brick and stone, but the majority are of timber. The population is considerable, and rapidly increasing. Being the residence of the Chief Officers of the Government, many of the luxuries of life are to be had. There are several newspapers published here. The lands in the neighbourhood are highly cultivated, and the market of the town is always well supplied".[63]

As a general rule this last statement was true, but a resident of Toronto in 1837 noted that there were times when it was difficult to procure any meat but salt pork; it may be assumed, however, that this condition was caused almost entirely by difficulties of transportation in the spring season, when the roads were breaking up and navigation had not commenced. Mrs. Jameson refers to a comparative scarcity of this kind in Toronto in April, 1837. She was living in the fashionable western suburbs of the city of that day—in the vicinity of Spadina and Palace (Front) Streets—and the remoteness of the Toronto market necessitated management and forethought to keep the larder full:

"Our table, however, is pretty well supplied. Beef is tolerable, but lean; mutton bad, scarce, and dearer than beef; pork excellent and delicate, being fattened principally on Indian corn. The fish is of many various kinds, and delicious. During the whole winter we had black bass and

[62]Isaac Fidler: *Observations on the Professions, Literature, Manners and Emigration in the United States and Canada.* 1833. pp. 257 *et seq.*

[63]Francis A. Evans: *The Emigrant's Director and Guide.* 1833. p. 143.

whitefish, caught in holes in the ice, and brought down by the Indians. Venison, game and wild fowl are always to be had; the quails, which are caught in immense numbers near Toronto, are most delicate eating; I lived on them when I could eat nothing else. What they call partridge here is a small species of pheasant, also very good; and now we are promised snipes and woodcocks in abundance. The wild goose is also excellent eating when well cooked. . . . The higher class of people are supplied with provisions from their own lands and farms, or by certain persons they know and employ. . . . Those who have farms near the city, or a country establishment of their own, raise poultry and vegetables for their own table. As yet I have seen no vegetables whatever but potatoes; even in the best seasons they are not readily to be procured in the market."[64]

There were, of course, fancy foods available in Toronto. Those who could afford imported delicacies were usually able to buy them, though some luxuries—oysters, for example,—had often to be purchased in large quantities. In the *Upper Canada Gazette* occurs the advertisement of James F. Smith, a merchant at the corner of Church and Palace (Front) Streets, and in his announcement dated March 25, 1830, he states that he "daily expects Oysters (in shell). Lobsters, Mackerel, North Shore Herring and Salmon pickled and smoked". He also advertises for sale a large variety of imported wines and liquors, "Sugar-Double, Single Refined, and moist; Tea of every description; Sauces, Pickles, East India preserves; Candied Lemons, Citron and Orange Peel; Anchovy Paste and Fresh Curry; Codfish of various kinds; Digby and Lockfine Herrings; English Cheese—Dolphin, King's Arms, Berkley, Pine Apple, Truckle and Double Gloucester; Tobacco, Snuff, Havana Cigars and Pipes."[65] In the early thirties even ice cream, then usually called ices, was sold in York. Thomas Hamilton states that in passing through the streets he was "rather surprised to observe an *affiche* intimating that ice creams were to be had within. The weather being hot I

[64]Anna Jameson: *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada*. 1837. Vol. I, pp. 267-9.

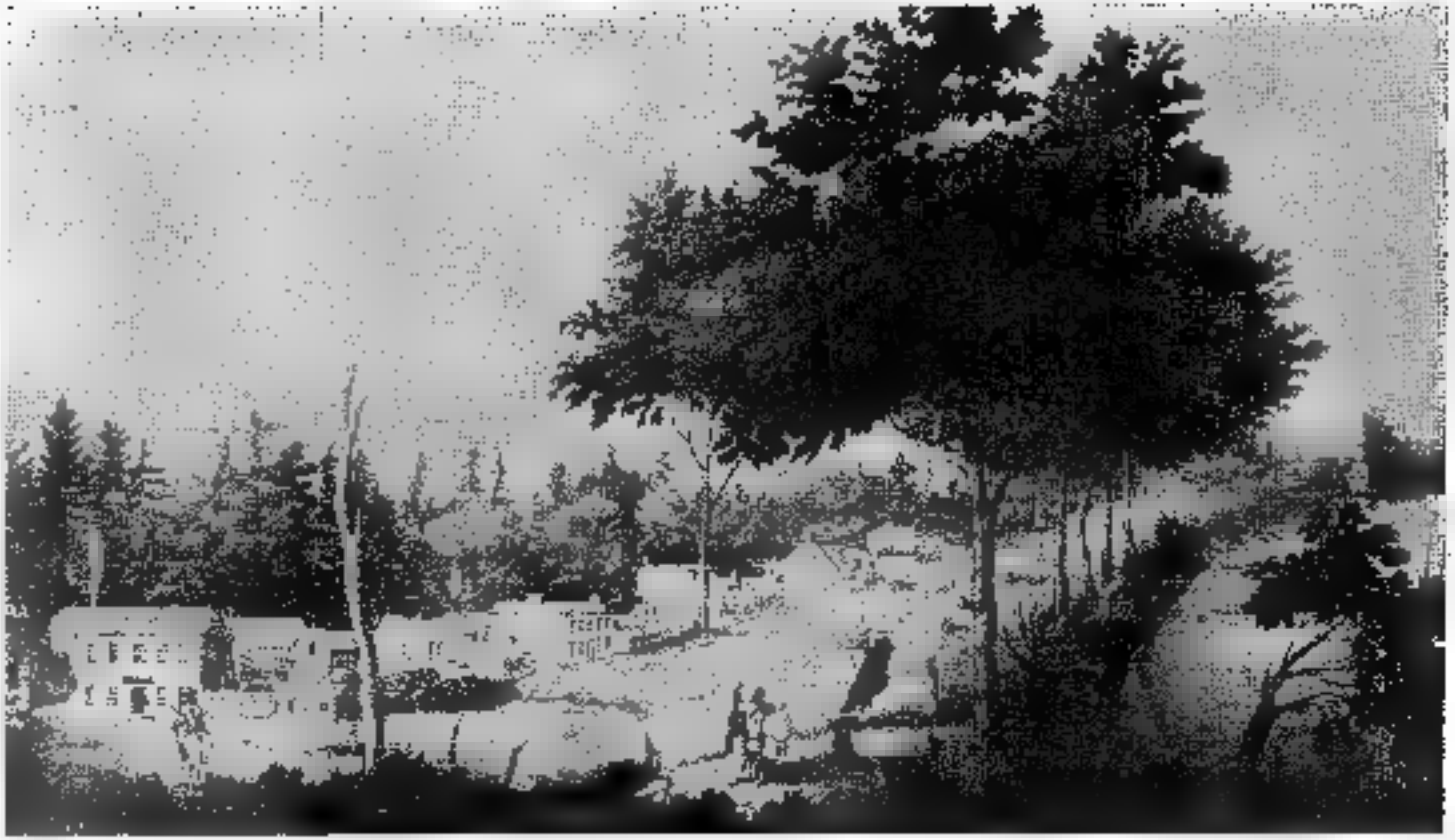
[65]*Upper Canada Gazette*, March 25, 1830.

Public Archives of Canada

Lieutenant Sampronius Stratton

YORK BARRACKS, U.C., MAY 13, 1804

Among the interesting activities being carried on by the soldiers may be seen men engaged in "stumping", and in sawing planks with a whip-saw, one man standing in a pit in this typical pioneer work.



Public Archives of Canada. Artist Unknown.

York, the New Capital of Upper Canada, 1808

The town then fringed the shore between Jarvis and Parliament Streets.

entered, and found the master of the establishment to be an Italian. I never ate better ices at Grange's".[66]

On March 6, 1834, the town of York became the city of Toronto. The change to city status was not accomplished without a fight. The Family Compact and ultra-Tory party, who at that time claimed a monopoly of the spirit of loyalty, were determined in their opposition to the alteration of the good old British "York" into the "wild and terrific" Indian name "Toronto". It was opposed for another reason, too, and one for which there was better argument. It was quite apparent that the change meant the concession of responsible government to the inhabitants, for while they had formerly elected merely one town warden (whose chief duty seems to have been to preside at the town-meeting), they were, under city status, to have power to select the entire City Council which was to replace the Court of Quarter Sessions, the chief governing body perviously. This quite evidently imposed upon the citizens the necessity of an appeal to the people, or—as one of the most violent critics of the scheme, Chief Justice William Dummer Powell, described it—"the curse of a popular election". But all the power that could be brought to bear was not enough, and it is consequently quite appropriate that the first Mayor to be chosen from his fellow aldermen was that agitator and Reformer—the John Wilkes of his period—William Lyon Mackenzie.

The inauguration of the city of Toronto in March, 1834, was the signal for great developments in all directions. Numerous by-laws and regulations which were passed in quick succession are described elsewhere. Among other improvements the first wooden sidewalks were built to replace the footpaths and flagstones, and the main streets were graded and gravelled. The financial condition of the new city, we are informed, was "wretched":

"The value of all the property in the city was under five hundred thousand dollars, and there was a debt of forty-five thousand dollars, contracted on account of the Market Buildings. In anticipation of the taxes it was necessary to borrow five thousand dollars. The Bank of Upper Canada refused to advance the money, though this might perhaps be

[66]Hamilton, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 335.

YORK, THE NEW CAPITAL OF UPPER CANADA, 1833
The town then fringed the shore between Jarvis and Parliament Streets.

accounted for by the fact that the Bank President, Dr. Widmer, was defeated by the Mayor in the election of councillors. Application was next made to the manager of the Farmers' Bank, and, on personal security of the Mayor and other members of the Council being given, the money was loaned. To meet the demands on the city treasury it was necessary to levy a rate of three pence on the pound sterling. This was regarded as a monstrous piece of fiscal oppression, almost sufficient to justify a small rebellion. To such an extent was the public dissatisfaction carried at what was considered the exorbitant taxes that the Mayor found it necessary to call a public meeting to make an explanation.

"The meeting called by the Mayor took place on the 29th of July. After Mr. Mackenzie had explained at some length the necessity for the three-penny tax, Mr. Sheriff Jarvis interrupted by saying it was his intention to move a censure the conduct of the Mayor. There were some two thousand persons present, and as the majority were the friends of the Mayor he met this menace by a resolution pledging the citizens not to support at the next Parliamentary election a candidate whose position as an office-holder made him dependent upon the Government. The meeting became very noisy and uproarious, and was in consequence adjourned till the next day. The meeting had commenced at six o'clock in the evening, and on the morning of the second day the opponents of the Mayor issued placards calling the adjourned meeting for three o'clock in the afternoon—an hour at which it would be very inconvenient for the mechanics and business men to attend. The Mayor regarded this as a breach of faith, forbade the city bellman to cry the meeting for that hour, and resolved not to attend it himself. The market, in which the meeting was held, was a parallelogram, and over the butchers' stalls was a balcony to accommodate spectators. While the Sheriff was addressing the meeting he said: 'I care no more for Mr. Mackenzie than'—here he looked up and saw a crow flying over—'that crow', he added. This was deemed a great oratorical stroke and it elicited a cheer. The crowd above, in stamping their feet, broke down the balcony, and in the descent some were impaled on the butchers' hooks, and

others were wounded by the falling debris or by the crush of persons upon them."[67]

Seven or eight people, including Sheriff Jarvis' son, died of the injuries they received, and others were crippled for life by this unfortunate accident.

The new city forged ahead a little too rapidly at the start, and there was a reaction. The *Toronto Albion* outlines the advance as it appeared about a year and a half later:

"In Mr. Gourlay's *Statistical Account of Upper Canada*, published in 1817, he writes of what was then Little York as follows:—'I suppose its population to be 1,200 souls; for five miles round the capital of Upper Canada scarcely one improved farm can be seen in contact with another. The only connected settlement is about five miles to the north of Yonge Street; in other directions, as far as the district goes, you might travel to its utmost limits and not find more than one farm house for every three miles.' Such was the state of things in Upper Canada in 1817. In 1835 we find the town of Little York metamorphosed into the City of Toronto and a population of from 12,000 to 14,000 souls. Supposing that on the average six persons lived in each house, there were then 200 houses; upon the same calculation, now there must be, taking the large amount of the estimated population, 2,333 houses, and supposing the average value of the houses in 1817 to be £200 each, the building property was then worth £40,000; and suppose their average value now to be £400 each (and considering the number of large and valuable houses being built it will be greatly too low) the building property of the city is worth £933,200, showing an outlay of £893,200 since 1817. This applies to dwelling houses alone, and, when the large stores and public improvements are taken into account, the least sum that can be supposed is a million. Look again at the difference in the three principal outlets; instead of the four miles Mr. Gourlay talks of, on which there was scarcely one improved farm, there is now scarcely a lot not improved. . . .

[67] Timperlake, *op. cit.*, pp. 94-5. The tax rate which almost provoked riots amounted to about fifteen mills on the dollar. For an excellent description of Toronto in 1834 see the account of "An English Visitor", reprinted in the Toronto Centenary Number of the *New Outlook*, March 14, 1934.

"It is not unusual to hear people croaking that there is a check to business and buildings in Toronto; every place is subject to such checks; a year or two ago Rochester was universally thought to be on the decline; it is now all activity. The truth was that the folks of Rochester had done as those of Toronto did last year—they went too fast, and a little time must be taken to recover it."[68]

In 1832 the first great cholera epidemic had visited York, and about 400 persons died of the disease. Archdeacon Strachan was as active in good works during this time of stress as he had been during the American occupation of 1813. He circulated a subscription list by which £1,263 9s. was collected for the relief of widows and orphans bereaved by the epidemic, and 150 families benefitted from the fund. An inscribed piece of plate was presented to Dr. Strachan by a large number of citizens, who rightly considered that his self-sacrifice was worthy of public recognition.[69] Memories of the distressing conditions so vividly narrated in Defoe's *Journal of the Plague Year* are called to mind when one reads in the Court records of 1833 the resolution "that the cholera carts be sold forthwith". The Potters' Field had, by order of the Magistrates, received the bodies of most of those who had died in the York hospital.[70]

From time to time during the next quarter century the cholera or, as it was later called, "ship fever", recurred in Toronto as in other parts of Canada during the days of extensive immigration under improper supervision. In 1834, shortly after the unfortunate market accident, the pestilence broke out again. Concerning William Lyon Mac-

[68]*Toronto Albion*, 1835. (The exact date of issue is not available.)

[69]See J. E. Middleton: *The Municipality of Toronto, a History*. 1923. Vol. I, pp. 168-9, for details concerning this presentation, and a list of the subscribers. A rare pamphlet descriptive of the presentation, the address and inscription, and Archdeacon Strachan's reply, is in the Toronto Public Library. It is entitled *Tribute of Respect and Gratitude to the Honourable and Venerable Archdeacon Strachan, by a number of the Inhabitants of the City of Toronto*. 1835. A sermon on the cholera epidemic, by Archdeacon Mountain, dedicated to Lord Aylmer and published at his request, was delivered in the Cathedral Church of Quebec on December 30, 1832. When printed in Quebec in 1833 it was entitled *A Retrospect of the Summer and Autumn of 1832*. A considerable part of it may be found in the *Canadian Literary Magazine*, April, 1833.

[70]Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

kenzie's unselfish activities during this epidemic his biographer says:

"During the term of Mr. Mackenzie's mayoralty the cholera revisited the city, and swept away every twentieth inhabitant. During the whole of the time that it raged, the Mayor was at the post of duty and of danger. He sought out the helpless victims of the disease and administered to their wants. He was constant in his attendance on the cholera hospital. In the height of the panic occasioned by this terrible disease, when nobody else could be induced to take the cholera patients to the hospital, he visited the abodes of the victims, and, placing them in the cholera cart with whatever assistance he could get from the families of the plague-stricken, drove them to the hospital. On some days he made several visits of this kind to the pest-house. Day and night he gave himself no rest. At length worn out by fatigue, the disease from which he had done so much to save others overtook himself. The attack was not of an aggravated nature; and he was fortunate in obtaining the timely assistance of Dr. Widmer; for medical men were difficult to be obtained, and many persons without medical education or experience practised on the unfortunate sufferers."[71]

In 1849 occurred the great ship fever epidemic, spread through the Canadas by incoming settlers. A writer describes that in Toronto "the worst ravages of the disease had been among immigrants worn by fatigue and misery, and among the lower class of the static population who were steady patrons of the small drinking-shops with which the city abounded".[72] Large numbers of immigrants died on Toronto wharves or in the hospital at the north-west corner of King and John Streets. January 3, 1850, was appointed a day of public thanksgiving for the end of the plague.

Again in 1854 there was a recurrence of the disease. As

[71]Charles Lindsey: *Life and Times of William Lyon Mackenzie*, 1862. Vol. I, pp. 316-7.

[72]Middleton, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 244. There was also a plague of cholera in 1847. For a most vivid and poignant account of suffering and death in Toronto see Patrick Slater: *The Yellow Briar*, 1933, pp. 53-9. During the summer and autumn of that year 863 poor Irish citizens died in Toronto, and of 97,933 immigrants from Ireland during the spring and summer a total of 18,625 had died before winter set in.

in the visitations of 1832 and 1834 there was one man whose self-sacrifice merited the public thanks of his fellow-citizens; and anyone might well envy the appreciation which was accorded—not after his death but during his lifetime—to Joseph Rowell, Councillor and Chairman of the Board of Health. The City Council presented him with a resolution engrossed on parchment, "for his indefatigable zeal and perseverance during the late epidemic, he having spared neither time nor trouble in endeavouring to arrest the ravages of that dreadful disease; cleansing filthy habitations, visiting the sick, and even coffining the dead. He was a daily gratuitous visitor of the hospitals, providing for the comfort and medical attendance of the unhappy victims of that destroying disorder, there being no duty, however disagreeable or dangerous, that he did not cheerfully undertake, to the very great and material assistance of the Board of Health in the execution of their arduous and responsible duties".[73]

While upon the subject of medical conditions it will be of interest to refer to Mr. Gidney, who was possibly Toronto's first dentist. In any case he received "very liberal patronage" as early as 1825, and after some years "in the most opulent and enlightened capitals in Europe" was back in town again; all of which he explains in his well-worded announcement in the press of 1836:

"Mr. G. remembers with lively gratitude the very liberal patronage received during his residence in this place in the winter of 1825. He now thinks that his services will be more valuable from the ten years' additional practice, 6 or 7 years of which have been passed in some of the most opulent and enlightened Capitals in Europe."[74]

In later years, even in comparatively recent times, there were numerous quacks and "characters" about the Market who would sell you anything from cure-all salve to fly-paper, and whose repertoire comprehended any service from pulling teeth to writing love letters.

Meanwhile the city was extending westward. In 1834 King Street had 287 buildings, the greater part of them, of course, east of Yonge; and in the same year Yonge Street

[73]Quoted in Middleton, *ibid.*, p. 256.
[74]*Courier of Upper Canada*, January 18, 1836.

contained 104 buildings. But by 1838 the population of the city was almost equally divided by Yonge Street, 6,469 people residing east of it and 6,002 to the westward; while ten years later there were 23,508 persons, occupying 3,795 houses, and the city boasted 10 public halls, 21 churches, 4 colleges, 51 schools, 318 merchant' shops, and 142 inns and taverns.

Travellers' impressions are always of interest, though not infrequently biassed. Mrs. Anna Jameson described Toronto in the late thirties as " a little ill-built town on low land at the bottom of a frozen bay, with one very ugly church without tower or steeple, some government offices built of staring red brick in the most tasteless, vulgar style imaginable; three feet of snow all around, and the grey, sullen, wintry lake, and the dark gloom of the pine forest bounding the prospect: such seems Toronto to me now. I did not expect much, but for this I was not prepared".[75] But she was not quite so severe in her criticism of the city as it appeared in summer. At the time of her residence in Toronto the increasing population had led to some improvements in street transport. The first cabs were introduced about 1837, and there were two livery stables—Field's on Henrietta Street, and John Grantham's at the Old British Coffee House on Front Street—"where can be had Horses, Coaches, Gigs, Waggons, Sleighs, etc., upon reasonable terms".[76]

Social life was quite extensively developed in the Toronto of the late thirties, for we find[77] among organisations in active operation many of a fraternal nature—of which those of the firemen and the National Societies were preeminent—and others with religious, charitable or literary aims:

City of Toronto Auxiliary Bible Society.

City of Toronto Ladies' Bible Association.

Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

[75]Anna Jameson: *Sketches in Canada, and Rambles among the Red Men*, 1839. Edition of 1852, p. 1.

[76]George Walton: *City of Toronto and Home District Commercial Directory and Register, with Almanack and Calendar for 1837*, p. 42.

[77]The list of societies and organisations was compiled from Walton's *Directory for 1837*.

Upper Canada Religious Tract and Book Society. (Established 1832).

Society for Converting and Civilizing the Indians, and Propagating the Gospel among the Destitute Settlers in Upper Canada. (Established 1830).

City of Toronto Institution for the Relief of the Orphan, the Fatherless and Widow.

City of Toronto Temperance Society. (Established 1828).

City of Toronto Annual Bazaar.

Upper Canada College Cricket Club.

City of Toronto Literary Club. (Established 1836).

City of Toronto Ethical and Literary Society. (Established 1836).

Strangers' Burial Ground. (Established 1825).

City of Toronto Horticultural Society.

Commercial News Room, City of Toronto.

Toronto Mechanics' Institute. (Established 1831).

City of Toronto Board of Trade.

City of Toronto Mechanics' Association. (Established in 1836 "for the protection of Mechanical Labour").

St. George's Society. (Established 1835).

St. Patrick's Society. (Established 1836).

St. Andrew's Society. (Established 1836).

At the time of the Rebellion of 1837 Toronto was in the midst of an era of notable expansion, having developed during the previous few years from a small town to a thriving and enterprising city of some 12,000 inhabitants. Characteristically conservative, its people were not usually sympathetic towards Reformers—as rabid mobs had more than once demonstrated. There is no doubt, however, that reforms were long overdue, and, though the means to effect changes were not always the best, it may at least be said that the difficulties to be overcome appeared almost insuperable. William Lyon Mackenzie, at his best as an agitator, gained a greater following after the dumping of his type into the harbour by sympathisers of the Family Compact. In Toronto the Reformers were accustomed to meet at the Sun Tavern, at the north-west corner of Queen and Yonge Streets, and later in John Doel's home and brewery on the north-west corner of Bay and Adelaide.

Jail | Court House | St. James' Church | Site of King Edward Hotel

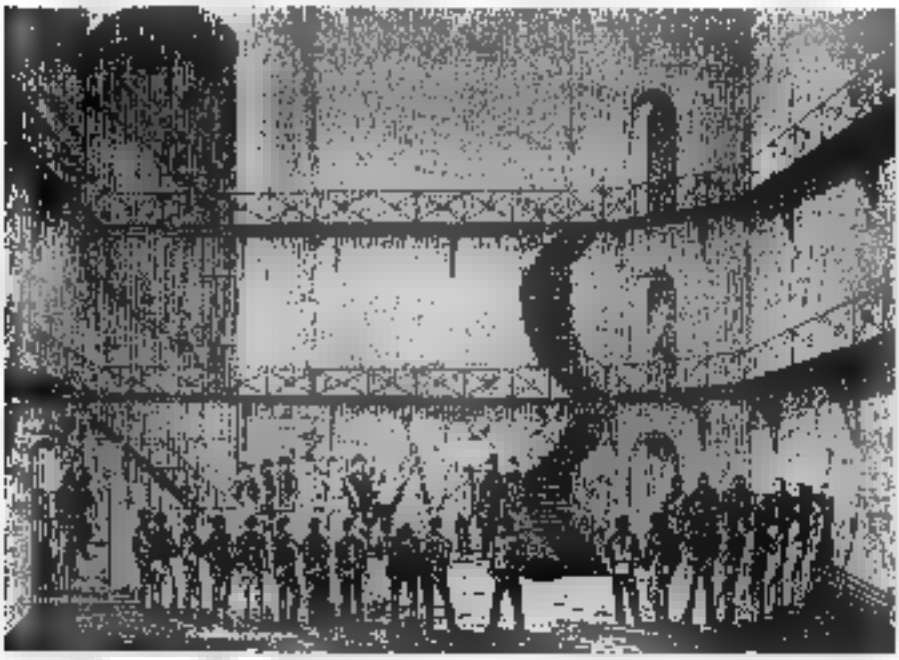
KING STREET, EAST OF TORONTO STREET, 1836

The artist represented the church as it was planned, but St. James' did not boast a steeple at that period.

Dent's Story of the Upper Canadian Rebellion. William Bourgough.

COLONEL MOODIE SHOT AT MONTGOMERY'S TAVERN, 1837

The Tavern stood on the west side of Yonge Street, a short distance north of Eglinton Avenue, and was the rendezvous [redacted] Mackenzie's "Patriots".



Canadian Illustrated News.

FLOGGING [redacted] PRISONER AT TORONTO JAIL, JANUARY 6, 1871

In part the punishment was apparently for the edification of the other prisoners.

The details of their activities and the preparations for rebellion may be found elsewhere,[14] but some description of the resulting confusion in the city will be of interest here.

The gathering of "Patriots" at Montgomery's Tavern, North Yonge Street, in the early days of December, 1837, appears to have been taken seriously by everyone except the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Francis Bond Head. Such was his neglect of all precautions that nothing but disorganisation and indecision among the rebels prevented the capture of the capital. The shooting of Colonel Moodie on the Monday evening prior to the main engagement showed that the insurgents meant business, though their cowardice during Tuesday's raid down Yonge Street was a great disappointment to their leaders. The journal of William Hamilton Merritt provides some interesting details of the confusion in the city after the raid. Merritt, then a student in Upper Canada College, notes that the ringing of the alarm bells was considered "merely a lark of the porter"; but in the morning the reality and imminence of danger was quickly felt, though, since the boys obtained a holiday on that account, they were naturally not at first greatly concerned. Several of them, however, were captured by the rebels when their curiosity led them up Yonge Street:

"It was a curious sight to behold guards of civilians about Government House, the shops all closed, people hurrying silently in all directions, some with arms and some without; then, at the town hall, where was the chief assemblage, were cannon with torches ready to be lighted, arms were being distributed, and melancholy was exhibited in every countenance. Nothing was done that day except various movements to defend the town, barricading the streets and filling houses with men. All was exciting; it was indeed a change agreeable from our dull work at college. This was something like life; we had often read in history of rebellion and war, but had never experienced the feeling of the immediate presence of conflict, of a real state of things when human life is held at so cheap a rate.

"We boys almost in a body visited Government House

[14] An excellent short account is W. S. Wallace: *The Family Compact*, 1915. See Guillet, *Early Life in Upper Canada*, Section V, Chapters IV and V, for a description of the Battle of Montgomery's Farm and the subsequent escape of the "Patriots".

to offer our services to Sir Francis Bond Head to fight for our Queen and country. He received us kindly, gave us a piece of cake, and advised us to go home as soon as possible. My brother and I and James Ingersoll, also of St. Catharines, not quite satisfied with playing so tame a part, were determined that we would catch a sight of the rebels if possible.

"We ran north up what is now Queen Street Avenue and the park, then struck towards Yonge Street, seeing nothing out of the way till we neared the toll-gate, when we caught glimpses of rough men riding about, apparently much excited, one of whom galloped over to me and promptly took us prisoners, shutting us in the back room of the little toll-gate house. We could see a few men riding about with guns, and that seemed to be the extent of the invading force. We thought of the preparations being made down town—closed stores, cannon in front of the market buildings, armed men in the windows, cavalry galloping up and down King Street to keep the people out of the cannon's range, and the enemy, of presumed great strength, momentarily expected by way of Yonge Street. We were aching to get back and tell what we had seen. One rebel aimed his rifle to shoot a man who was making away, so we knew what to expect if we tried to escape.

"In a couple of hours, however, we became bold, worked at the window until at last it yielded, when we quickly dropped out of it and crept on all fours to the nearest brushwood. But the vigilant eye of one of the rebels had sighted us and several gave chase. The woods at that time were so thick in that vicinity that it was not difficult to evade the horsemen and reach what is now Avenue Road, down which we sped at a much quicker pace than we had come up. When it was safe to breathe again we told our tale, and soon there gathered a curious crowd around us who conducted us to headquarters, where they were much surprised and relieved at our discovery of the handful of men whose dreaded presence had caused so great an alarm; and we did not regret the rashness that had suddenly made us the heroes of the hour."[78]

[78]Journal of William Hamilton Merritt, quoted in the *College Times* (Upper Canada College), Easter, 1907.

The arrival on Wednesday of considerable bodies of men from points east and west put heart into Toronto's citizens, and there developed a feeling of security which had been lacking before. Judges and lawyers shouldered muskets alongside labourers and students, and the march northward on Thursday *viâ* Yonge Street and College (University) Avenue partook of the nature of a public holiday. Windows and housetops were crowded to view the cavalcade, flags waved and cheers rang out on this day of great public enthusiasm. The result was never in doubt, and the "Patriots" were soon fleeing in all directions. Two of them, Lount and Matthews, were brought back to be hanged at the old jail on Toronto Street in April, 1838.

William Lyon Mackenzie, however, escaped to the United States; and finally, offered amnesty by the proclamation of February 1, 1849, returned to Toronto on March 18th, being welcomed by a few relatives and friends. A few days later, when news of his return became generally known, a rabble of "unshaven, dirty-looking, half-drunken men and ragged boys", (or, if you prefer it, "a band of loyal citizens determined to save Toronto from shame"),[80] gathered at Queen and Yonge Streets to drive Mackenzie out of town. Images of Reformers were burned, and the mob milled about the streets for a time, finally bombarding the house where Mackenzie was supposed to be. Stones, bricks and rotten vegetables alternated for three hours with howls for his blood, but the supply of liquor gave out, and after smashing windows in George Brown's home the mob broke up. Mackenzie left town for some months, but was back again in June, 1850. Though he once more sat in the House he seemed out of place when there was no longer the same need for an agitator. He and the other Reformers who returned after the general amnesty found that the policies which they had long advocated and had fought for in 1837-38 were then in large measure a reality, for full responsible government had been achieved in their absence. An increasing number of Canadian citizens now consider that Mackenzie's "rebels" have every claim to the title "patriots" advanced by the Rt. Hon. W. L. [illegible]. King at the Centennial Banquet of March [illegible], 1934.

[80]The descriptions are from the *Examiner* and *Patriot*, respectively.

Captain Marryat, the novelist, visited Toronto shortly after the Rebellion, and as soon as he stepped off the boat he felt that he was "no longer in the United States: you are at once struck with the difference between the English and the American population, systems and ideas. On the other side of the lake you have much more apparent property, but much less real solidity and security. The houses and stores of Toronto are not to be compared with those of the American towns opposite. But the Englishman has built according to his means—the American, according to his expectations. The hotels and inns at Toronto are very bad; at Buffalo they are splendid: for the Englishman travels little; the American is ever on the move. The private houses of Toronto are built, according to the English taste and desire of exclusiveness, away from the road, and are embowered in trees; the American, let his house be ever so large, or his plot of ground however extensive, builds within a few feet of the road that he may see and know what is going on. You do not perceive the bustle, the energy and activity at Toronto that you do at Buffalo, nor the profusion of articles in stores. . . . If an American has money sufficient to build a two-storey house he will raise it up to four storeys on speculation, ... whilst at Toronto they proceed more cautiously".[81]

Descriptions of the city as it appeared in the early forties contain much of interest. One publication notes that "the streets are laid out at right-angles to each other, are broad and spacious, generally flagged on each side, and some of them macadamised. King Street, the great thoroughfare, is half a mile long and contains the principal buildings and public offices of the province".[82] James B. Brown ("A Four Years' Resident") writes as follows in 1844:

"The City of Toronto has much increased in population within these last four years, and with the recent introduction of gas and other improvements its appearance is much like some of our provincial towns in Britain; and in several respects, such as the amount of trade and general comfort of the inhabitants, the advantages, with the greater

[81] F. Marryat: *Diary in America*, 1839, p. 60.
[82] Samuel Butler: *The Emigrant's Hand-book of Facts*, 1843, p. [illegible].

number of these towns, are on the side of Toronto. The principal streets are comfortably paved, the buildings large and imposing, and the shops spacious and filled with every luxury to be had in the best cities at home.

"In 1841 there were as many as 90 four-wheeled open and close carriages and 130 gigs and pleasure waggons returned upon the assessment rolls of the city. The churches and chapels amount to thirteen, and there are numerous benevolent and other societies: eight or ten newspapers are regularly published, three of which are twice-a-week papers, the others weekly. A Temperance Society which commenced in 1839 numbered in 1841 about 1,300 members. The Home District Agricultural Society holds its meetings and public shows in Toronto. Fourteen or fifteen (if not more) spacious and elegantly fitted-up steamboats which ply upon Lake Ontario are some of them almost continually touching at the wharves close to the town. The building of King's College is at present in operation, situated within pleasantly laid-out grounds, and promises to be a fine structure of hewn stone, and to prove the chief ornament of the fast-growing and comparatively wealthy city of Toronto."[83]

Charles Dickens and his wife paid a short visit to Toronto in 1842, registering as guests at the old American House, at the north-east corner of Yonge and Front Streets. No public reception was accorded them, but the Chief Justice entertained the famous author at dinner, and a large number of prominent citizens were introduced to him during the evening. He afterwards wrote the following impressions of the city:

"The country around this town being very flat is bare of scenic interest, but the town itself is full of life and motion, bustle, business and improvement. The streets are well paved and lighted with gas; the houses are large and good; the shops excellent. Many of them have a display of goods in their windows such as may be seen in thriving country towns in England, and there are some which would do no discredit to the metropolis itself. There is a good stone prison here; and there are, besides, a handsome church, a court house, public offices, many commodious

[83] [James M. Brown]: *Views of Canada and the Colonists*. 1844. p. 190.

private residences, and a Government Observatory for noting and recording the magnetic variations. In the College of Upper Canada, which is one of the public establishments of the city, a sound education in every department of polite learning can be had at a very moderate expense, the annual charge for the instruction of each pupil not exceeding nine pounds sterling."[54]

Dickens was, however, more discreet about what he published concerning Toronto than appeared with reference to his experiences in the United States; but in one of his letters to John Forster he noted the prevalence of "wild and rabid Toryism" in Toronto, a condition which he considered "appalling".[55] In more modern times there have been many people who look upon this condition as the one outstanding characteristic of the city.

Dr. John Bigsby, who had known the York of the eighteen-twenties, found the Toronto of a quarter of a century later greatly increased in size. He noted that there were "91 streets, one of which, King, is two miles long, 21 churches and chapels, 10 newspapers, 20 medical men, 5 artists and portrait-painters, 107 taverns, 16 auctioneers, 27 butchers, 19 bakers and 6 booksellers. Toronto is a gay place, and in its wealthy shops, stately and crowded churches, paved and gas-lighted streets, public walks, societies—religious, scientific, literary and social—and charitable institutions, is much in advance of British towns of the same size".[56] The Rev. Henry Christmas, however, suggests that the city had frequently the characteristics of rural life:

"In Toronto even cows and pigs are occasionally seen running loose about the town, though contrary to law, frequently pursued by half the dogs in the parish, who seem to consider them fair game as they beat a hasty retreat by a variety of squealings, lowings and bellowings which form now and then in the back streets a whimsical and most unmusical concerto. By the way, talking of concerts, the lovers of ancient music will be pleased to be informed that

[54]Charles Dickens: *American Notes*. See Household Edition of his *Works*, 18?, Vol. II, p. 98.

[55]See Forster's *Life of Charles Dickens*, in *Works*, Vol. XXII, p. 123.

[56]J. J. Bigsby: *The Shoe and Canoe, or Pictures of Travel in the Canadas*. 1850. Vol. II, p. [illegible].

a very promising society for the performance of the works of the great masters flourishes in Toronto under the auspices of the Rev. Dr. McCaul, the learned and deservedly popular president of King's College, who, I hope, will accept my apology for introducing him and his harmonious labours in such close juxtaposition with those of the bovine and other gentry above named."[57]

The "Great Fire of 1849" devastated the city to a greater extent than any other conflagration, and, like the fire of London in 1666, prepared the way for many new and better buildings—among others St. Lawrence Hall. The following account of the fire appeared in the *Globe*:

"About half-past one this morning a fire was discovered in some outbuildings in the rear of Graham's Tavern, King Street, and Post's Tavern, Nelson Street. The fire speedily extended to the main part of Nelson Street, on the east, consuming Post's Tavern, the *Patriot* office, and turning into King Street, on the east, burnt all Mr. Sprule's buildings, where it stopped. The fire extended from King Street to the south of Duke Street, where it consumed nearly all the back buildings and the office of the Savings Bank.

"It then crossed to the west side of Nelson Street to Rolf's Tavern, destroying the whole block, including the *Mirror* office, to Mr. Nasmith's bakery. Proceeding from Rolf's Tavern the flames laid hold of the corner building, occupied by Mr. O'Donohue, which was speedily consumed, and then they ran along the whole block to Mr. O'Neill's, consuming the valuable stores of Messrs. Hayes, Harris, Cherry, O'Neill and others. About three o'clock the spire of St. James' Cathedral took fire, and the building was entirely destroyed; about the same time the flames broke out in the old City Hall, consuming the greater part of the front building, including Mr. McFarlane's small store.

"The fire then extended from the Cathedral across to the south side of King Street, where a fire had lately occurred. The shops of Mr. Rogers and others were with difficulty saved. All that block was in great danger; some of them had most of their goods removed, and great injury to

[57]Henry Christmas: *Canada in 1849: Pictures of Canadian Life, or the Emigrant Churchman*. 1850. Vol. I, pp. 71-2.

property was sustained. About five o'clock the flames were in a great measure subdued. The exertions of the firemen were for a long time retarded for want of water. The soldiers of the Rifle Brigade from the garrison were extremely active, and deserve the highest gratitude of the citizens. The loss by this fire is estimated at the lowest computation to be £100,000 sterling.

"It is not easy to describe the gloom which this calamity has cast over the city, or the ruined appearance of the ground so lately occupied by many respectable and industrious individuals, who, by the work of four or five hours, were suddenly thrown out of business or seriously injured in their circumstances. In whatever light this serious event be regarded, it must be acknowledged as a heavy blow and sore discouragement to Toronto, the heaviest it has received.

"There cannot be a doubt, however, that the activity and enterprise of the inhabitants will soon surmount the loss. The season is favourable for rebuilding, and many improvements will doubtless be introduced in the formation of new streets. Meantime there is a first duty to be looked to: we mean the relief of those who are so reduced by the fire as to require public assistance. There are cases of the kind where a small amount of assistance promptly administered will revive the drooping spirits of those who may be ready to sink under their burdens. We hope the public will not lose sight of this, but will come forward with a liberal hand when it is required.

"Mr. Watson, publisher of the *Canadian and Upper Canada Gazette*, lost his life in trying to save some type from the *Patriot* office."[66]

Though unsanitary living conditions had no doubt much to do with outbreaks of disease in earlier times, the development of an extensive "slum" district in Toronto occurred some years after the fire of 1849, as the city steadily increased in population. One writer outlines in considerable detail the conditions as they applied in the sixties, and gives an illuminating account of the lack of sanitation which characterised no inconsiderable portion of Toronto—as, indeed, of almost all towns and cities prior to the development and general use of sanitary appliances and before

[66] *Globe*, April 7, 1849.

sewage and garbage disposal had advanced beyond the primitive means in use for centuries:

"The sanitary condition of the city at this time began to attract the attention of our city fathers; after the outbreak of the cholera in 1849 life and vigour had been infused into this department of the City Council's work. New sewers were constructed, new drains built, inspection was occasionally made, but in a few years the sanitary affairs of the city began to be neglected and no attention paid to its wants or requirements, until in 1866 the miserable drainage, bad air, bad water, filth, dirt and refuse of the worst kind appeared to invite disease. The state of one of the streets in the very centre of the city was thus described: 'You enter a house from the front door and find yourself in a room twelve by fourteen feet, in which are huddled together, as if they are frightened to look on their fellow-creatures, a man, five women, three boys, and a couple of young specimens of the *genus homo* in arms. The stove is almost reddened with heat, the room is fumigated with fumes of the mid-day meal which is in course of preparation, the walls are so black that one would think sable was their original colour, and, on the back door being opened to admit one to the yard, the stench from the pig-pen within three feet of the back door is so foul that you could cut it with a knife. In another yard we have a pig-pen four feet six inches square, with a floor a couple of feet thick with offal, filth, dung and manure, and no less than five pigs lying snorting and snoring within it. Going further down the same street the visitor sees in every yard and closet the same accumulations. Near Nelson Street, on the south side of Stanley Street, we have a house the rear room of which is occupied by a brigade of pigs. The next room, (with a doorway between the two), a few feet from this nest of filth, the residents of the house use as a cooking, eating and sleeping room. Just fancy the sickening odour of a pig-pen curling through the cracks of the door and winding around the kitchen stove and dinner table!'

"Near the corner of George and Duchess Streets we have a sink of death and disease in a place called Bethune's Lane or Fish Alley, where, in a former year, during the

heavy rage of cholera, every resident was affected, and the dead-cart a daily visitant. This lane contains nine apologies for houses, and is inhabited by about fifty souls. There are no back yards to these miserable hovels, and slops, filth and dirt are thrown out in front of the doors. At one end of the lane the necessary is in a fearful state, and it is credibly believed that a well, situated a short distance from it, received the sewage, and that it was to residents drinking this water in 1854 the severe attack of cholera in that quarter was attributed.

"Pine Street is another bad street in the city for cow-pens, and in these there is not the slightest attempt at cleanliness. Queen Street, east of Parliament, is another locale of pig-pens and cow-sheds, and on Queen Street, opposite Cooke's Church, can be seen a dwelling house the cellar of which is used as a stable for three cows and a horse, and the effluvia from which must find its way into the rooms above, occupied by human beings. Coming further west an examination of the premises within eyesight of the City Hall will show how dilatory those whose duty it is to inspect the city have been in their duties. In the rear of the buildings on Palace Street, where decent citizens are supposed to live, will be found overloaded necessaries, and filth of every kind, which ought to put decent men to shame. Take a glance at the western part of the city, and in the rear of buildings on the west side of York Street, between Richmond and Adelaide Streets, the same story will be found of filthy places. Walk as far as Dummer Street. Look in the rear of 'Deadbeat Lane' and 'Whiskey Alley', and go through a passage three feet wide, and have a look at 'Hole in the Wall'. In this latter, which is situate on the west side of Dummer Street, we find ourselves in a room eight by ten feet, the entrance being by a half door, and the light coming through an old-fashioned casement window which has not been cleaned since the building was erected fifteen years ago. In one corner is a dilapidated-looking stove, with a pot full of dirty water attempting to boil by the feeble aid of a few hardwood chips. On a chair minus a leg and back is seated a youth about ten years of age, half clad and holding two benumbed hands over the flickering embers of the half-lighted chips;

a little girl is nestling in a corner of the room on a quantity of dirty straw, half covered with a torn counterpane, and both are anxiously awaiting the return of their mother, who is out begging a morsel; their father is an inmate of the gaol, and when he is not working for the good of the city he is sawing wood for any citizen who will give him a job."

"If the east end of the city can claim the premium for dirt, filth, cow-sheds and pig-pens, the west certainly can follow close in its wake. Renfrew Street, around St. Patrick's Market, Maple Lane, near Phoebe Street school-house, where hundreds of children are daily congregated; Grog Lane, Centre Street, and some parts of Brock Street were also named as being in a disgraceful condition."[89]

From time to time new public buildings were erected to replace those which had outlived their usefulness. In 1853 a new Post Office at 10 Toronto Street (now the Receiver-General's Office) commenced to serve the city, and continued to do so until 1873, when the present building at the head of the street was erected. In announcing the opening of the 1853 office the *Globe* was in a reminiscent mood:

"The provision for the accommodation of the public, in beauty of design and practical convenience, far surpasses anything we have seen in North America, and does great credit to the architect, Mr. Cumberland. . . . Not many years have passed since the office was removed to the place it is now deserting, but how few of our present citizens remember the little old house at the foot of Yonge Street. At that time there were not 16,000 people in Toronto. Now there are probably 35,000. The Markets, the Banks, the St. Lawrence Hall, the Asylum, the two University piles, the Normal School, eight splendid churches and cathedrals, and whole streets of elegant buildings, have all sprung into existence since then, and yet but ten years have gone past. It seems like magic to look back upon it. We question if there is a town in the world which has advanced more rapidly than Toronto."[90]

To this Toronto, improved by seven years of further development, came the Prince of Wales on September 7,

[89]Timperlake, op. cit., pp. 146-9. Early in 1934 Lieut.-Governor Bruce instituted a movement to eliminate slums in modern Toronto.
[90]*Globe*, February 5, 1853.

1860. The press characterised his visit as "the brightest day in the annals of Upper Canada":

"Many a year hence it will be told that on that day the heir-apparent to the British throne made his public entry into the chief city of the Western Province, and received a welcome surpassing in magnificence and enthusiasm all the public ovations ever before witnessed in the New World. No pen could adequately describe the unbounded enthusiasm of the joyous multitude assembled to greet their future Sovereign on the banks of Lake Ontario. Nor will anyone who witnessed it ever recall without thrilling delight the magnificent spectacle presented when the Prince stepped from his vessel and took his seat upon the throne amidst the thundering cheers of the vast concourse piled up in the noble amphitheatre around him.

"The illumination of the city at night was a very grand sight, far surpassing, we believe, any similar demonstration ever witnessed on the continent. Particular buildings may have been illuminated elsewhere on a grander scale, but as a whole we doubt if the display was ever excelled in America in extent, variety, and brilliance of decoration. The Normal Schools, Osgoode Hall, and the Romain Buildings were magnificently decorated, and the *Globe* Buildings, St. Lawrence Hall, the Edinburgh Assurance Company, the St. Nicholas Restaurant and several other buildings were illuminated in splendid style. Many of the arches erected at prominent points of the city were noble designs, and executed with a degree of artistic taste which must have astonished the illustrious guests who passed under them. The arch erected at the crest of the noble amphitheatre at the landing will be a lasting monument to the fame of its designer, Mr. Storm. Fine as were the arches erected at Quebec, Montreal and Ottawa, the finest of them could not for a moment enter into competition with it."[21]

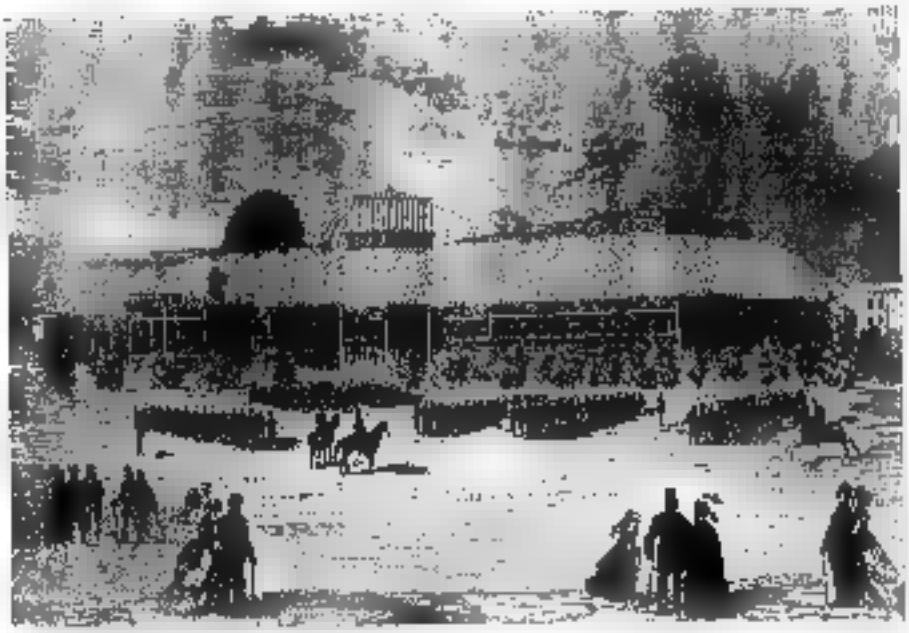
In 1866 the Fenian Raid scare was exciting the inhabitants in a much less pleasant manner. The frivolous attitude which the government adopted towards the activities of Fenians is paralleled only by Sir Francis Bond Head's manner of treating the Mackenzie Rebellion of 1837; and it was not unexpected, consequently, that on Sunday,

[21] *Ibid.*, September 8, 1860.

Canadian Illustrated News.

THE "OLD BLOCK FORT" NEAR YORKVILLE, C.W., IN 1863

This notable landmark stood on the east side of Yonge, opposite the present Belmont Street. Several similar blockhouses were erected in various parts of Toronto, but only those at the foot of Bathurst Street now remain.



L'Opinion Publique.

VOLUNTEERS TRAINING AT THE CRYSTAL PALACE, 1870

Originally called the Palace of Industry, the first permanent Exhibition building was located to the south of the Provincial Lunatic Asylum. The troops were quartered in the building before leaving for the West to quell the first Riel Rebellion.

Hanney's Map of 1824.

THE WESTERN ENTRANCE TO THE HARBOUR, 1832

The original high banks were very different from the flat bay shore of today.

June 8, 1866, it was rumoured in Toronto "that the Queen's Own Volunteers, then near Ridgeway, would shortly be in want of provisions. A few citizens became aware of the fact during the forenoon. A meeting was promptly called, citizens were detailed to canvass among merchants and others for supplies, and at two o'clock the steamer *City of Toronto* sailed with the following free offerings of the merchants, contributed in two or three hours' time, viz.: 2 barrels of sugar, 2 barrels of pork, 1 barrel of tobacco, 8 boxes of tobacco, 2 boxes of sundries, 9 boxes of cigars, 19½ boxes of biscuits, 16 barrels of biscuits, 41 barrels of bread, 9 boxes of cheese, 5 sides of bacon, 6 tons of hams, 2 chests of tea, 1 case of matches, 3 cases of brandy, 2 cases of gin, 6 hogsheads of ale, 1 case of glasses, 6 rolls of spiced bacon, 9 rolls of dried beef, 1 box of butter, 3 cases of coffee, a very large quantity of fresh meat (about five tons), bacon, medicine, splints and surgical instruments. The whole was given in charge of Messrs. C. W. Bunting, John Boyd and John Leys, members of the Committee, and for hours after the steamer had left the wharf citizens poured down Yonge Street, bringing with them their contributions in quantities sufficient to have supplied a small army."[22]

In such a generous manner did the inhabitants of that day forecast the patriotism that was to be so characteristic of the much greater city of the days of the Great War.

The Toronto of the seventies and eighties is sufficiently remote to be unfamiliar to most of the citizens of today, and yet close enough that many people still living can recall it. It was the time when people were tremendously excited over Edison's little tin-foil phonograph, and when roller-skating and the first awkward-looking bicycles were arousing as much curiosity as the earliest "motor carriages" did nearly a quarter of a century later. The period forms a fitting point to close this chapter, for Toronto was then a great city, although the horse-car had not yet been superseded by the trolley, wooden sidewalks and cedar-block streets were still in general use, and the boundaries of that day did not comprehend a very large section of the present city. In 1877 Yonge Street had over 600 buildings, about six times the number in the first year of the city; while the

[22]Timperlake, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

main street, King, had 848, many of them old and dilapidated, the number in 1884 being 287. Apart altogether from the city's structural development and extent there still remained among its topographical features many evidences which were to disappear as they came to be considered in the path of progress. Hills were to be cut down, ravines filled in, and the water of creeks carried away in underground sewers; but old inhabitants can still recall when there were several streams within the city limits, the course of one of which passed through its very centre, and is still easy to trace in part. An interesting description of this creek recently appeared in the press:

"There was a stream or creek which crossed Bloor Street, where the McMaster University building stands, and flowed south through the university grounds, forming the dog pond (now the site of Hart House). It went on past the site of the Medical building to College Street, crossing it into the lovely estate of Sir John Beverley Robinson ('Sleepy Hollow'), then past the Caer Howell Hotel and its bowling green on what is now Murray Street, to about where the Military Institute stands; then it turned eastward through the present parade ground of the Armories to Holy Trinity Church, which stood on its banks. Crossing Yonge Street it found its way to Moss Park and so to the Don.

"A branch of this stream turned east at the present site of Sir Joseph Flavelle's home, and wound past where Victoria University now is on to Yonge Street. The northern side was known as 'Clover Hill' as far as Yonge. Crossing Yonge it entered the grounds of Donald MacKay, extending to Church Street, where it was well wooded and full of fish. After crossing Church Street to the present old Granite Rink, the water was turned into the sewer and the creek ended. Before that the stream had made its way to the Normal School grounds. There was a stone culvert across Church Street; one can still see where the original bank was, in the yard at the southeast corner of Gould and Church.

"I can remember three collapses of walls of buildings along the course of this stream—the east end of the original Granite Rink, a house on Wellesley Street, and at the corner

of Breadalbane and Yonge; even to-day you can see where the sidewalk at this point has sunk, and I well recall when the sewer collapsed and a good piece of Yonge Street there disappeared."[108]

In the early eighties the old but not venerable City Hall was still in use—and so continued until 1899; but Toronto was by no means deficient either in natural advantages or structural beauty, as the following quotations from G. Mercer Adam's essay will show:

"The reign of solitude on the Great Lakes has nowhere been more pleasantly broken by the life and movement which indicate the approaches to a great city than in the case of Toronto. . . . To the traveller whose brain has been stunned by the sights and sounds of Niagara, and to whom the restful passage of the lake has brought relief, the view of the 'Queen City of the West', with its array of dome and turret, arch and spire, and the varied movements of its waterfrontage, is one that cannot fail to evoke pleasure and create surprise. . . . Coaches and cabs are flying to and from the hotels. The street cars glide past, diverging, a short way on, towards various points. . . . Massive warehouses and piles of buildings block in the traffic, though the vista of crowded streets opens everywhere to view. The city, which covers an area of eight or ten square miles, is built on a low-lying plain with a rising inclination to the upper or northern end, where a ridge bounds it, which was probably the ancient margin of the lake. Within this area are close upon 120 miles of streets, laid out after a rigid, chessboard pattern, though monotony is avoided by the prevalence of boulevards and ornamental shade trees in the streets and avenues not given up to commerce.

"What the city lacks in picturesqueness of situation is atoned for in its beautiful harbour, in the development of an aesthetic taste among the people. . . . We have now less flimsy sheet-iron ornament, and more decorative work in stone. . . . On the whole there is a creditable display of architectural taste and skill. . . . The Custom House, with its adjoining Examining Warehouse, is perhaps one of the

[108]Reminiscences of Harry P. Nasmith, quoted in Fred Williams: *In Toronto Fifty Years Ago.* (Toronto *Mail and Empire*, January 17, 1934.)

most striking instances of the new architectural *régime*. . . . The American Hotel . . . . the Queen's . . . . the Bank of British North America . . . . the Ontario, Imperial, Toronto, Standard and Federal Banks . . . . the head office of the Bank of Commerce . . . . Toronto Street, the upper end of which is terminated by the Post Office, an imposing building in the Italian style of architecture. . . . The County Court Buildings and the headquarters of the Police Department and the Fire Brigade."[34]

All of these were important and even notable buildings in the city of that day, though most of them—if still standing—are now hidden by more colossal, if not more imposing structures. There were, of course, many other buildings of architectural merit. The Insane Asylum, Knox College, Osgoode Hall, Trinity University, the Normal School, St. Lawrence Hall, the University of Toronto (now University College), McMaster Hall and the Metropolitan Methodist Church were among the sights of the city. The limits of this Toronto of some 80,000 inhabitants are apparent from further selections from the work[35] just quoted:

"From Bloor Street, or what used to be known as the Sydenham Road, the adjoining suburb of Yorkville extends north and east. . . . To the north is Deer Park, another pretty off-shoot of the town. . . . To the west lies Seaton Village, and all about are the suburban residences of wealthy merchants. . . . West and north of the Asylum a new Toronto is rapidly rising in the suburban villages of Brockton and Parkdale. . . . A short drive beyond the Don, through Leslieville, the pleasant site of extensive market gardens, brings us to Norway, Ben Lamond, and the com-

[34] This is quoted from the chapter on Toronto in G. M. Grant (Ed.): *Picturesque Canada*, 1879, Vol. I, p. 398 *et seq.*

[35] *Ibid.* In addition to the villages named in this description, others in the vicinity of Toronto were Dovercourt at Bloor and Dovercourt Streets; Bracondale near Bathurst and Davenport; Todmorden, Doncaster and Chester near the Danforth Road; and Davisville and Eglinton north of Yorkville. From 1834 to 1883 the city was 6,771 acres in extent, but in 1883 a development, partly speculative, commenced, and the village of Yorkville threw in her lot with Toronto, to be followed soon after by other villages. By 1889 the area of the city had increased to 11,889 acres, and sewers, cedar block pavements and plank sidewalks were rapidly pushed into what was largely farm land. Taxes rose, real estate agents flourished, the Belt Line Railway was built—but the deflation and depression of the early nineties was the inevitable end of over-development and speculation.

manding elevation of Scarboro Heights. . . . Regaining the Don, we direct our steps northward, and, passing by Riverside, another outflow of the city, and by the fine buildings and adjoining farm of the New Jail, we continue our ramble through the woods in the direction of Yorkville."

All of these suburbs which then encircled Toronto have long since been swallowed up by the extension of the boundaries of the city—now rapidly approaching the million mark in population; but the mere recital of them recalls a day not yet remote, when disciples of Izaak Walton might, without wandering far afield, enjoy "the contemplative man's recreation"; . . . . "a wholesome walk to the Brookside, pleasant shade by the sweet silver Streams; . . . . good air, and sweet smells of fine fresh meadow Flowers; . . . . the melodious harmony of Birds."

CHAPTER II

THE HARBOUR

THE sandy spit extending some six miles from the mouth of the Don River enclosed a natural harbour known to the French as *La Baie de Toronto*. The bay is represented on a number of maps made prior to the founding of the town of Toronto in 1793, that ascribed to Louis Joliet and thought to have been made about 1673 being the earliest. Captain Gother Mann made late in 1788 a "Plan of Tarento Harbour with the proposed Town and Settlement"; and in 1791-2 Augustus Jones, government surveyor, laid out eleven townships in the district. The most westerly, York, was originally named Dublin, for the Toronto harbour section was entitled "Plan of the Front Line of Dublin, with the Harbour and Soundings".

Joseph Bouchette visited the site of Toronto in 1792, before the founding of the town, and afterwards wrote with reference to his survey of the harbour: "I distinctly recollect the untamed aspect which the country exhibited when first I entered the beautiful basin, which thus became the scene of my early hydrographical operations. Dense and trackless forests lined the margin of the lake and reflected their inverted images in its glassy surface. The wandering savage had constructed his ephemeral habitation beneath their luxuriant foliage—the group then consisting of two families of Mississaugas—and the bay and neighbouring marshes were the hitherto uninvaded haunts of immense coveys of wild-fowl."[1]

Bouchette's minute delineation of the peninsula enables one to see the course of its formation, as well as that of the inevitable marshes at the mouth of the Don. The eastern part of the bay—the marshy section—has long been known as Ashbridge's Bay; while the harbour proper is a circular basin to the westward, nearly two miles in diameter. The excellent protection which the peninsula afforded led to Lord Dorchester's choice of the location as the site of "the King's

[1] J. Bouchette: *The British Dominions in North America*. 1831. Vol. I, p. 89 fn.

arsenal on Lake Ontario," and it was later to become the capital of the province. Lieut.-Governor John Graves Simcoe first visited Toronto on May 2, 1793, and selected the site of the town, but it was the latter part of July before his plans for its development were well under way.[2]

The town proper was not commenced until 1794, but work on the fortifications to the westward was actively pushed in 1793, and on August 26th the Governor changed the name from Toronto to York in honour of the Duke of York, who had won a notable victory over the French. At noon the following day the first royal salute was fired from the garrison of the town and responded to by the gunboats in the harbour in commemoration of the change in name.

As is evident from the plan of York harbour made by Alexander Aitkin in 1793, the stress was laid upon the town's military expansion, and the first development of the harbour was in the vicinity of the Garrison. Buoys were placed at the entrance to prevent the repetition of the stranding of vessels on the sandy shallows. At the mouth of Garrison Creek the first wharves were built, and to facilitate the landing of stores a canal and several sluice gates were constructed, which enabled control of the water level.

At the town, meanwhile, the development of landing facilities was, and long continued to be hampered by a dense growth of weeds and rushes. Temporary landing-places were used in the early years of the town, but something better was essential at the commencement of the new century. In 1801 York was made a customs port, and a report of duties received mentions a storehouse. This was located at the foot of Frederick Street, and in November, 1803, the first important wharf was constructed there by W. Allan, who, among other offices, held the position of Collector of Duties. This was for some time the only wharf at which the larger ships could land, and after being known for some years as Allan's Wharf it came to be called the Merchants' Wharf.

As time passed, other wooden jetties were pushed out into the Bay. The King's or Navy Wharf, between John and Peter Streets, the Commissariat Wharf, at the foot of Peter Street, and the Farmers' Wharf, were among those con-

[2]*Diary of Mrs. John Graves Simcoe*, July 30, 1793.

structed in the next few years. Cooper's Wharf, later called Feighan's and then Maitland's, was built at the foot of Church Street previous to 1818, for it is marked, along with the other wharves and large storehouses, on Lieutenant George Phillpott's Plan for York, dated May 24th of that year. This wharf was the place at which the first steamship on Lake Ontario, the *Frontenac*, landed in 1817. A storehouse, with a covered way in the middle, and a shipbuilding yard of considerable size, were located near the wharf.

In the shoal water between the various wharves great quantities of rushes grew. Numerous attempts to eradicate them were made from year to year at considerable expense to the town or county authorities. Perhaps the most successful efforts in this direction were those of Captain Macaulay. After Mr. Coles' account of £13 6s. 3d. "for his assistants' labour in destroying rushes in front of the Market Square" in July, 1821, had been paid, the minutes of the County Court for August record that "Capt. Macaulay, Royal Engineers, offered to cut down the rushes in front of the town between the Merchants' Wharf and Cooper's Wharf, for a sum not to exceed ninety dollars, which would merely be the expense of the men and materials in executing the undertaking: his own time he would give to the public on this occasion, as encouragement to others to endeavour to destroy the rushes when they became a nuisance". It was accordingly ordered "that ninety dollars be paid to Capt. Macaulay or his order, for the purpose of cutting down the rushes, according to his verbal undertaking to cut down the same, to be paid out of the Police or District funds in the hands of the treasurer of the District".[3] Commenting upon these activities Dr. Scadding gives an interesting account of the method employed:

"We have understood that Capt. Macaulay's measures for the extinction of the rank vegetation in the shallow waters of the harbour proved to be very efficient. The instrument used was a kind of screw grapnel, which, let down from the side of a large scow, laid hold of the rushes at their root and forcibly wrenched them out of the bed of mud below. The entire plant was thus lifted up, and

[3]See Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old*, 1873, p. 39.

drawn by a windlass into the scow. When a full load of the aquatic weed was collected it was taken out into the open water of the Lake and there disposed of."[4]

Previous to the creation of the City of Toronto in 1834 three more wharves were built. The next in point of time was Ewart's, near the foot of Church Street. In 1831 Tinning's Wharf was constructed a short distance east of York Street; and in 1833-4 the New Wharf (extended in 1837, the year of Victoria's accession, and renamed the Queen's) was built farther westward, near the foot of Bathurst Street, and remained until 1917 when it was buried by the reclamation work of the Harbour Commission. This wharf, the first work of any magnitude to be undertaken in Toronto Harbour, resulted from Acts in 1833 and 1837 granting a total of £4,500 to facilitate navigation and provide more adequate wharf accommodation for large steamers. A system of tolls and wharfage charges was instituted at the same time, all previous dues, excepting a toll for the upkeep of the Island lighthouse, being regulated entirely by the private companies which owned the docks.

The fortifications which were early established at the Garrison as a defence for the harbour cannot be described in detail here. The barracks and blockhouses erected under Simcoe's direction, 1793-6, were supplemented in 1798 and subsequent years, but it is unlikely that any of the buildings survived the American occupation of 1813. Three years later, during 1816, fortifications of considerable magnitude were planned, and the scheme put into execution during the next few years. The group of buildings east of the Exhibition Grounds include several which, with some later variations, date from this period. Among the eight blockhouses which at one time or another were erected in the vicinity of the town was one on Gibraltar (Hanlan's) Point which was among the first military works constructed for the defence of the harbour and town. This blockhouse was erected in 1794 and demolished in 1818, and was once armed with one or two guns. The point upon which it was located was later dredged out, and the remains of the blockhouse, as well as some small cannon balls, were uncovered during the operations.

[4]*Ibid.*

It was early realised by Governor Simcoe that some type of light to guide vessels into York harbour was essential, but, apart from a few buoys in the western channel, nothing was done about it until 1808, when the *Gazette* refers to the commencement of a lighthouse on Gibraltar Point:

"It is a pleasure to inform the public that the danger to vessels navigating Lake Ontario will in a great measure be avoided by the erection of a lighthouse on Gibraltar Point which is to be completed in compliance with an address of the House of Assembly to the Lieutenant-Governor."[5]

The address referred to was dated March 9, 1808, and on April 6th the Lieutenant-Governor personally visited Gibraltar Point and chose the spot for the lighthouse. Work commenced immediately, and the lighthouse was completed in 1809. Funds were provided by the House to defray the cost; and it was stipulated that the collections made under the terms of the Act of 1803 (a levy of [illegible] per ton on all vessels entering the harbour) should be used to repay the amount advanced. The ship *Mohawk* was employed to haul limestone from Queenston, and John Thompson was one of the masons engaged in work upon the structure. The lighthouse was 54 feet in height to the floor of the lamp room, and a wooden cage encircled by a balcony was used by the keeper to signal the approach of a vessel. The continual change in form of the peninsula owing to the forces of nature is well shown by the comment of Captain Thomas Smith in 1854: "I have lived in Toronto for over forty years, and been connected with sailing the greater part of the time. . . . . When the lighthouse was built by my grandfather and uncle the materials for building it were landed within 25 feet of where it stands; but the land extends now over a quarter of a mile to the south and three-quarters of a mile to the west of the lighthouse."[6]

In 1833 the height of the lighthouse was increased to 66 feet, and an improved light installed. The unsatisfactory flag signalling method was replaced by the use of canvas balls or spheres coloured red, white and blue, and as this means proved inconvenient it in turn gave way to signalling

[5] *Upper Canada Gazette*, 1808. (The exact date of the issue is not available.)

[6] Cited in J. R. Middleton: *The Municipality of Toronto, a History*. 1923. Vol. I, p. 456.

from a new flagpole a short distance to the north-west. In 1878 the old stationary light was replaced by a flashlight, one of the largest in Canada, which revolved every thirty seconds and could be seen for fourteen miles. It is of interest to know that the light still shines during the period of navigation, though petitions by the City Council were necessary to prevent the government from discontinuing it in 1907, and again in 1911.

Another important lighthouse in the harbour was on the Queen's Wharf, and was constructed in 1861 of wood, with a metal lamp housing. It was on the north side of the old Western Channel and remained in effective use until 1911, when the new channel was opened about 1,100 feet to the south. The original lighthouse has been preserved a short distance from its former site, though the harbour reclamation work has left it several hundred yards from the present waterfront. A lighthouse on the piers at the Eastern Gap, together with fog-horns at both entrances, completes this part of the equipment of the harbour.

Before outlining the first improvement of Toronto harbour by the Esplanade development, some account of the means of approach to the wharves in the days of sailing-ships will be of value. Special signals were used in York when the King's Ships of the Provincial Marine were ordered to sail. They were to be flown from the masthead of the vessels, and repeated at the blockhouse near the Don, as the following announcement issued from the Lieutenant-Governor's office shows:

"Notice is hereby given that when the King's Vessels have received their orders to proceed from hence to Niagara the following signal will be hoisted at the Foretop Gallant Mast Head, and repeated from the Blockhouse in town, viz.: To Niagara, a White Flag; to Kingston, a Blue Flag."[7]

The usual method of announcing to intending travellers that a vessel was about to leave port was to blow repeated blasts on a long tin horn, which was sounded at intervals previous to their casting loose and at the moment of departure.

The earliest Lake Ontario steamship was the *Frontenac*, which first entered the harbour of York in 1817. For some

[7] *Upper Canada Gazette*, June 5, 1802.

years steamships were operated under considerable difficulties, as but few harbours had been constructed. It was usual for a ship to anchor at some distance from shore while passengers and goods were transferred by bateau or Durham boat. The wharves at York were approached by early steamships only with great difficulty, the vessel being brought to a standstill some way out in the harbour, and boats lowered from the fore and aft gangways; these craft carried hawsers, and when they had reached shore the ship was solemnly hauled to the wharf, the onlookers evincing surprise that the feat could be successfully accomplished.

Maitland's Wharf (formerly Cooper's) long continued to be the landing-place of most steamships, though in the early forties it was becoming rather the worse for wear. In 1841 Sir Richard Bonnycastle travelled up the lake on the *Great Britain*, one of the most popular steamships of the time, and landed at Toronto on this wharf, which he calls "a narrow decaying pier". He writes that he was "jostled almost into the water by rude carters plying for hire on its narrow bounds, and pestered by crowds of equally rude pliers for hotel preferences". The aristocratic Sir Richard found other ports similar to Toronto in these respects, however; and he also noticed the inconvenience caused by the fact that all the boats, "for some unaccountable reason", preferred to start upon their voyages at night.[8]

Some interesting memories of waterfront activities, honest and otherwise, are built up by John Ross Robertson around one Michael Masterson, whose official occupation in 1846 was razor-grinder, but who was versatile enough to include in his repertoire anything from smuggling to renting boats, from sailing his own schooner to praising publicly someone else's steamship line:

"In the *Directory* of 1846 we find 'Masterson, Michael, razor-grinder, Bay Shore, near York Street'. His house was at the foot of Bay Street, about a hundred feet from the south line of Front Street, for in those days, in fact till the time the Esplanade was built, the shore ran up to the edge of the bank, the line of which would be a little south of the front doors of the warehouse in the Iron Block. The

[8]Sir Richard Bonnycastle: *The Canadas in 1841*. 1842. Vol. I, pp. 146-7.

John Ross Robertson Collection. William Armstrong.

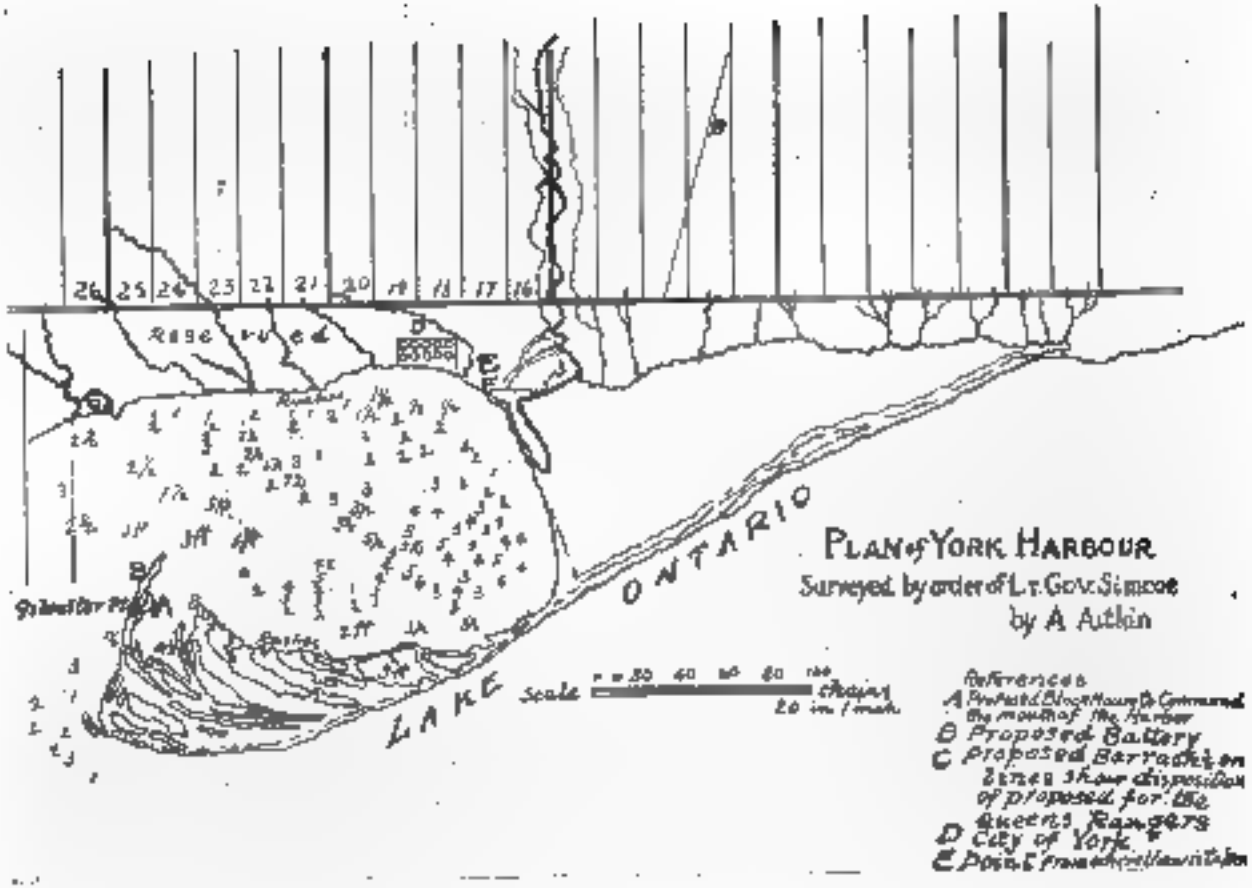
THE LIGHTHOUSE ON THE PENINSULA, 1851

This landmark was completed in 1809, and was 52 feet high. In 1832 twelve feet was added to its height, but the structure has not otherwise been materially altered since its erection.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

MICHAEL MASTERSON'S COTTAGE ON THE BAY SHORE

Sailor, smuggler, renter of boats, "Fisty" Masterson was later a razor-grinder. His home was situated near the foot of Bay Street, and he and his wife took a kindly interest in the schoolboys who were often to be found around their boats.



John Ross Robertson Collection.

ALEXANDER AITKIN'S PLAN OF YORK HARBOUR, 1793

York was originally intended to be an arsenal, but was later chosen as the capital of Upper

writer has bathed within a few feet of the back of the old Custom House on Front and Yonge which was burned down in 1870.

"Masterson was a city character. In the early days, from about 1825, he was a sailor. Through a mishap his left arm was shot off when quite a young man. A wooden arm with an iron hook did good service in lieu of the genuine article. His wife was a most estimable and motherly woman, and in later years when Masterson kept boats for hire at the foot of Bay Street, Mrs. Masterson always had a kindly eye for the welfare of the school and U.C. College boys who were her patrons. Long before this era, Michael, or, as he was popularly named, 'Fisty', had a small schooner which he ran across the lake, and it is said that he did quite a lot of smuggling. His vessel was two-masted and about forty feet long. He called his craft the *Christina* after his wife, who, by the way, was a Scotchwoman and a zealous Presbyterian.

"When Carfrae was Collector of Customs he attempted to seize the vessel on account of a lot of tea that had been smuggled for a King Street grocer, now a wealthy man in Toronto. 'Fisty' did not believe, as he said, in having 'the broad arrow' on his deck, so he, one-armed and all as he was, grasped Carfrae about the neck, and jumping overboard attempted to drown him, but fortunately both were rescued, and Masterson was heavily fined. On another occasion a couple of hogsheads of wine were captured by the Customs. It was removed uptown to Mossley's auction rooms on King Street, near the market. The sale was fixed for a certain date. The crowd assembled and the auctioneer directed that the wine be tested, when, to the amazement of the audience, it was found that the wine had turned to water by some mysterious process.

"In those days there was a great deal of smuggling carried on. The farmers on the lake shore used to connive at many a cargo of stuff being run in from the States, and large amounts of money were made. An old carter named Handy used to secrete tea in his stables and keep it there for weeks till a prominent King Street establishment was ready to receive it. Masterson, however, gave up his bad tricks, and with a grinding machine went about town earn-

ing a good stipend. He also kept boats for hire from about 1847, at the foot of Bay Street. At a later period Mr. Darby Finch and Mr. Millard, two popular boatmen, kept boats for hire at Rees' Wharf, foot of Simcoe Street. Mrs. Masterson ran the boat department and her house was kept as bright as a new pin. Her charge for boats was seven pence half penny an hour, and the patronage was very liberal.

"The Mastersons had one son, a clever fellow, who was educated at Upper Canada College. His name was Charles Michael, and he was a phenomenal musician. He could play the violin with much ability. Mrs. Masterson was, in after years, an employee of the Boys' or Girls' Home. Her son went out west. Michael, the father, was a man of about 5 feet 9 inches in height, stout and burly, sharp and keen. In the summer months he was a runner for the steamer which ran from Toronto and Hamilton to Rochester. It was amusing to hear him shout out the advantages of this particular steamer and route he was working for as he stood at the corner of Yonge and Front Streets, while his rivals in the business would be doing as well on another corner."[8]

The harbour carries other memories, too. At the middle of the century, and earlier, the curlers of the city were to be found playing "the roarin' game" on rinks kept free of snow between the wharves. There was a skating rink at the foot of Yonge Street, and the best figure-skater of the day was Principal F. W. Barron of Upper Canada College. The officers of the Garrison and the young bloods of the city outdid one another in tearing about in their gay carrioles and cutters, and the Bay in winter wore a picturesque and typically Canadian aspect. In summer the swimming that is now centred in the Island and eastern and western beaches took place in the more central portions of the Bay. The days of salmon-spearing by jack-light from birch canoes had passed, but pike, bass, perch, sunfish and an occasional maskinonge could still be caught off the wharves, though lunge were, of course, more plentiful in the Don and Ashbridge's Bay. Many a citizen, too, enjoyed an hour's sail on the horse-boat which long conducted the ferry service to the Peninsula; while those who could afford sail-

[8]John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*. 1894-1914. Vol. I, pp. 334-5.

ing yachts of their own competed in the regattas which were prominent sporting events on its waters.

The incorporation of York into the city of Toronto in 1834 had no effect on the condition of the harbour, for the city had no jurisdiction in the matter. The harbour front at that time followed the "Windmill Line", extending from Old Fort Point to Gooderham and Worts' Mill on Trinity Street. In 1837 the first preparations looking towards the construction of the Esplanade were taken when the city commenced to secure all land along the waterfront not already in private possession. The patent of such lots from Berkeley to Graves (Simcoe) Street was granted in 1840, and in 1853 a license of occupation was secured for those westward from Graves Street to the Queen's Wharf. A map in the Surveyor-General's office shows the projected Esplanade to be 100 feet in width and from 150 to 330 feet from the existing waterfront.

During the thirties and forties wharves additional to those already named were built from time to time. In 1836 John Cull made use of a large scow, which operated under the name of "The Royal Floating Bath. The *Toronto Directory* of 1837 gives an interesting description of the establishment:

"These baths have been erected by Mr. Cull of this City; they are 110 feet in length and 21 feet in width, and contain two warm and ten cold baths, with vapour and shower baths. One end is exclusively appropriated to ladies, with a private entrance from the gallery outside and leading to an elegant drawing-room adjoining a promenade deck 80 feet long with a dome roof, and trellis work guards all round. It is capable of accommodating 200 persons, and so constructed that the additional weight of 300 will not depress the bath one inch. There are reading and refreshment rooms for both ladies and gentlemen, fitted up in the best possible style. These baths are highly creditable to the city from point of appearance, and not less so as to their utility."[10]

Some eight or ten years later the baths were not being

[10]George Walton's *City of Toronto and Home District Commercial Directory and Register, with Almanack and Calendar for 1837*, p. 6.

used except as dressing-rooms for the Baptists, who were usually immersed in the Bay at the foot of Bay Street. By 1847 there was a total of eighteen wharves in the harbour, though some were showing signs of extreme old age.

Among the early regulations of the Port of Toronto are a number which recall the days of sailing-ships, and still others which existed because of the bad condition of the waterfront. It was ordered that all obstructions to navigation, such as sunken wharves, should be removed, and that no vessel should add to the refuse in the harbour by discharging ballast.[11] It appears, however, to have been expected, that this regulation might be "more honour'd in the breach than the observance", and that the sunken wharves might not all be removed, for it was provided that they should be marked with beacon lights, and, if not so marked, the owners of the wharves would be liable for any damage to vessels. A regulation notable for its seamanly language stipulated that "all schooners, square-rigged vessels or steamers lying at wharves shall top up their lower yards, or brace them fore and aft; also rig in their movable bumpkins and davits, lower all or house all boats hanging over the stem or quarter or any way outside the vessel". On foggy days precautions were to be taken by all vessels to warn others by ringing their bells, blowing off steam, sounding horns, or in some other way attracting attention to their location in the harbour.[11]

In 1860 schooners still predominated in lake trade. J. E. Middleton[12] gives a list of twenty-nine Toronto schooners engaged in that year in the carriage of grain, and remarks that "the combined burden of all these little sailing craft would about fill one hatchway of the modern Upper Lakes steamer". The largest of these schooners, the *Omar Pasha*, could carry 14,000 bushels, the smallest, the *Echo*, only 2,000. In the autumn of 1933 "the last sailing-ship on the Great Lakes" was to be burned off Sunnyside to provide a novel spectacle for Toronto's thrill-seekers, but was tempor-

[11]Seventeen regulations may be found in the small printed pamphlet, *Rules, By-Laws and Regulations of the Port of Toronto, passed by the Commissioners of the Harbour of Toronto the 24th day of December, 1850.* For many valuable suggestions concerning the history of the harbour the writer is indebted to V. [illegible] Roberts, Esq., Librarian of the Harbour Commission.

[12]Middleton, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 272.

arily saved from this ignominious end by public disapproval of such a wanton act. Nearly half a century earlier the steamship had won the competition for lake traffic, and had, in turn, suffered greatly from its land rival, the railway.

Meanwhile merchants and shippers were dissatisfied with the manner in which the government was operating the harbour, and a campaign instituted by the Board of Trade succeeded in effecting, in 1850, the passage of "An Act to Provide for the Future Management of Toronto Harbour". A Commission of five men was placed in charge of the Queen's Wharf and of navigation in general, but had no jurisdiction over privately-owned wharves, and the development of the harbour under such divided control was hardly to be exected. Railways were in the air, however, and in 1853 the public quay or Esplanade was commenced, C. S. Gzowski & Co., contractors for the Grand Trunk Railway, being awarded the contract, which carried an agreement to sell the Railway a right of way forty feet wide along the entire Esplanade for $10,000. Tenders, contracts, disagreements and delays characterised the next ten years, but in 1863 the work was finished at a cost of about $750,000. During the course of the improvements several wharves were filled in, and the others were connected by a macadamised roadway, of which the Torontonians of that day were quite proud.

As the years passed, other improvements increased the wharfage facilities of Toronto harbour. In 1863 Shedden's Wharf and elevator had been built at the foot of Peter Street, but in the next year it was destroyed by fire. In 1870 the Northern Railway Company's wharf at the foot of Brock Street (now Spadina Avenue) was a notable addition, and it remained until fire destroyed it in 1908. In the eighties and nineties the old Windmill Line was twice extended southward, the total distance being 644 feet and the last extension being known as the New Windmill Line; many of the wharves were consequently pushed farther into the Bay. Towards the close of the century the city constructed several additional wharves between Yonge Street and York Street; and by 1908 there were no less than forty between Bathurst Street and Parliament Street. At that time, however, the condition of the waterfront was deplorable, only

a few of the docks being in good repair, and the slips between them so full of silt and sewage that vessels drawing as little as twelve feet of water frequently grounded. The harbour was sadly in need of a comprehensive scheme of development as commensurate with the modern city as the old Esplanade had been in the Toronto of the fifties and sixties.

In January, 1852, the lake had made a breach in the peninsula at the narrows, and again in February, 1853, a storm formed a channel at that point three feet deep. Storms and low water in the spring of 1854 closed the beginnings of the Eastern Gap, however, and a protecting breakwater was erected at a cost of £1,389. On April 13, 1858, a storm battered the locality with such force that the breakwater and Quinn's Hotel were completely carried away and a permanent eastern entrance some 500 yards in width created. On May 31st the schooners *Eliza* and *Highland Chief* left the harbour by way of the new channel, and by 1859 steamers and other craft were using the Eastern Gap. Nothing was done to prevent further erosion, and by 1862 a channel three-quarters of a mile in width and from five to eight feet deep had been formed. Buoys were placed to guide traffic, but some twenty years passed before anything further was done.

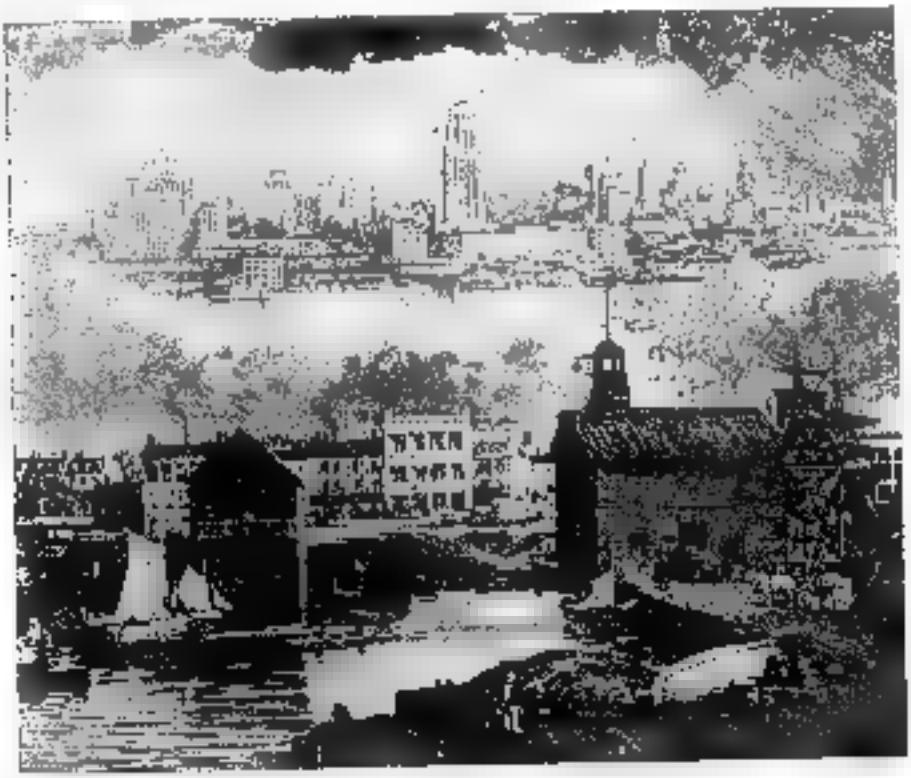
Bars outside the eastern channel continually interfered with its use, and the western entrance retained its supremacy, though it was difficult to navigate during seasons of low water. The City Council and the Harbour Commission petitioned the Dominion Government to take some action which would preserve the harbour from destruction by storms, and in 1879 an expert, J. B. Eads, reported in favour of closing both eastern and western channels, as well as all connection with Ashbridge's Bay, and, in place of the existing entrances, the opening of a channel across the north end of the island. In 1882 harbour improvements totalling $250,000, of which the city paid $100,000, were commenced, but the recommendations of Mr. Eads were not acted upon; on the contrary, both channels were improved, and a dyke was constructed separating Ashbridge's Bay from the harbour, but leaving an opening to the Don River.

The germ of modern developments along the waterfront

John Ross Robertson Collection. E. Wyly Grier, after an early painting.

Front Street between Peter and John, 1810

House of the Hon. George Crookshank | House of John Beikie | Commissariat Storehouse | The Holloway House



Reproduced by Courtesy of the Canadian Bank of Commerce

Toronto Waterfront, 1834 and 1934

The lower illustration is based upon Bartlett's sketch of 1840. In the foreground is Maitland's Wharf; and the white building in the rear centre is the Ontario House, later the Wellington Hotel, on Palace (Front) Street.

Reproduced by Courtesy of the Toronto Harbour Commissioners.

EASTERN HARBOUR TERMINALS, 1914

"Where swamps and flocks of wild fowl were characteristic sights."

Reproduced by Courtesy of the Toronto Harbour Commissioners.

EASTERN HARBOUR TERMINALS, 1933

The remarkable developments of a few years are apparent when one compares the two photographs. The plans were approved in 1912-13, but the outbreak of the Great War delayed the work. A clean and attractive waterfront now forms a pleasant approach to the Queen City.

is in one respect afforded by an idea which Dr. Beaty had when Mayor in 1880. Referring to the low land at the mouth of the Don he planned "to fill up the marsh with dry earth" (we can appreciate his use of the word *dry*!) "from the hills north and east of the city. I examined this question when in Council 15 years ago, and I then had a plan to make alternate canals and streets in the marsh, and fill up the intervals or let the lots to manufacturers at a nominal rental, under conditions that they fill up a certain acreage each year. The time had not come then to demand it, and I abandoned it for the time being".[13] When many years later the land was reclaimed as part of the harbour development the filling material was not carted from the hills but was excavated by hydraulic dredge and pumped 6,000 feet from the bed of the lake and from parts of the harbour.

In 1902 the eastern channel was deepened, and concrete piers were placed on either side of the entrance. In 1909 a new western channel south of the original one was built, but time had proved the utter impossibility of ever establishing any permanent policy of waterfront development as long as the magnificent resources remained under divided control. The Board of Trade inaugurated a campaign to induce the City Council and the Dominion Government to place all the city's waterfront properties and waterlots in Toronto Bay and Lake Ontario, including the whole of Ashbridge's Bay, into the hands of a permanent Commission for development. In December, 1910, the ratepayers expressed their approval by an overwhelming majority, and as a result "The Toronto Harbour Commissioners' Act" was passed on May 19, 1911, ushering in a new era in the development of the city.

In the autumn of 1912 the final plans of waterfront improvement were approved by the City Council, and in June, 1913, by the Dominion Government. The scheme included the reclamation of Ashbridge's Bay for industrial purposes, and the construction of a harbour head line 1,100 feet south of the New Windmill Line, the region north of it being filled in as the development proceeded. The harbour was to be deepened to 30 feet, and some 900 acres of park lands to the east and west of the harbour and on the Island were to be

[13]James Beaty: *Civic Relief*, 1896, p. 44.

reclaimed. The estimated cost of the entire scheme was $25,000,000.

The Great War interfered with the progress of the improvements, but in later years the work was pushed forward, and almost all of the plans have now been carried to completion. Toronto boasts one of the best harbours on the Great Lakes, and adequate provision has been made for her industrial and commercial expansion. At the same time the Toronto Grade Separation, which elevated the railway tracks, and the construction of the Queen's Quay, Fleet Street and similar roadways, have provided for the development of rail and motor transportation; while storage warehouses and manufacturing plants exist where swamps and flocks of wild fowl were, until recently, characteristic sights.

A unique feature in connection with the improvements has been the combination of recreational with industrial development. The breakwater forms adequate protection for canoes and other small boats, while the amusement resorts at Sunnyside and the Island provide countless thousands of people with summer pleasures unsurpassed anywhere. Life-saving has consequently developed greatly since the first official lifeboat was purchased in 1857 to aid mariners shipwrecked in or near the harbour. Until 1912 there was no permanent life-saving and police patrol service, and in earlier years it had long been necessary, when a wreck occurred, for the one boat, which was kept in Tinning's boathouse, to be manned by volunteers. As time passed, arrangements more satisfactory were gradually effected, but the modern waterfront development has necessitated a greatly enlarged service to provide adequate protection—not so much for mariners, as in days of old, but for bathers and boaters along the numerous beaches. "Toronto Harbour" implies much more than it did formerly, and the modern appearance of ten miles of clean and attractive waterfront affords a remarkable sight to all who can recall the conditions of but a few years ago.

CHAPTER III

The Island and the Ferry Service

Toronto Island, even in Indian days a favourite place for the holding of native councils, was from the earliest years of the town of York a pleasure resort enjoyed and appreciated as a centre of recreation. A peninsula until 1858, it was approached on foot, on horseback or by canoe in early times. In commenting on the necessity of a bridge across the mouth of the Don in order to facilitate approach to the Peninsula, the *Gazette* noted that there might be found land which would "answer every purpose of an extensive common to the owners of cattle; to those who might use it for purposes of recreation it furnishes a most delightful walk or ride; as a race ground or place for field exercise we know not its equal; the sportsman will find a constant and easy access to the best shooting ground; and the convalescent might find health in an occasional excursion to the opposite beach".[1]

While John Ross Robertson dates the establishment of a hotel on the Island, and of horse-boat transport to it, from the conversion of Lord Sydenham's residence into a hotel in 1843-4 by the Privat brothers, yet there was both a hotel and a horse-boat in operation as early as 1833. Michael O'Connor was proprietor of the hotel and owner of the horse-boat named in the following announcement in Mackenzie's *Almanac* for 1834:

"Horse-boat to the Island. A boat propelled by four horses runs every day from the Steamboat Wharves to the Starch Factory on the peninsula or island across the Bay—her trips regulated to suit public convenience. Fare to and from the island, 7½d. A hotel has been opened on the island to accommodate sportsmen, parties of pleasure, etc."[2]

[1] *Upper Canada Gazette*, April 1, 1808. Fourteen years later the Magistrates petitioned the Lieutenant-Governor to grant "a lease or otherwise in trust for the use of the inhabitants of the town as a commons for the pasturage of cattle on the Peninsula in front of said town".

[2] [W. L. Mackenzie's] *New Almanack for the Canadian True Blues*, 1834, p. 15. The fare given is evidently one way only.

From another source[3] we are able to state that the inn was known in 1833 by the appropriate name of The Retreat on the Peninsula; and furthermore that 1s. 3d. was the fare charged to convey a passenger to and from the resort on the *Sir John of the Peninsula*, for this was the grandiloquent name of the first horse-boat. The ferry made three trips daily from the foot of Church Street to the eastern end of what is now called Ward's Island, leaving York at 10, 2 and 4 o'clock and returning at 11, 3 and 6. On Sundays a trip was made at 8 a.m., and the return at 9; and commencing at 10 o'clock there was a continuous service with 15-minute stops at each side of the Bay. G. Roe was the enterprising operator of the TEAM BOAT, as it was often called. In naming the boat and hotel, Michael O'Connor, evidently an old soldier, was thinking of the Spanish Peninsular War; and particularly was Sir John Moore in his mind—that famous leader of the disastrous retreat to Coruna, who died in the moment of victory and was buried with melancholy solemnity just before the embarkation of his troops.

Steamships were becoming common on Lake Ontario in the early thirties, and on April 1, 1835, George Heathcote submitted a proposal to the City Council suggesting that he would build a steamboat to ply to the Peninsula. In May of the same year the first steam ferry—the newly-built *Toronto*—was operating regularly on the Bay, and the *Courier* of July the 9th states that the construction of a new road and bridges on the eastern end of the island enabled those who crossed the Bay to take a pleasant drive.

John Ross Robertson wrote that the Peninsula Hotel was originally erected in 1839 by Mr. Poulett Thompson (later Lord Sydenham) as a residence during a visitation of cholera; but there is every reason to believe that it was the same building opened as an hotel by Michael O'Connor in 1833, and later operated by Joseph Palin. It was 50 feet by 40, and was built upon a layer of 4-inch planks sunk two feet in the sand, since it was difficult to lay a brick foundation. The lower storey was built of brick, and the second

[3] *George Walton's York Commercial Directory for 1834*. 1833. p. 147. A detailed announcement of the opening of the hotel appears in the *Courier of Upper Canada*, October 5, 1833, and may be found in Chapter XVII, page 313.

and third of wood. In 1843 Louis (Peter) Privat (pronounced Prevs at the time) purchased the house, and, with his brother Louis Joseph, commenced therein the operation of the Peninsula Hotel. While Peter undertook to run the hostelry, Louis Joseph endeavoured to attract customers by running a horse-boat across the bay. The *Peninsula Packet*—called merely "the horse-boat" by the inhabitants of Toronto—had formerly operated as a steamship below Queenston, and was sixty feet in length by twenty-three in width. A waterwheel on either side was set in motion by two horses who trod on a circular table set flush with the deck in its centre. As the table revolved it worked upon rollers which, being connected with the shaft, set the paddles in motion. The horses were, of course, in position practically stationary, the table on which they trod being fitted with ridges of wood radiating like spikes from the centre. In 1845 the vessel was lengthened and the front pointed, enabling a better rate of speed; five horses were employed instead of two, and they walked round and round the deck, propelling the boat in a manner similar to the working of an old-fashioned threshing machine or French-Canadian grist-mill.

Some account of the people early connected with the peninsula will be of interest. The first inhabitants of the *Presqu'Isle de Toronto* were fishermen. At least as early as the eighteen-forties William Strowger erected the first house on the eastern sandbar, now called Fisherman's Island. This primitive cabin was constructed of logs and other loose timber which had been washed up on the beach. Mary Anne Strowger, widow of William, recalled in 1908 that her eldest son was probably the first child born on the Island. In those days Ashbridge's Bay and the Lake abounded in fish, and the Strowgers, Wards, Laffertys and Durnans, the only residents on the Island, were all fishermen. At various times, also, fishermen established themselves on what is now called Hanlan's Point, the Hanlans being the first to locate there.

In later years William Geddes bought out the five or six fishermen at Hanlan's, and William Strowger removed thither to become his foreman. His family lived on the shore of Centre Island, and Mrs. Strowger recalled that

fourteen men were employed in netting whitefish, while trout were frequently caught by hook and line. For a time the Strowgers occupied the former summer home of Lord Sydenham, which they operated as a hotel previous to its use for the same purpose by Peter and Louis Joseph Privat. Other buildings in the vicinity of the Peninsula Hotel are described as follows:

"To the east of it was another small dwelling, occupied by the keeper of the lighthouse, James Durning, while about one hundred yards to the west was a third house, known afterwards as Parkinson's Hotel. These, the huts we have before mentioned, and the lighthouse, were, until 1853, the only dwellings upon the Island. Between where now is Island Park, and the Eastern gap, were a great many trees, chiefly pines and Balm of Gilead. Exactly opposite the present Albert House is one of each of these trees, and this spot was a favourite rendezvous for picnic parties. To the east are several other scattered pines, much the same now as then, and from them one of the adjacent villas takes the very appropriate name of 'The Pines'."[4]

The first careful survey of the peninsula was probably that of J. G. Howard, who wrote that in 1846 he "made a survey of the Toronto peninsula, and laid out 283 acres in fifty-seven two-acre lots on Trafalgar Marine Parade, or Fitzroy Street, going north from the lighthouse, Vernon Street at right-angles to it; also Rodney and Duncan Streets."[5]

The Privats developed a small pleasure resort around their hotel, swings and a merry-go-round, etc., providing entertainment for children, and bowling alleys, pigeon-shooting and similar diversions attracting the men. John Ross Robertson's description of Privat's amusement park shows that the sports of earlier generations were frequently characterised by cruelty to animals which is now prevented by law:

"The Island afforded its visitors many other attractions besides the journey there, which, by the way, generally occupied thirty and sometimes forty minutes. Opposite the

[4]See John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*, 1894-1914, Vol. II, pp. 764-7, for reminiscences of early days on the island. "Durning" is obviously an error for "Durnan".

[5]J. G. Howard: *Incidents in the Life of J. G. Howard*. . . . 1885. p. 22.

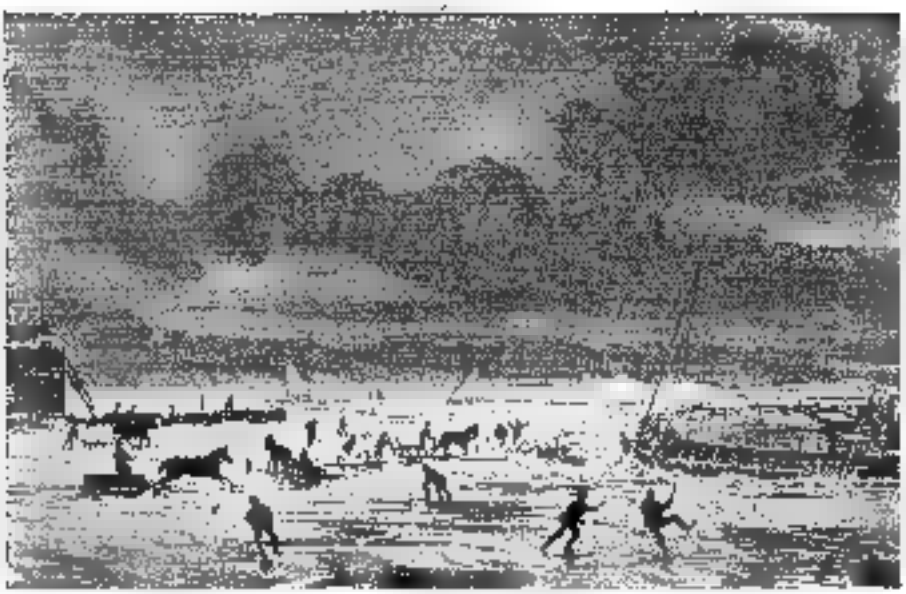
John Ross Robertson Collection. C. H. J. Snider.

A Team Boat

John Ross Robertson Collection. C. H. J. Snider.

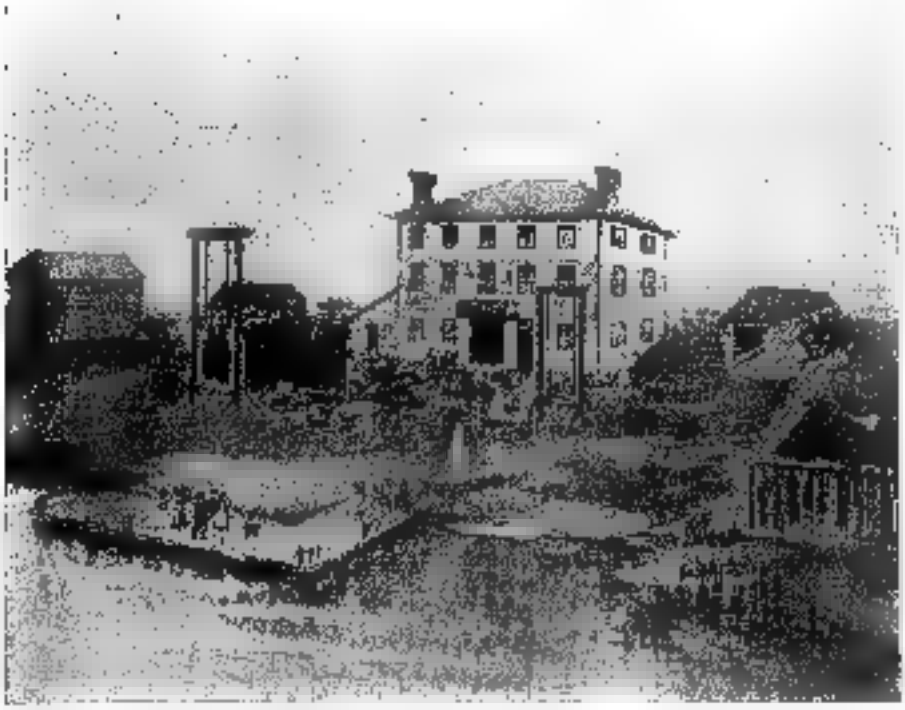
The Five-Horse Boat Peninsula Packet

Horse-boats conducted a ferry service on the Bay from 1833 to 1851. The *Peninsula Packet* was 60 feet long and 23 feet beam, and ran to Privat's Hotel.



Canadian Illustrated News. W. Armstrong.

CUTTING ICE ON TORONTO BAY OPPOSITE THE UNION DEPOT, 1871



John Ross Robertson Collection.

PRIVAT'S HOTEL AND AMUSEMENT PARK ON THE PENINSULA

Swings, a merry-go-round and a small zoo may be distinguished. At the rear right is the Ten-Pin Alley. Visitors were transported to the park on the horse-boat *Peninsula Packet*.

hotel was a merry-go-round and two large swings, the one to the east, the other to the west of the merry-go-round. The first was eighty feet high, the second but thirty, and all three were largely patronized by the younger portion of the Island's visitors. For the elders there was a bowling alley, known as 'Ten Pin Alley', while to ensure instruction as well as amusement there was a small zoological collection consisting of a bear, a wolf, a white deer, several racoons and two or three eagles. There was also a good deal of amusement of a somewhat miscellaneous nature. Every Queen's Birthday many of the sportsmen of Toronto journeyed to the Island for blackheart shooting. These were birds of passage of the plover tribe, who invariably were making their annual migration at this period of the year. Another, though somewhat cruel pastime consisted of trap pigeon shooting, wild pigeons being netted by bird-catchers and sold to Privat for the purpose.

"Besides these contests to test the prowess of marksmen, there was turkey shooting. This, it must be confessed, was very sorry sport. A turkey was tied and placed on an elevation about fifty yards from where the sportsmen (?) stood. Everyone who chose to enter and pay a York shilling for each shot was allowed to fire at the poor bird; the first who hit it became possessor of the turkey. This amiable pastime continued until the supply of turkeys was exhausted. There was yet one other occasional diversion, equally reprehensible but perhaps not quite so cruel as the one just mentioned: this was shooting a bear with a candle. A bear was purchased, and forty years ago these were not difficult to obtain, and a man resident in Toronto used to give an exhibition of shooting this animal with a rifle ostensibly loaded only with an ordinary tallow candle. To see this performance a small sum was charged, and those who witnessed it went away believing the bear had met his quietus solely through the force of the candle striking him. They were not told, and probably would not have believed it had they been so, that when the candle was put in the rifle a bullet had preceded it; nevertheless such was the case. This 'sport' always took place in the winter, and there was from time to time an occasional fox hunt also, a fox being let loose the night before to furnish the

sport, and a very exhilarating amusement was the result."[6]

In 1850 the *Peninsula Packet* was still being advertised in the press. Under the head "Cheap Pleasure" L. J. Privat announces the horse-boat service in connection with his hotel, and the reference in this advertisement to pasturage for horses and cattle shows how close to rural life Toronto was at that period:

"That Safe and Convenient Horse-Boat, the *Peninsula Packet,* will leave Mr. Maitland's Wharf, foot of Church Street, every day at ten o'clock a.m., 12, 2, 4, and 6 p.m., for the Peninsula Hotel. Returning at 11 a.m., 1, 3, 5, and 7 p.m. precisely. Fare to and from, 7½d. Family Season Tickets $4 each. Swings and Merry-go-round, etc., for the amusement of Children. Dinners, Lunches, Teas, etc., to be had at the shortest notice. Good pasture for Horses and other cattle, which can be conveyed over by the first boat—not later."[7]

But horse-boats, long effectively used for short distance ferry services, were gradually being displaced by steam ferries, and the Toronto horse-boat was taken off the route in 1851. In the early fifties the chief steam ferry was the *Victoria,* built by James Good, Toronto ship-builder, and purchased by L. J. Privat. This boat of 25 horse-power ran throughout the season every hour between 10 a.m. and 7 p.m., and it was announced that she had "no connection with any other boat, or racing",[8]—which suggests that a race-track was in operation at the time, and was, perhaps, attracting unfavourable comment in some quarters. At the close of the 1853 season Privat sold the *Victoria* to George Tate, Superintendent of the Grand Trunk Railway, and continued to operate the boat for the Company until the autumn of 1855, when Privat and his family removed from Toronto to Bentinck, Grey County. During their residence on the Island the Privats rescued at least five men from drowning. Other steam ferries operating in the fifties included the *Bob Moodie* and the *Lady Head.*

[6]*Ibid.*

[7]Quoted in Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 884. A similar announcement in the *British Colonist* of May 18, 1849, contains the information that "children sent without guardians will be taken every care of".

[8]Any quotations in this chapter not otherwise credited are from Robertson, Vol. II, pp. 884-927.

John Quinn, who succeeded the Privat brothers in the hotel business on the Island, also operated a ferry while the *Victoria* was still running. In 1853 a newspaper item announces that "among the new projects for the season is John Quinn's new steamer, the *Citizen*, built to run between Toronto and the Island". Shortly afterwards the news appears that she "made her first trips to and from Toronto and the Island on Thursday, May 19th. The return fare was only 8 cents". The *Citizen* was a vessel of 350 tons and operated on the Bay for some years.

Before leaving the resort operated by the Privats and Quinn it is worth noting that the site of their summer hotel was, after 1858, under water. In the vicinity of the Eastern Gap which replaced the narrow neck of land where the hotel was located might also be found in the sixties the hulks of two steamships—the *Monarch*, wrecked in 1856, and the *Southern Belle*, a few years later. It may be mentioned, too, that the locality was not always the quiet resort of today, for in the eighteen-fifties the hundreds of Toronto grog-shops and taverns supplied no end of hard liquor, and among other "sinks of iniquity" where gambling, drinking and fighting were rampant was the Island. Conditions were usually at their worst on Sundays and holidays.

In addition to the hotel occupied by the Privats and Quinn, there was Parkinson's, which was incidentally mentioned previously. Some details concerning the history of this hostelry will be of interest. About 1850 Reuben Parkinson, a carriage-builder, erected the hotel at Maskelonge Point (Mugg's Landing), moving it a few years later to the west side of the Privat Hotel grounds. It was washed away at the time the Eastern Gap was created, and the following year (1859) Mrs. Parkinson built a hostelry in what is now called Island Park. Robert Mead took over the property in 1873, and his widow continued the business after his death. In 1887 the city purchased from Mrs. Mead the twelve acres of land surrounding the hotel, and the property became part of the park.

In April, 1858, what had long been called the Island became so in fact, for a heavy storm broke through the sandbar and created the Eastern Gap in that year. It was on this occasion that Quinn's Hotel was carried away and

the site covered with water. Evidently a deep channel was made, for on April 19, 1859, the steamship *Bowmanville* passed through the gap, and it soon became commonly used by vessels.

In 1859 occurs the first announcement of moonlight excursions on the bay. In addition to her regular trips to and from the Island, the *Fire Fly* advertises moonlight voyages on Tuesdays and Fridays, and "for the accommodation of the dancers there will be music on board. Fare only one York shilling". In 1861 Captain Robert Moodie announces the recommencement of the service, and makes the rather unhygienic suggestion that citizens of Toronto "can get a mouthful of fresh air" by patronising the *Fire Fly* on one of her hourly trips.

During the sixties several other ferries were employed on Toronto Bay. The *Watertown*, a vessel of 175 tons built in 1864 in Kingston, entered the service immediately afterwards, and in 1865 it is announced that "the miniature little steamer, the *Ripple*, with her jaunty rig and obliging boy captain, runs half-hourly between the city and the Island, and is well patronised by our citizens and young folks desirous of enjoying a sail".* On August 22nd of the same year the *Princess of Wales*, John Walsh, captain, is advertised to leave Tinning's Wharf "every day at noon, and every half hour afterwards throughout the day until 7 p.m". Tinning's Wharf was built in 1831, and was located on a small part of the site now occupied by the Union Station.

In 1866 a new steamer, the *Bouquet*, was advertised to run to the Island, and season tickets were for sale at "W. & J. Strachan, Front Street; Saulter's wood-yard; Church Street Wharf; R. W. Parkinson, Esq., corner of King and Yonge Streets; and from the captain on board". James Saulter was the master of the *Bouquet*. Two years later Captain William Parkinson was in charge of this ferry, and advertised that "the steamer has been furnished in a tasteful style and in such a manner as to ensure comfort combined with safety to persons wishing to visit this favourite place of resort. The most liberal arrangements will be made with excursions and picnic parties".

In 1867 the *Princess of Wales* commenced a service in

The Globe, July 27, 1865.

opposition to the *Bouquet*. It appears that there was a move in that year to award the exclusive right to conduct the ferry service to friends of certain aldermen, and the *Globe* adopted a characteristic and praiseworthy attitude:

"We understand that a project is on foot in the Council to lease the privilege of carrying passengers to the Island. The city has full power in this direction, and it is felt that they might justly exercise it, while the result will be a better control over those to whom the privilege is given. Some talk exists of giving the exclusive privilege to some intimate friends of certain members of the Council, without tender. We trust such favouritism will not be attemped. Undoubtedly the only just plan will be to let it out by tender."[19]

Among other ferries in operation in the late sixties were the *Ada Alice* and the *Prince Arthur*, both of which went on the route in 1868. In 1870 the *Perry*, under Captain Thomas Lundy, operated under the same management as the *Bouquet*, and the two boats provided a quarter-hour service. On May 24th, the opening of the season, 5,000 people, a large crowd for that period, journeyed to the Island.

The development of Hanlan's Point and the other portions of the Island was particularly noticeable in the seventies. A contemporary publication suggests that "what 'the mountain' is to the Montrealer, 'the island' is to the people of Toronto. Until recently it was regarded simply as a fine natural breakwater, and the occasional resort of a few sportsmen. Now, it has become—to borrow a phrase from the sea-coast watering-places—'a great marine resort' of the townspeople, thousands of whom, all summer long, throng the ferries to its shores to enjoy the cool breezes of the lake. The once flat and featureless marsh is to-day a waterside suburb of rapidly increasing interest. From Hanlan Point—the island-home of Toronto's noted oarsman—a beautiful view of the city may be had. The features of the island itself, moreover,—the stretches of water-meadow, the hotels, promenades, and quaint summer residences on its shores—present a picture of varied and pleasing outline. Lakeward, stretching out

[19] *Ibid.*, May 5, 1867.

beyond Gibraltar Point,—the site of an old French block-house—is the great basin from which the city derives its water supply. The water is pumped up through sunken mains, laid across the bay and island, by powerful engines situated on the Esplanade. To the east is the fine, airy building of the Royal Canadian Yacht Club, a flourishing organisation designed to encourage amateur yachting and to supply the means of luxuriating in the adjacent lake. Still farther east, on a modest section of the peninsula now encircled by the lapping waves of the lake, the Wiman Baths may be seen, their outline sharply mirrored in the sunny expanse of gleaming water in the bay."[11]

The same writer envisions some of the modern development of Toronto's waterfront, noting that "the purposes to which the Island and water-surroundings of Toronto may be put, in affording the means of rest and enjoyment to its jaded citizens, are yet almost undreamt of. The whole of the lake-front of the island, and much of the Esplanade, might be converted into a continuous promenade or drive, with floating pontoons and occasional jetties thrown out lakeward, and the necessary adjunct of commodious hotels, at modest charges, for individual and family resort. The preservation of the island, meantime, is a pressing duty, and the municipal authorities of the city will be criminally responsible if they continue to neglect it. The existence of the bay and harbour is imperilled by indifference. No time should be lost in protecting the island from the encroachment of the lake."[12]

As time passed, other ferries appeared on the bay. During 1876 the *Princess of Wales, Bouquet* and *Watertown* were the chief vessels providing a ferry service. The *Watertown* also ran from time to time to the Humber. Two years later the *Princess of Wales* and *Bouquet* and four new ferries—the *Transit, Golden City, St. Jean Baptiste* and *Juliette*—were operating on the Bay. In 1883 the *Princess of Wales* sank near Queen's Wharf, but was raised, taken to Oakville, and rebuilt under the name *General*

[11]G. M. Grant (Ed.): *Picturesque Canada*. 1879. Vol. I, p. 407. The suggestion of a French blockhouse on Gibraltar (Hanlan's) Point is evidently an error, though there was a British block-house on that site in the early years of the town.

[12]*Ibid.*

Wolsey; soon afterwards she was burned at Fire Island. There appears to have been no objection to the operation of horse-boats or steam ferries on Sunday in earlier times, but there were attempts to prevent the use of commercial "pleasure boats" in the late eighteen-seventies. In the *Globe* is reported the case of three men who had been arrested for running steamers on the Sabbath, but the Magistrate dismissed the case on the ground that the boats should be construed as ferries rather than pleasure boats.[13]

During the eighties several new ships entered the service. Old inhabitants of Toronto will recall the *Canadian*, launched in 1882, the *Luella*, the *St. Jean Baptiste* (later *Sadie*), and *Prouvette Beyer*, all under Turner's management, and the *Mascotte, Arlington, Jessie McEdwards, Kathleen, Gertrude* and *Island Queen*, the last five of which were operated by A. J. Tymon. Almost all of them became the property of the Toronto Ferry Company when it was formed in 1890. Most of these boats were small screw steamers, but the *Canadian* and *Sadie* were two-decked paddle-wheelers, and carried 340 and 370 passengers, respectively. In 1890 were constructed the *Mayflower* and the *Primrose*, which incorporated the latest conveniences and improvements, including electric lights—then rather a novelty. They are steel-built, two-decked, double-bowed paddle steamers, and are the only boats in use in 1890 and still remaining in the ferry service. In the nineties these vessels left the Yonge Street Wharf for Hanlan's Point and Island Park, and the wharves at Dufferin and George Streets were also used to a lesser extent. The service extended from April to October, and from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. daily except Sunday, when it was more limited.

When the Toronto Ferry Company commenced operations in 1890 it purchased the steamers hitherto operated by the Doty Ferry Company, and two years later those belonging to the Island Park Ferry Company. In the late nineties the new company was operating twelve ferries. The *Luella* was long most popular with Island residents, and her captain was once presented with a set of colours by the City Council in recognition of her services in saving a number of people from drowning. A commendable custom

[13]The *Globe*, October 29, 1879.

In connection with the Toronto Ferry Company's service in the nineties was the frequent free excursions provided for many hundreds of inmates of the various charitable institutions of the city.

From time to time new boats replaced old ones. The *Island Queen* and *Kathleen* were destroyed by a fire at Hanlan's Point on February 12, 1918. In August of the same year the rate of passage for adults was raised from 10c. to 15c., and many were the complaints of citizens. In 1923 the Bay Street Docks were becoming unsafe, and removal to the new slips at the foot of York Street was suggested. But L. J. Solman, owner of the Toronto Ferry Company, objected to doing so unless car tracks were laid to the new docks. At that time the greater part of the patrons of the ferries were those who attended ball games at Solman's stadium on Hanlan's Point, and, as the Harbour Commission stated that the York Street Bridge could not carry street cars, Solman threatened to discontinue his ferry service and to build a new stadium within reach of the cars. The latter part of this policy he proceeded to carry into effect, but the ferries were operated with a steadily decreasing patronage until April, 1926, when the city decided to buy the ferry service for $337,500, eight boats comprising the fleet at that time.

In February, 1927, the service, which for a year had been conducted by the Ferry Company for the city, was transferred to the management of the Toronto Transportation Commission. Hanlan's Point, for generations the "Sunnyside" of Toronto citizens, had almost faded from the picture under the competition of Scarboro Beach and, latterly, of Sunnyside, but it secured a new lease of life under the enterprising management of the Commission. Street car tickets are used for the ferry passage, and the number of visitors to Centre Island, Hanlan's Point and Ward's Island is greater than ever before.

The present equipment of the ferry service includes six ferries, four of which—the *Mayflower*, *Primrose*, *Bluebell* and *Trillium*—are large paddle-wheelers, and two—the *T. J. Clark* and *Luella*—are small screw steamers. The old *Jasmine* (formerly *Ojibway*) was in service until 1927, and ended her days in flames off Sunnyside on August 2,

Reproduced by Courtesy of the T.T.C. Rowsey Murphy.

THE LUELLA, 1880-1917

This ferry was long among the most popular on the Bay.

Reproduced by Courtesy of the Toronto Transportation Commission.

FERRIES AND FERRY DOCKS, 1927

The construction of several notable buildings has greatly altered the appearance of the waterfront since the T.T.C. assumed control of the ferry service in 1927.

John Ross Robertson Collection. J. G. Howard.

WINTER ACTIVITIES ON THE BAY, 1835

The Parliament Buildings may be seen in the right background.

From the Ontario Curling Association Annual, 1877.

THE TORONTO RED JACKETS ON TORONTO BAY, 1873

T. McGaw is at the "back", having just delivered his stone. J. Gray and D. Walker are the sweepers, the former with his broom in the air. Captain Perry is the skip with one knee on the ice. It is a good "end", for all the stones are "in the house". In later *Annuals* the whiskey bottles at the lower right-hand corner were covered by a black cloth—presumably in deference to temperance sentiment!

1929. The *Clark Bros.* and *John Hanlan* were similarly burned to provide a spectacle for amusement seekers. Two sightseeing gasoline launches, the *Miss Simcoe* and *Miss York*, and two freight boats, the *Aylmer* and *Buttercup*, comprise the rest of the equipment. All boats now run from the New Queen's Quay instead of using several wharves as formerly. In 1931 passengers to the number of 2,172,568 were carried on the ferries, over 101,000 making the trip on the record day, July 1st of that year. Even during the winter anyone who wishes to cross may do so on the tug *Ned Hanlan*, which sails from the foot of John Street to the Island filtration plant.

Just previous to the arrangements under which the city took over the ferry service from the Toronto Ferry Company there was considerable discussion relative to bridging the Eastern and Western Gaps so that motor and trolley cars might proceed to the Island. Fortunately these plans, which would have ended the ferry service and destroyed much of the charm of the pleasure resort, were terminated by the agreement conveying the property to the City of Toronto, and it is to be hoped that future generations may long be able to approach the restful Island on ferries larger but not greatly dissimilar to the old horse-boats.

CHAPTER IV

The Don and Its Early Bridges

In the pioneer period it was usual to carry on transportation by water whenever possible, for such roads as had been blazed were mere trails through the forest. The canoe and the bateau were long familiar on Canadian waterways, and the Don River, first mapped by the Frenchman, Raffeix, in 1688, was part of a trade route which was early of great importance. Soon after Yonge Street was opened in 1796 by Augustus Jones, the North-West Company, which had formerly sent brigades of canoes to the west *via* the Ottawa River, diverted much of the traffic to the Yonge Street route. Bateaux travelled in fleets up the St. Lawrence and the Bay of Quinté, and by a portage at the Carrying Place entered Lake Ontario, along the shore of which they proceeded to York. Crossing the Peninsula at the point where the Eastern Gap now is, they made their way by oars and poles up the Don, and by one of its forks to Yonge Street. The flat-bottomed boats were then loaded on trucks or wagons and hauled to the Holland River, down which they proceeded to Lake Simcoe and thence to the North-West. Some years later the boats frequently used Yonge Street all the way from the shores of the Bay, the more difficult hills being ascended by the aid of a windlass or capstan.

Transport by dug-out canoe was developed by a picturesque resident on the Don—Joseph Tyler, hermit-squatter from New Jersey, who lived on the west side of the river, just north of the site where was later erected the Don Street bridge. He is described as having fine, sharp, shrewd features, set off by an abundance of white hair and beard; in fact, in every way "the counterpart of an Italian artist's stock model". Almost all that is known of him and his more than locally famous canoe is recorded by Dr. Scadding:

"The mystery attendant on his choice of a life of complete solitude, his careful reserve, his perfect self-reliance in regard to domestic matters, and, at the same time, the evi-

dent wisdom of his contrivances and ways, and the propriety and sagacity of his few words, all helped to render him a good specimen in actual life of a secular anchorite. He had been, in fact, a soldier in the United States army in the War of Independence, and was in the receipt of a pension from the other side of the lakes. He was familiar, he alleged, with the personal appearance of Washington.

"His abode on the Don was an excavation in the side of the steep hill, a little way above the level of the river-bank. The flue of his winter fireplace was a tubular channel, bored up through the clay of the hill-side. His sleeping-place or berth was exactly like one of the receptacles for human remains in the Roman catacombs—an oblong recess, likewise carved in the dry material of the hill. To the south of his cave he cultivated a large garden, and raised, among other things, the white sweet edible Indian corn, a novelty here at the time, and very excellent tobacco. He, moreover, manufactured pitch and tar in a little kiln or pit dug for the purpose close by his house.

"He built for himself a magnificent canoe, locally famous. It consisted of two large pine logs, each about forty feet long, well shaped and deftly hollowed out, fastened together by cross dove-tail pieces let in at regular distances along the interior of its bottom. While in process of construction in the pine woods through which the 'Mill Road' passes, on the high bank eastward of the river, it was a wonderment to all the inquisitive youth of the neighbourhood, and was accordingly often visited and inspected by them.

"In this craft he used to pole himself down the windings of the stream, all the way round into the bay, and on to the landing-place at the foot of Caroline Street, bringing with him the produce of his garden, and neat stacks of pine knots, ready split for the fishermen's lightjacks. He would also on occasion undertake the office of ferryman. On being hailed for the purpose, he would put across the river persons anxious to make a short cut into the town from the eastward. Just opposite his den there was for a time a rude causeway over the marsh.

"At the season of the year when the roads through the woods were impracticable Tyler's famous canoe was employed by the Messrs. Helliwell for conveying into town,

from a point high up the stream, the beer manufactured at their Breweries on the Don. We are informed by Mr. William Helliwell of the Highland Creek that twenty-two barrels at a time could be placed in it, in two rows of eleven each laid lengthwise side by side, still leaving room for Tyler and an assistant to navigate the boat."[1]

Most of the early transportation problems of York centred at the mouth of the Don River. The swampy shores of the stream long remained a great place for muskrats, and in the upper reaches the wary trout lured the disciples of Izaak Walton; while in York's earliest years sea salmon used to run up the Don. But these sporting activities neither aided nor hindered the development of transport. Apart from the fallen butternut tree which provided a precarious foot-bridge in 1794, the first structure supplying more than a temporary crossing appears to have been constructed by Asa Danforth's road-builders when they opened the first road from Kingston to York in 1799-1800. The original Danforth Road entered York along the present Kingston Road, and additional bridges were built over the Don from time to time to replace log structures which were continually rotting away or being partially washed out. In 1803 the minutes of the Court of Quarter Sessions carried the item that "John Vanzante and Thomas Humberstone, Overseers of the Highways in the Town of York, represented the impossibility of passing the Don Bridge in its present state". It was thereupon ordered "that a copy of the Assessment Roll be furnished to each of them, and that they unite their strength to make a causeway uniting the road to the Bridge".[2]

For some time men forded the river on horseback, or crossed by means of a scow which was worked back and forth by the help of a rope. This service was maintained by a schedule of tolls, and it may be presumed that they were similar to those in force at the Humber and the Credit, of which we have some particulars of interest. On April 14, 1802, the Court of Quarter Sessions[3] authorised Richard

[1]Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old*. 1873. pp. 228-9.
[2]Minutes of April 18, 1803, *Report of the Archives of Ontario, 1932*, p. 45.
[3]Minutes of April 14, 1802, *ibid.*, p. 30.

Willson to collect the following amounts from persons who used his ferry at the mouth of the Humber:

For every Waggon, Cart or Sleigh	1s.	3d.
Every Person		7½d.
Every Horse		7½d.
Every Horned Cattle		7½d.
Every Sheep		3d.
Every Hog		3d.

The same rates were laid down in April, 1806, for Thomas Ingersoll's ferry at the River Credit, inaugurated at that time.[4] On July 15, 1807, the Court considered these rates too high, and instituted a new schedule with charges of from one-third to one-half of the former rates. An interesting item lays down a "return fare", stating that "every Foot Passenger and every single Horse with Rider returning the same day before sunset shall be ferried over without charge".[5] Again, in 1810, it was believed that, "from the increased population of the Country, and also of travellers on the said road, the rates established on the 15th July, 1807, are at present too high, and that less rates would support a ferry very well"; accordingly a new tariff was drawn up for the Humber ferry, then in charge of James Cranford, though the reductions were not great.[6]

For many years the marshes and deltas at the mouth of the Don prevented easy access to the town from the Bay. A channel was early made, but it appears to have been of little use. "A Country Subscriber" writes to the *Gazette* in 1807 as follows:

"To the Printers of the *York Gazette*: It cannot have escaped the observation of any person acquainted with the River Don that at times, and in all high winds, it is impossible to get to or from the town with craft of any description through the present channel. Whereas, if nature's hint was improved—I mean the break which took place three years ago—the navigation would be made safe and practicable at all times, and, without any of the inconveniences attending the old, the new channel would shorten the distance from York to the Don Mills upwards of a mile. It would also, by being properly opened, do more towards

[4]Minutes of April 8, 1806, *ibid.*, p. 83.
[5]Minutes of July 15, 1807, *ibid.*, p. 109.
[6]Minutes of April 13, 1810, *ibid.*, p. 157.

draining the marsh than a large sum of money laid out in any other possible way. If permission could be obtained from the Governor and Council for the purpose, the few feet to be cut for opening the new channel would be done by subscription. Added to its other general advantages, it would be a great object to the owners of cattle and others who do not possess pasture ground in the neighbourhood."[7]

The *Gazette* was heartily in accord with this, and commented favourably on much-needed improvements in transportation facilities:

"The editors agree perfectly in opinion with this correspondent, and if permission could be obtained, which they think ought to be applied for by petition, they will gladly contribute towards accomplishing an object of such obvious utility. Seeing all the advantages which would result from the execution of the proposed plan, they will cheerfully second with their best endeavours everything tending to local improvement or public advantage. They would be happy to see some public-spirited person set on foot a subscription for the purpose of erecting a bridge over Frank's Creek, and the repair of the causeway leading to Yonge Street."[8]

Another difficulty which long existed was the lack of a bridge across the mouth of the Don which separated the town and the peninsula. As early as 1806 a bridge or float had been built to enable the inhabitants of York to take a pleasant ride or walk on the Peninsula, but the *Gazette* of June 18th of that year suggests that people should not draw sand or haul loaded waggons over it. In 1808 Parshall Terry attempted to ford the river on horseback, and though the horse reached shore its rider was drowned. The obituary notice gives some details of the condition which caused the unfortunate event:

"Departed this life on the 20th, Mr. Parshall Terry. His death was occasioned by his getting into the River Don on horseback. By this misfortune an exemplary wife and large, helpless family are left to the care of the all-disposing Providence, and a resistless appeal is made to the benevolence and sympathetic generosity of a virtuous public. The particular situation of the road near the Don Bridge calls

[7]*York Gazette*, July 4, 1807. [8]*Ibid.*

imperiously upon the commissioners appointed by his Excellency for the particular care of the roads and employing the voted money for immediate repairs, as many lives are seriously threatened with danger by its present state, in consequence of the causeway being removed by an excessive flood. The place, when seen, suggests the nature of the required improvement, and as a part of duty we earnestly recommend to public attention."[9]

In an earlier issue the *Gazette*, in announcing a meeting to consider ways and means of constructing a bridge, stated that several lives had been lost because of the lack of a causeway. The development of recreational and sporting activities on the peninsula is also mentioned:

"The editors having been called upon by a number of gentlemen to request a meeting of such persons as might wish to subscribe towards erecting a bridge across that part of the River Don which separates the town and the peninsula, give notice that it is desired such meeting should take place to-morrow at Campbell & Deary's Tavern at 3 o'clock in the afternoon. They should be wanting in themselves and in their duty to the public were they not to give every encouragement and assistance in their power to so desirable an object. Humanity is interested in the laudable undertaking, and it may promote a more general subscription to state that for want of a bridge several lives (within their knowledge) have been lost. When completed the peninsula will answer every purpose of an extensive common to the owners of the cattle; to those who may use it for purposes of recreation it furnishes a most delightful walk or ride; as a race-ground or place for field exercise we know not its equal; the sportsman will find a constant and easy access to the best shooting ground; and the convalescent might find health in an occasional excursion to the opposite beach—and travellers or persons coming to market from below would at all seasons find the town accessible, which to them at present frequently is not, but at the imminent hazard of life."[10]

The project appears to have been well received, for on April 15, 1808, the *Gazette* contains the following item:

[9]*Ibid.*, July 23, 1808.
[10]*Ibid.*, April 1, 1808.

"We have been favoured with a list of the sums subscribed for the purpose of erecting a bridge across the Don, and have the pleasure of informing those who wish to patronise the undertaking that the subscription already exceeds one hundred pounds. From the liberal sum given by Mrs. Gore an example is offered to other ladies, and we may infer that His Excellency permits that part of the demesne (the peninsula) to be rendered useful to the community, whilst unappropriated to the particular purposes for which it was reserved. When the requisite sum is made up we will publish the names of the donors with pleasure."[11]

Whatever bridge was constructed at this time, it may be presumed to have been, like all others at that period, merely a crude corduroy causeway, built with little or no engineering advice. In 1813 the bridge was burned by the British Regulars to prevent pursuit as they retreated eastward. In later years the renewed bridge was frequently in a bad state of repair. From time to time efforts were made to construct satisfactory bridges across both outlets of the Don, but the subscriptions were never great enough to complete them. Finally in 1834-35 the works were finished, but only after Lieut.-Governor Sir John Colborne provided a subsidy from the military chest. On August 22, 1835, the bridges were ready to be presented by the military authorities to the City of Toronto. Dr. Scadding well describes the old-world formalities which characterised the occasion:

"The civic authorities approached the new structure in procession; a barricade at the first bridge arrested their progress. A guard stationed there also forbade further advance. The officer in command, Capt. Bonnycastle, appears, and the Mayor and Corporation are informed that the two bridges before them are, by the command of the Lieutenant-Governor, presented to them as a free gift for the benefit of the inhabitants, that they may in all time to come be enabled to enjoy the salubrious air of the peninsula; the only stipulation being that the bridges should be free of toll forever to the troops, stores, and ordnance of the sovereign.

"The mayor, who, as eye-witnesses report, was arrayed

[11] *Ibid.*, April 15, 1808.

in an official robe of purple velvet lined with scarlet, read the following reply:

'Sir—On the part of His Majesty's faithful and loyal city of Toronto, I receive at your hands the investiture of these bridges, erected by command of His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, and now delivered to the Corporation for the benefit and accommodation of the citizens. In the name of the Common Council and the citizens of Toronto I beg you to convey to His Excellency the grateful feelings with which this new instance of the bounty of our most gracious sovereign is received; and I take this occasion on behalf of the city to renew our assurance of loyalty and attachment to His Majesty's person and government, and to pray, through His Excellency, a continuance of royal favour towards this city. I have, on the part of the corporation and citizens, to request you to assure His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor that His Excellency's desire and generous exertions for the health and welfare of the inhabitants of this city are duly and gratefully appreciated; and I beg you to convey to His Excellency the best wishes of myself and my fellow-citizens for the health and happiness of His Excellency and family. Permit me, Sir, for myself and brethren, to thank you for the very handsome and complimentary manner in which you have carried His Excellency's commands into execution.'

" 'Immediately,' the narrative of the ceremonial continues, 'the band, who were stationed on the bridge, struck up the heart-stirring air, *God Save the King*, during the performance of which the gentlemen of the Corporation, followed by a large number of the inhabitants, passed uncovered over the bridge. Three cheers were then given, respectively, for the King, for His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, for the Mayor and Council of the City of Toronto, and for Capt. Bonnycastle. The gentlemanly and dignified manner in which both the addresses were read did credit to the gentlemen on whom these duties devolved; and the good order and good humour that prevailed among the spectators present were exceedingly gratifying.' "[12]

Many years later ferrymen were necessary at the Don owing to the destruction of the bridge by floods, of which

[12]Scadding, *op. cit.*, pp. 86-7.

one of the most disastrous occurred in 1850. The circumstance recalls a peculiar boat of the late forties and its use as a bridge:

"A very peculiar vessel plied at this time on the bay between Toronto and the Island opposite, known as the 'Cigar Boat' from the peculiar nature of its construction. The hull consisted of three hollow cylinders, bolted well together and pointed at each end like a cigar. She was a steam side-wheel vessel, the property of Mr. [redacted]. Tinning, the wharfinger. She was anything but a success and in the spring of 1850, owing to the floods that had occurred both at the east and west of the city, whereby the Don and Humber bridges were swept away, Mr. Tinning leased the vessel, her machinery having been removed, to the Toronto City Council, for use as a pontoon bridge over the Don until the bridge was repaired. Of course all the upper portion of the vessel had been taken away as well as her machinery. The very first night she was moored at the Don the ferrymen who, when she arrived, found, like Othello, 'their occupation gone', sank her, and she had, of course, to be raised. Nevertheless, she was again placed in position, and guarded each night by special watchmen to prevent further outrage. When the bridge was repaired, the old 'Cigar', or what was left of her, was not used for any other purpose, but laid by, and was eventually broken up."[13]

[13]John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*. 1894-1914. Vol. II, p. 834.

CHAPTER V

Toll Roads

Though toll roads have but little application within the confines of old York, yet the main highways entering the town and passing through the villages which are now within the city limits were characterised by numerous toll-gates. In common with those of many other parts of the province most of the important roads of York County passed, at various times after the first quarter of the nineteenth century, from the control of the pathmasters appointed at the township meeting or by magistrates into that of road companies, which agreed to maintain the highways in return for the right to collect toll from those who used them. The reason for the change lay in the difficulty of enforcing statute labour on the roads, as a result of which the condition of many was impassable; the amount of money available for road development in many municipalities was at the same time very small, and the central government supplied but little to supplement what could be raised by local taxation. In the eighteen-forties and fifties numerous roads were planked, usually by road companies; while before and after that time efforts were made to macadamise some of them, though the macadamising was frequently more imaginary than real. Twelve miles of Yonge Street, for example, underwent the process in the early thirties, but the road was in such a bad condition in 1837 that pursuit of the rebels after the battle of Montgomery's Farm was almost impossible—even on horseback.

Throughout the province many fair roads were provided by road companies, though they were frequently no better than those upon which no toll was paid. This system of highway management, thoroughly disliked by everyone, lasted nearly a century in some districts, a number of survivals resisting the trend of the times until long after the introduction of the motor-car rendered their continuance a nuisance. What was commonly called "the first" toll-gate

on Yonge Street was that at Yorkville, said to have been in operation as early as 1820. There were at least two others farther south, however,—one at the corner of King and Yonge, and the other near the intersection of College and Yonge. The former was the earlier of the two, and was the first toll-gate in the town. It was at one time kept by William Heighton, who, in the eighteen-fifties, was transferred northward to the Yorkville gate.

Whether or not there were toll-gates on Yonge Street prior to that date, on January 14, 1830, a petition was laid before the Legislative Assembly of Upper Canada praying that the signatories might be incorporated as a turnpike company, with power to raise money by loan upon the security of their tolls. Seneca Ketchum, James Hogg, and seventy-two other inhabitants of Yonge Street signed the document, and they hoped that His Majesty's government would provide the initial loan. Messrs. Jesse Ketchum, Cawthra and Mackenzie were appointed a committee to consider the matter, and the evidence of witnesses called before them was preponderantly in favour of the scheme, since there appeared to be no other effective means of keeping the road in condition. Recognising the value of the highway leading to York, the committee reported that "it might be worth while at some period not far distant, as an experiment, to allow a sum sufficient to macadamise four miles of that road to be expended, and afterwards to place a toll-bar with moderate rates of toll for two years, within a mile of York, the tolls to be let by auction and the proceeds applied to keep the road in repair under the direction of the freeholders on or near the line of road. If found not advantageous it might be done away with at the expiration of the Act."[1]

The Yorkville toll-gate originally occupied the north-east corner of Bloor and Yonge Streets. A small three-room house of characteristic type reached the edge of the road, and a gate stretched across the roadway. There were also a couple of wooden turnstiles through which travellers on foot passed. Between 1840 and 1850 one Monkman

[1] A full account of the Yonge Street gate-keepers, and related data, may be found in John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*, 1894-1914. Vol. V, pp. 343-4.

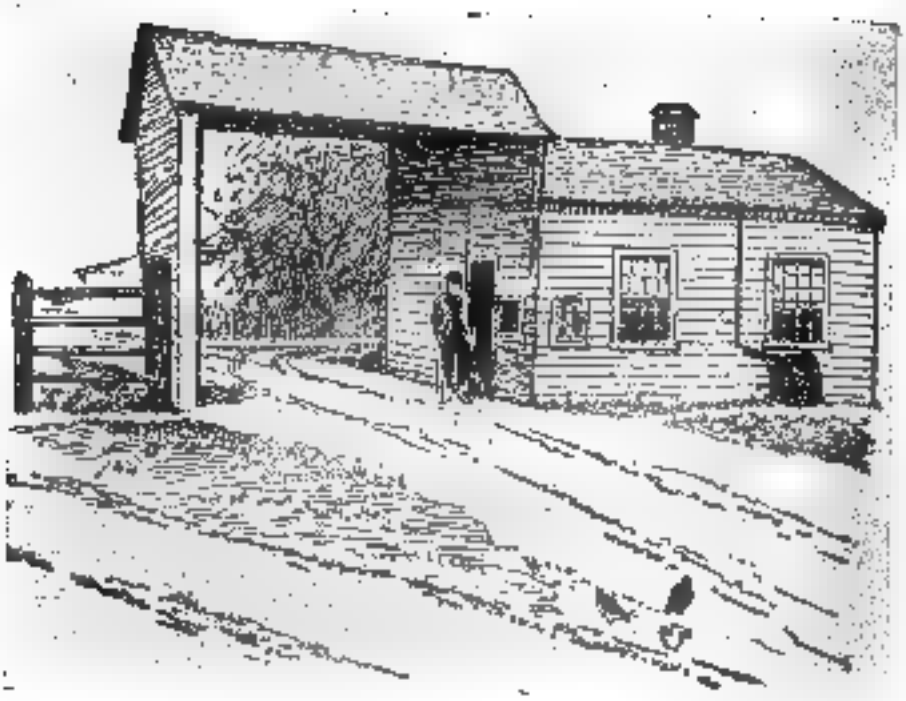
Cornelius Krieghoff.

RUNNING THE TOLL-GATE

A trick which many enjoyed during the heyday of toll roads.

THE CHECK TOLL-GATE, DUNDAS AND ST. CLAIR, 1857

The Lambton Check Gate was one of four on Dundas Street within ten miles of Toronto, but travellers paid toll at only two of them.



John Ross Robertson Collection.

THE YORKVILLE TOLL-GATE IN THE EIGHTEEN-FIFTIES
Originally at Bloor and Yonge, it was later moved northward.

John Ross Robertson Collection. J. W. Cotton.

THE BROCKTON TOLL-BAR, DUNDAS STREET, 1852
The old Brockton Town Hall still stands on the south-west corner of Dundas Street and Sheridan Avenue.

was custodian of the gate, and in the latter year the toll-house was moved northward to the north-west corner of Davenport Road and Yonge Street. A few months later it was moved across the road and two rooms were added, and the covered way shown in the accompanying illustration was erected. William Heighton was gate-keeper between 1850 and 1864. In 1865 the gate was again moved northward, this time to the north-west corner of Wyckham (now Cottingham) and Yonge Streets. E. Y. Crown succeeded Heighton as keeper, and for some years had a small store at the corner, where also there was an entrance to Deer Park. An old resident of the district recalls that "one of our amusements as children was to see equestrians gallop up to the gate and, before the keeper was able to get out to collect the toll, jump the gate and dash up the road; but the keeper never worried: he always got them when they came back!"[2]

About 1870 gate-keeper Crown was followed by one Mowat (or Moat), the toll-house being removed northward in the same year to the top of Gallows Hill, just below the present St. Clair Avenue. The name of the hill appears to have originated from the falling across the roadway at that point of a huge tree which stood in early times on the west side of the street. The tree did not break, and did not block the road, but for several years remained in a peculiar position, resembling the beam of a gallows; and of course it was nobody's business to remove it!

In 1865 the "York Roads" within the united counties of York and Peel—consisting of Yonge, Dundas, the Kingston and Lake Shore roads—were purchased by the counties from the Canadian Government. Arbitrators fixed the price at $72,500. The annual revenue at that time was about $32,000, but it must be remembered that road companies spent (or were supposed to spend) a good deal of money to maintain the roadways in passable condition; though the general impression appears to have been, with reference to toll roads throughout the province, that road companies were groups of capitalists who built toll-gates

[2]Reminiscences of an anonymous correspondent, quoted in Fred Williams: *Do You Know?*, Toronto *Mail and Empire*, January 28, 1933.

every few miles and exacted toll from all users of the road no matter how bad it was.

The toll-gates on Yonge Street within York County at the time of the purchase were six in number. No. 1 was at Yorkville village; No. 2 at the head of the southern hill at York Mills; No. 3 at Cooke's Corners, a mile and a quarter north of Thornhill; No. 4 a mile and a quarter north of Elgin Mills; No. 5 was the Aurora gate, near the cemetery; and No. 6 was at Cady's Corners, a mile and a quarter north of the township line between East Gwillimbury and Whitchurch.

The Hogg's Hollow toll-gate was known to travellers on Yonge Street as "the second". The roof of the structure crossed the entire roadway, and the house of the keeper was on the east side, while at the west was a small lean-to used as a storehouse. The first keeper of whom we have any record was one Penock, who collected toll there in the eighteen-thirties; and Charles Snider and George Lee were among the keepers in later years. The public attitude towards toll-gates—"relics of barbarism"—was never characterised by fond memories, but it is of interest that the keepers of this gate appear frequently to have been chicken fanciers. There was a saying current in the district that "If you want the freshest of fresh eggs just go to the keeper of 'the second'. He's got 'em"; and consequently many city people were numbered among his patrons.[3]

During the heyday of toll roads there were four gates on Dundas Street within ten miles of Toronto. There was No. 1 at Brockton, on the north side of the street, about half way between Sheridan and Brock Avenues; No. 2, always called "the blind toll-gate", on the north-east corner of Bloor and Dundas Streets; No. 3, the Lambton check gate, at the intersection of Dundas Street and St. Clair Avenue; and No. 4, the Mimico gate, a short distance west of St. George's Church, Islington. Concerning the collection of toll at these gates John Ross Robertson writes:

"Teams proceeding to Toronto from beyond the fourth gate paid toll at the fourth and the first, being free of the two intermediate ones; but those who came from places between the fourth and the third paid at the latter and also

[3]See Robertson, *ibid.*

again at the first. The 'blind' toll-gate never exacted a toll from teams proceeding direct along Dundas Street, but was built for the purpose of catching those people who, coming from Toronto, drove along Dufferin Street north to the concession, thence proceeding west to Dundas Street, thus avoiding the Brockton gate. It often happened that a teamster going to the city would turn out of the way and proceed east along the concession, so as to escape—or in the hope of escaping—Brockton toll. The keeper of the 'blind' gate rarely missed noting the occurrence, and looked out for the return of this man. [illegible] he came by himself he was all but certain to find the bar down and passage impossible. Then would follow a war of words, and 'langwidge' flowed that would be extremely forcible even from a London cabby's point of view. Sometimes even blows were struck, which occasionally resulted in a meeting before the magistrates, with sometimes a conviction for assault. As a pretty general rule, though, the toll-taker settled his own quarrels. Neither he nor his employers had much liking for Police Court proceedings. They knew that to a great extent they were Ishmaelites: every man's hand was against them. Precisely such scenes as have been described as happening at the 'blind' gate took place over and over again at No. 3 gate, with delinquents who tried to dodge the toll by going along St. Clair Avenue."[4]

The "blind" gate at the Bloor Street intersection was a peculiar two-storey structure, with a covered way extending across Dundas Street. The check toll-gate stood for forty years, but disappeared in 1897. The Brockton toll-bar, kept for many years by James Kerr, was located about one hundred yards west of the "Appii Forum" or "The Three Taverns"—Collard's, Church's Brown Bear and the Queen Street Hotel. Numerous rails fixed between the fence and the bar prevented vehicles from passing when the gate was closed, and pedestrians had either to wait or climb over. Near by, Mrs. Larkin, postmistress of Brockton, kept a small general store. Both the Brockton toll-bar and the "blind" gate were removed considerably earlier than the check toll-gate, for they were much closer to the city, and of necessity

[4]*Ibid.*, Vol. III, pp. 274-6.

came to an end when the boundaries were extended in their direction.

On Queen Street, near its junction with Ossington Avenue (then part of Dundas Street), was a toll-gate which led to the naming of Rebecca Street, originally a lane running from the eastern side of Dufferin Street to open fields, by which Queen Street might be approached. John Ross Robertson says:

"The reason it obtained this name was that the land it crosses was purchased by a contractor who supplied wood to the Garrison. He disputed the right of the road trustees to exact toll from his teams at the gate. This dispute caused a great deal of ill-feeling between the contractor's men and the keepers of the gate, and constant quarrels ensued, and sometimes blows were interchanged. Owing to these quarrels the lane got locally known as Rebecca Street, after the Rebeccaites, who in South Wales in 1843 systematically destroyed toll-gates and bars. The reason they took the name of Rebeccaites was in allusion to the reference contained in Genesis xxiv, 60."[7]

Dundas and Yonge Streets were by no means the only toll roads leading into Toronto. Queen Street, and the Lake Shore Road which extended westward from it, had their share. A correspondent of the *Mail and Empire* recalls that in the late seventies "there was a toll-gate at Queen Street and Brockton Road (now Brock Avenue), and a check toll-gate at the junction of King and Queen Streets. This latter was opened when King Street was extended west at Dowling Avenue through Beaty's Bush to meet Queen Street. The Brockton Road toll-gate was shortly afterwards moved to the site of the check toll-gate and tolls were collected by Mr. Eveleigh, who had a farm on the west side of Roncesvalles Avenue, about a quarter of a mile north of Queen Street."[8]

Concerning the Sunnyside gate, and a check gate farther west, S. H. Howard writes to the same paper:

"Surely you have not forgotten the toll-gate at Sunnyside that stood just west of Roncesvalles, on the south side

[7] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, pp. 745-6.
[8] "W. J. G." quoted in Williams, *op. cit.*, *Mail and Empire*, January 21, 1933.

just by the big oak tree? Every horse-drawn vehicle of the early days, the days of my boyhood in the 80's and 90's, coming into town from the Lake Shore Road or leaving town from the west *via* that old thoroughfare, was required to pay toll, and the gate was there to stop traffic till he did, though I cannot remember that this gate was ever actually closed. The toll-keeper's cottage was close beside the gate. Cottage, oak tree, field, road, railway track, the very ground of the site, are gone now, being replaced by the Sunnyside bridge over the railway track and the new railway grade, now one of the busiest highway intersections in Canada.

"A catch gate was also maintained further out on the Lake Shore, opposite the second entrance gate to High Park, the Howard Park stop for street cars to-day. This gate and a shelter hut for the gate-keeper stood under the shade of the gnarled old Balm of Gilead trees, the trees that, doubtless, Etienne Brûlé saw when he, first of white men, paddled down the Humber and out into Humber Bay, and which the City of Toronto, in its incorporated wisdom(?), permitted to be cut down when the boulevard was planned. They are replaced now with a spindley row of Lombardy poplars!

"This catch gate was to catch those who sought to evade the toll at Sunnyside by driving around through High Park and coming down to the Lake Shore Road beyond the Sunnyside toll-gate. The toll was taken in those days by a family named Atkinson, any one of whom, male or female, was likely to step out into the road with hand outstretched. I went to school with Curly Atkinson, the eldest son of the family, who was frequently stationed at the Howard Park catch gate, and learned, as I remember, from passing teamsters to chew tobacco at an early age. Where is he now?"[7]

North-east and east of Toronto the main arteries had each its quota of toll-gates. There was one on the Kingston Road between the city and Norway, and another on the Danforth Road between Little York and the city. There was once a gate at the corner of Avenue Road and Davenport Road, and a check gate where Davenport crosses Bathurst Street; while old inhabitants remember two toll

[7]S. H. Howard quoted *ibid.*

lodges just west of Osgoode Hall, and one to the east of the intersection of College and St. George Streets.

During the thirty years that the toll-gates were under the control of the county they were leased to the highest bidder at public auction, at first annually, and later for three years at a time. The rates of toll as charged in 1875 for various types of vehicles and animals may be taken as typical:

Loaded vehicle drawn by one horse or other beast	7c.
Loaded vehicle drawn by two horses or other beasts	10c.
Unloaded vehicle drawn by one horse or other beast	5c.
Unloaded vehicle drawn by two horses or other beasts	7c.
For each additional beast	4c.
For each saddle horse or other beast with rider	4c.
For every horse, ox, cow, etc., unattached	2c.
For every sheep, pig or goat	1c.

The toll-gates continued to be operated by the county until 1896, though several of them had disappeared prior to that time. W. J. Hill of York Township moved in the County Council in that year that tolls be abolished, and the motion carried. The by-law putting an end to toll-gates went into effect on December 31, 1896, a strong compensating factor being the abolition at the same time of the fees previously charged to farmers participating in the Toronto market. Twenty years later there were still a number of toll roads in Ontario, notably around the town of Cobourg. But they were becoming a great nuisance as motor traffic increased, and the construction of the King's Highways put an end to any remaining on the main routes of travel. Toll roads had served their purpose in only a semi-satisfactory manner, and it may safely be said that each and every one departed this life "unwept, unhonour'd and unsung".

CHAPTER VI

Streets and Sidewalks

York, in common with other municipalities, was originally governed by officials appointed by the citizens at the town-meeting, together with some regulation, particularly in the licensing of taverns, etc., and in the enforcement of laws, by the Court of Quarter Sessions. The most important offices to be filled were those of clerk, collector and assessor, but there were also pathmasters or overseers of the roads, fence-viewers, pound-keepers and a town warden. One of the early pathmasters of York, John McDougall, was publicly complimented in the *Gazette* for his "great assiduity and care in getting the streets cleared of the many and dangerous (especially at night) obstructions therein".[1] Three weeks later, on July 20, 1799, Mr. Clark, pathmaster for the west end of the town, was similarly congratulated.[2]

The mud and the numerous stumps in the streets added greatly to difficulties of transport. One man wrote to the Niagara *Canada Constellation* in 1799 that "if any gentleman will come forward and pledge his honour (he being perfectly sober at the time) that he will introduce a bill in the House of Assembly for the purpose of a Stump Act for the city of York he shall have my vote at the ensuing general election".[3] This type of law appears to have been effective in Vergennes, Vermont, where each drunk was forced to remove one stump from the streets. In the following year a "Stump Act" was in force in York, and many a root was removed by topers, who might be sentenced to eradicate one or more stumps from the highways of the town. Since, however, such knowledge as we have of this innovation emanates from Niagara, York's rival, we may assume that its importance was considerably exaggerated.

Yonge Street, the first great highway in the province, was blazed in 1793-96 by the Queen's Rangers under

[1] *Upper Canada Gazette*, June 29, 1799.
[2] *Ibid.*, July 20, 1799.
[3] Niagara *Canada Constellation*, December 14, 1799.

Augustus Jones, and led from York northward to Lake Simcoe. Almost immediately after the original survey, however, that portion from Toronto Bay to a point some distance above the first concession line (Bloor Street) fell into disuse, traffic from the north approaching the town by way of a trail along Parliament Street. The inconvenience resulting from this detour led to the reopening of that part of Yonge from Lot (Queen) Street to the three-mile post. The York *Gazette* of December 20, 1800, gives an account of a meeting held to consider the matter:

"A number of the principal inhabitants of the town met together in one of the Government Buildings to consider the means of opening the road [redacted] Yonge Street, and enabling the farmers there to bring their provisions to market with more ease than is practicable at present. . . . The Hon. the Chief Justice (Elmsley) was called to the chair. . . .

"A paper was then produced and read, containing [redacted] proposal from Eliphalet Hale to open and make the road, or so much of it as might be required, at the rate of twelve dollars per acre for clearing it where no causeway was wanted, four rods wide, and cutting the stumps in the two middle rods close to the ground, and 7s. 6d. Provincial currency per rod for making a causeway 18 feet wide where [redacted] causeway might be wanted. Mr. Hale's proposal was accepted; . . . . and [redacted] petition of the Legislature lies for signature at Mr. McDougall's Tavern, and subscriptions will be received by Messrs. Allan and Wood."[4]

This work was completed in June, 1802, and was for some years known as "the road to Yonge Street". Traffic from the north then proceeded east on Lot Street to the Market and the business section of the town.

Eliphalet Hale appears to have considered himself the loser by the opening of this stretch of roadway, for in the spring of 1803 he "presented a memorial to the Court of General Quarter Sessions stating the injury he had received by the continuation of Yonge Street through his Town Lot, and praying the land to the east and north of his House, formerly part of Toronto Street, in lieu of what has been taken from him to the west of his House".[5] On May

[4]*Upper Canada Gazette*, December 20, 1800.
[5]Minutes of April 18, 1803. See *Report of the Archives of Ontario, 1932*, p. 45.

2nd he was permitted "to fence in and occupy for this Summer and the ensuing Fall *only*, that part of the Old Road . . . . which lies to the eastward and to the northward of his House".[6] From Lot Street to the bay Yonge Street remained unopened for some years longer.

The Court of Quarter Sessions was in charge of the enforcement of statute labour on the roads, and from the proceedings of this body we learn many details of early highway development in York and vicinity. In April, 1810, Jordan Post, Pathmaster for the eastern portion of York, reported "that he had money in his hands unexpended, being the fines levied upon such persons as had not performed their Statute labour for the last year, and he desired the Court to point out to him the road whereon he shall lay it out. The Court then ordered that he should expend the said money on the road leading past Jesse Ketchum's towards Yonge Street".[7] Ketchum lived north of the corner of Yonge and Adelaide Streets, so that the road named was the lower part of Yonge Street, or, as it was called at that time, "the road to Yonge Street". The low and marshy nature of parts of the land over which it passed made it necessary that a bridge or causeway be constructed, and we find two years earlier that "D'Arcy Boulton, Esq., the Elder, be permitted to do his Settlement duty by erecting a new Bridge at the Entrance of the road leading from the Town of York to Yonge Street". At the same meeting Samuel Ridout was allowed to perform his statute labour on that part of the same road "between the poplar plain and the Blue Hill Creek".[8]

The difficulty of enforcing statute labour was always present. In July, 1810, the pathmasters of Scarboro' reported that ten men had refused or neglected to do their work; whereupon the Magistrates "ordered them either to work their Statute duty on Danforth's Road in Scarboro' as soon as the said Pathmasters shall again warn them, or else pay the sum of five shillings for every day they are rated at, with all expenses".[9] It was worth while for the pathmaster to get all statute labour done, for the Court might charge

[6]Minutes of May 2, 1803, *ibid.*, p. 48.
[7]Minutes of April 19, 1810, *ibid.*, p. 160.
[8]Minutes of June 30, 1808, *ibid.*, p. 122.
[9]Minutes of July 11, 1810, *ibid.*, p. 166.

him with all work which had not been completed. For example, D'Arcy Boulton, Pathmaster of York, appeared before the Court in 1810 "to shew cause why the remainder of the Statute duty of his division due for the last year should not be charged to him by reason of his neglecting the duties of said Office".[10] He was, however, given another chance to get the work done.

In addition to the rather general evasion of statute labour the Magistrates were not infrequently bothered by interference with the course of drains or by encroachment upon road allowances. In 1811 letters were sent to eleven persons ordering them to remove buildings or fences from the highway, or to widen the roadway to the statutory 66 feet. Five years later a regulation was adopted for the improvement of King Street, the resolution stating that, "in order to render the most commercial street (King's Street) passable, the Pathmaster shall open water-courses on each side which have been arrested in their natural course either by negligence, inattention or indifference, not to say worse". In the same year (1816) it was stipulated that the footpaths on either side of the street should be eleven feet wide, and that "no person shall presume, in front of their premises, to raise the footpath so as to occasion a step unless the Magistrates in session approve. The carriage way shall be formed by a gentle descent to the bottom of the water-course adjoining the footpath, so as to have the appearance of a segment of a circle or what is known by a barrelled or turnpike road".[11]

The Lake Shore Road west of York was originally opened by British Regulars and militia. Dr. Scadding's account of its construction contains some details of interest:

"The early line of communication with the Head of the Lake was by the Lake Shore Road. The cross thoroughfare between the park lots of Mr. Bouchette or Col. Givins and Mr. David Burns was opened up by Col. G. T. Denison, senior, with the assistance of some of the embodied militia. The work of opening the road here, as well as further on through the forest, was at first undertaken by a detach-

[10]Minutes of May 12, 1810, *ibid.*, p. 162.

[11]J. Edmund Jones: *Pioneer Crimes and Punishments in Toronto and the Home District*. 1924, p. 139.

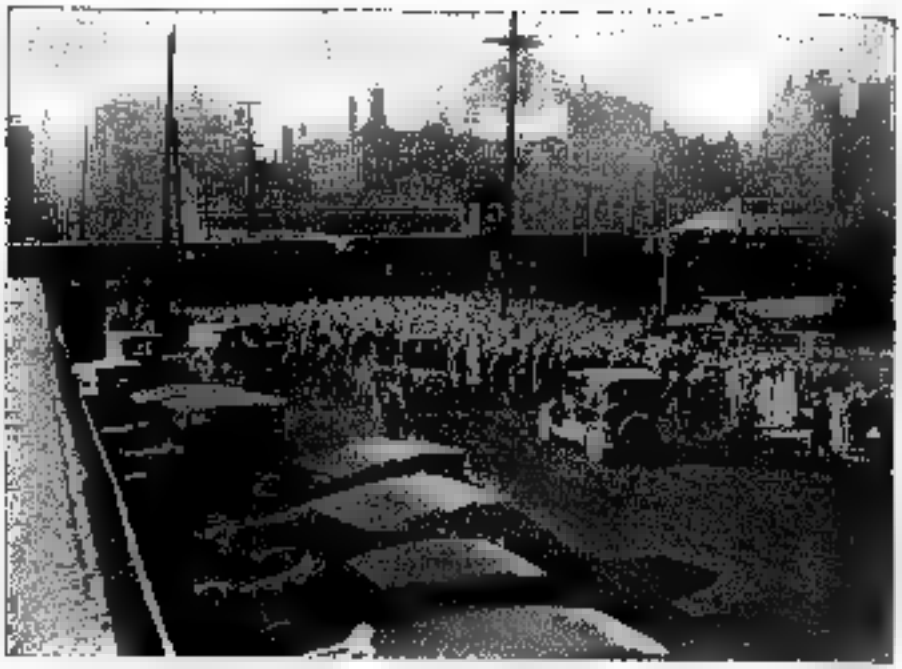
John Ross Robertson Collection. William Armstrong.

THE FIRST UNION STATION, 1858

This station stood at the foot of York Street and until 1871 was used by the Grand Trunk, Great Western and Northern Railways.

THE UNION STATION, 1884

This magnificent station, which affords such a striking contrast with the first, arose out of the ruins of the great fire of 1904.



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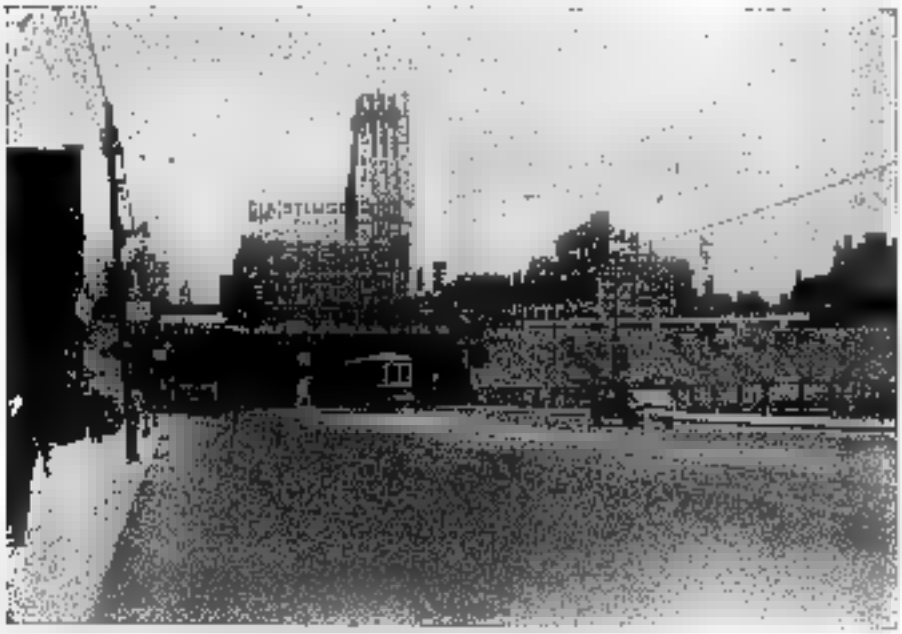
THE SOUTHERLY EXTENSION OF BAY STREET, 1924

This traffic condition was usual when crowds were returning from ball games at the Island Stadium.



Reproduced by Courtesy of the Toronto Harbour Commissioners.

LOWER BAY STREET, 1933

The changes made by the Grade Separation are apparent when one compares the two photographs.

ment of the regulars under the direction of an officer of the Royal Engineers. The plan adopted, we are told, was first to fell each tree by very laboriously severing it from its base close to the ground, and then to smooth off the upper surface of the root or stump with an adze. As this process was necessarily slow, and after all not likely to result in a permanently good road, the proposal of Colonel (then Lieutenant) Denison to set his militia-men to eradicate the trees bodily was accepted—an operation with which they were all more or less familiar on their farms and in their new clearings. A fine broad open track, ready, when the day for such further improvements should arrive, for the reception of plank or macadam, was soon constructed."[13]

It appears that subterranean springs and quicksand greatly interfered with effective road construction on Yonge Street between Lot Street and the village of Yorkville. Not until about 1830 was any attempt made to macadamise the roadbed, but some years previously a wooden tramway or narrow plank road over a short distance of the worst part was an interesting experiment. Sheriff Jarvis was the chief promoter of this temporary expedient, but it was first suggested by Rowland Burr. In later years plank roads became very popular in Upper Canada.

King Street, the most important thoroughfare in the town, was usually in somewhat better condition than the others. Previous to the War of 1812 an effort was made to pave, though rather crudely, some few yards of the footpath around Jordan's York Hotel, and here and there elsewhere. The paving material consisted of flat flagstones from the lake beach, but as they were of irregular shape and small size the resulting pavement was very coarse and uneven.

On April 26, 1823, however, the magistrates of York, assembled at Quarter Sessions, ordered that "£100 from the Town and Police Fund, together with one-fourth of the Statute Labour within the Town, be appropriated to flagging the sidewalks of King Street, commencing from the corner of Church Street and proceeding east to the limits of the Town, and that both sides of the street do proceed at the same time".[14]

[13]Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old*. 1873, pp. 371-2.
[14]Minutes of the Court of General Quarter Sessions, April 26, 1823.

We have no knowledge of the extent of sidewalk provided through this grant of £100, but it is improbable that the entire business section of even this one street was improved by stone paving. In fact three years later the *U. E. Loyalist*, in commenting upon the marked improvement in the streets, suggests that the sidewalks are in need of repair:

"The great improvement which has been made within a few years in the streets of the town reflects the highest credit on the York police. The whole extent of King Street is well gravelled and affords a good carriage road. Many others are undergoing the same process, and several are prepared for it by being first turnpiked and allowed time to settle. Some regulation with respect to the improvement of the sidewalks may be considered as necessary."[14]

An old inhabitant recalled that when he came to York in 1828 "the roads on all thoroughfares of the town were like most village roads in dry weather, fairly good. No material, however, was used to improve them, in consequence of which in the fall and in rainy weather they were almost impassable for vehicles. The winters set in generally early, and the frost made the roads better; and as sleighing could be looked for almost to a certainty through the winter months up to the end of March, there was not much to complain of. So far as locomotion was concerned, the sidewalks, except in dry weather, were in no better state than the streets. This state of affairs, however, did not last long, as shortly after 1830 improvements on the street and sidewalks commenced, and on the latter some flagging and plank walks were laid down. Quite a number of our wealthiest men, merchants, professional men and government officers, kept their carriages. The most in use by the merchants was a kind of four-wheeled light waggon or waggonette, made for one or two seats, and strongly made for rough roads".[15]

It is interesting to know, however, that even in the days of mud streets and oxen there was a speed law. In the Police Regulations of 1817, as amended in 1823, it is

[14]The *U. E. Loyalist*, June 24, 1826.

[15]"A York Pioneer" quoted in John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*, 1894-1914. Vol. I, p. 26.

stipulated that no person shall "gallop, or ride or drive a horse or horses at an unreasonable rate" (delightfully indefinite!) "in the Streets of the Town or on the Bank or Beach in front of the Same; . . . . nor to ride on the Footpaths". To prevent encroachment upon the footpaths it was usual to place posts at short intervals.

There were even anti-parking laws and restrictions as early as 1817, for it was laid down that "no Waggon, Cart, or Carriage of any description" was to be left standing in the street for longer than 24 hours. Similarly, it was against the law to leave on the street for a period exceeding 24 hours "any Firewood, Timber or other incumbrance, ... except in cases of building, when one-half of the Street in front of the Lot to be built on will be allowed to be occupied for a reasonable time by the materials required in building, leaving a clear passage on the footway".[16]

For many years streets went unlabelled and houses unnumbered, but in 1830 the Magistrates ordered the Clerk of the Peace "to take steps to get the names of the streets painted and put up wherever there is a corner house". Two years later an appropriation not to exceed 50s. was made for the numbering of houses, the plan being that "those running east and west commence to be numbered from the east end, and those running north and south to commence from the south end".[17]

Among the many improvements effected in the newly-created city in 1834 by borrowing money and increasing the tax rate was the construction of 2,618 rods of two-plank sidewalks at a cost of about 7s. per rod. There were not previously any wooden sidewalks in the town, and these were laid on only one side of the street, where pedestrian traffic was greatest. J. G. Howard was city surveyor at the time, and the first walks—consisting of two eleven-foot planks laid lengthwise—were put down on King Street under his direction. At the same period Jesse Ketchum, tanner, whose benefactions to the citizens of York reached large proportions, kept the footpaths in the vicinity of his home and tannery on Yonge Street clean and comfortable by a thick coating of tanbark. Ketchum's home stood

[16]*Regulations for the Police of the Town of York*, 1823.
[17]Jones, *op. cit.*, pp. 148-9.

where the Holt, Renfrew clothing store is now located, and high stacks of hemlock bark faced Yonge Street in front of his tannery, which was situated on the south-west corner of Yonge and Adelaide Streets. The streets, too, were being improved at that time, for a contemporary description of the city notes that they "are wide and well laid out, and owing to the indefatigable exertions of George Gurnett, Esq., are now well drained, alike enhancing the health and comfort of the inhabitants".[18]

Perhaps a short digression will be pardoned to enable reference to a man who not only laid the first plank sidewalks but whose good works in many fields of activity provide mute yet eloquent evidence that he loved Toronto. The city's first mayor, William Lyon Mackenzie, appointed John G. Howard city surveyor, and a more versatile engineer could hardly have been found. He should always be remembered for his notable gift of High Park to the city, but his contribution to Toronto's development in other respects was outstanding. A writer well summarised his life work in the *Globe* of February 19, 1934:

"He was, as it were, this youthful city's Universal Provider of Amenities. He provided amenities in line, wash and India ink, in plank, clapboard, brick (both red and white), and plaster; in cast iron, cut stone, macadam, and at last in more enduring stuff of beauty. Sewer, college, church or jail; barn, bank, patent bridge or cemetery; racquet court, coach house, wharf or villa residence; turnpike road, ballroom, market or tavern, court house, lunatic asylum, Masonic hall or hay scales, store, monument or warehouse; printing office or picture gallery; whatever the city's need, John Howard had a design ready to serve it. If he hadn't he could make one. And did."[19]

In 1835 a motion before the Council suggested "that the crossings of this city be done with stone, four feet wide". In general, however, not much money was expended upon the roadways, the cost of clearing and repairing them being only £750 ($3,000) as late as 1848. The usual condition of

[18]Thomas Rolph: *A Brief Account . . . . of the West Indies and the United States: . . . . together with a Statistical Account of Upper Canada*. 1836. p. 178.

[19]The *Globe*, February 19, 1934. Howard's journal may be found in his *Incidents in the Life of J. G. Howard* . . . . 1885.

streets and sidewalks in the early forties is described by one who lived in the city at the time:

"The streets were wretchedly paved, or not at all, and were generally in a very bad condition. All the sidewalks were of wood, and in the principal streets were from eight to ten feet in width, the planks being laid crosswise, and on many of the private streets not more than four planks (four feet) in width, laid lengthwise. The nails frequently became loose, causing the ends to tilt, making it somewhat risky for pedestrians. These sidewalks had to be frequently renewed."[30]

The characteristics of city travel are further described by another writer:

"Few who now stroll down the well-boarded sidewalks of King Street reflect upon the inconvenience attending this recreation to their sires and grandsires and granddames, who were compelled to tuck up their garments and pick their way from tuft to tuft and from stone to stone. It was no unusual sight to behold the heavy lumber waggon sticking fast in the mud up to the axle in the middle of King Street, opposite to what is now McConkey's refectory. The party-going portion of the citizens were content either to trudge it, or to be shaken in a cart drawn by two sturdy oxen. The fashionable cry then was 'Mrs. McTavish's cart is here', and the 'Gee up' resounded as clearly among the pines and elms as the glib 'all right' of the modern footman along the gas-lit street."[31]

Apropos of conditions of travel C. C. Taylor tells the following story, which went the rounds in the days of bad streets:

"A gentleman, walking on the loose planks forming a sidewalk on King Street, espied a good-looking hat in the middle of the street. Curious to see and pick up the hat, he managed to reach it, and, on removing it, discovered to his surprise the head of a living man underneath. This individual at once appealed for help and deliverance, urging as a special plea, that, if prompt assistance was not rendered, his horse, which was underneath, would certainly

[30] W. H. Pearson: *Recollections and Records of Toronto of Old*. 1914. pp. 122-3.

[31] C. C. Taylor: *Toronto Called Back*. 1886. pp. 59-60.

perish. The usual mode of extrication by the use of shovels and oxen was soon applied, and man and horse excavated. This being the climax of exaggeration on this muddy question, it must now be dismissed."[22]

The so-called macadamising of Toronto streets was ineffective in providing a good roadway—excepting the main street, King, which was usually kept in satisfactory condition. A better macadam roadbed was laid in 1861 on Yonge, on King Street between Yonge and St. Lawrence Hall, and on Queen west of Yonge, when the horse railway was inaugurated on these streets. The agreement made with Alexander Easton, builder of the railway, included a provision that he was to maintain the roadway between his tracks and for eighteen inches on either side, the city being responsible for the rest. On other streets the macadamising consisted largely of piles of rocks in the centre of mud streets, most vehicles religiously avoiding the centre of the road on that account; while such horses and waggons as travelled there kicked rocks to the side of the road, where they provided excellent ammunition during Orange parades, elections, or other activities of a partisan nature.

In the late sixties cedar-block paving was introduced by the Street Railway Company, the blocks, six inches deep and cut from poles, being placed on sand between the ties on which the rails were placed. Apart from the railway roadbed this type of paving appears to have been first applied to the streets of the city when King Street, between Yonge and Bay, was so paved in 1869 or 1870. Yonge Street from Bloor to King was paved with cedar blocks in 1881, and so remained until 1904 when it was asphalted, the sidewalks being similarly paved the same year. The first brick paving in Toronto was also on the street railway track allowance, the sections which introduced the use of bricks in 1893 being Dundas and College from Lansdowne Avenue to Dufferin Street, on Bathurst from College to Queen, and on College from Bathurst to Dufferin.[23] As in the case of the cedar blocks, the city soon extended the use of brick pavements to many other streets, and numerous examples of

[22] *Ibid.*, pp. 60-1.

[23] For several items of information concerning early paving the writer is indebted to R. C. Harris, Esq., Commissioner of Works, City Hall.

both types are still to be found in the older portions of Toronto.

The appearance of streets just before the era of asphalt paving is worthy of mention. Those who have memories extending back to the eighties can recall the main streets of Toronto with high board sidewalks, deep gutters on either side, and bridge-like crossings over them. Hitching-posts were prominent at store entrances in the days when cabs and carriages unloaded customers. And one need only observe the mud in unpaved portions of North Toronto to be able to visualise the condition of such streets as were not dignified by cedar-block paving—which was itself not of the smoothest.

Though Portland cement was first manufactured in 1824, it was the late eighties before anything in the nature of concrete paving was attempted in Toronto. The first sidewalks of this type were known as "granolithic", and were six inches thick, the wearing surface consisting of Portland cement and granite chips. At first, in 1886, merely a few short strips were paved, their location being on either side of the Rossin House at the south-east corner of King and York Streets, and at the corner of Yonge and Front Streets, opposite the Bank of Montreal. At that time the sidewalks of even important streets like King were of wood, and their development from footpath to flagstones to planks and then to cement has been more or less contemporary with similar improvements in the surface of streets, in which the first use of asphalt occurred in 1888 on Bay Street from King to Front. In 1889 the use of concrete under the ties was inaugurated by the Toronto Street Railway, and in later years the employment of such materials for sidewalks and streets became more common. In 1895 it was announced with evident pride that "many of Toronto's main streets and private thoroughfares are asphalted";[24] and so, with its trolley street car service, improved water supply, and more effective police and fire departments, Toronto had definitely assumed many of its modern characteristics, though skyscrapers, incandescent street lights and motor-cars had not yet made their *début*. By March, 1934, the mileage of paved streets in the city was 542.5 out of a total of 574.7;

[24] *Official Programme for Canada's Great Industrial Fair, 1895.*

while there were 900.4 miles of concrete sidewalks. Of the street paving most is, of course, of asphalt, but a considerable mileage of the older types still remains; and in the city may be found about ten miles of old wooden sidewalks to remind one of the first of that variety which were laid when Toronto was inaugurated exactly a century ago.

CHAPTER VII

Cart, Pleasure Waggon, Cab and Omnibus

In the early years of the town the inhabitants of York either walked, or rode in their own carriages or waggons. There were, of course, plenty of carters, but until after the creation of the city, in 1834, its area was not large and there was but little demand for vehicles of passenger transport. There were, however, two livery stables in the town in the early thirties, an announcement appearing in Walton's *1834 Directory* that "Hackneys, Coaches, Gigs, Pleasure Waggons, Sleighs, etc., can be had upon reasonable terms at Barnard's Livery Stables, Market Street, near the Ontario House Hotel, and at Black's Livery Stables, Neptune Inn, New Street"[1] By 1835 the use of hired vehicles was great enough to suggest that their drivers should be licensed and the business regulated, and an Act was passed for the purpose by the City Council on May 30th of that year; but the "Cartmen's Act" of that date makes no mention of passenger vehicles, its terms being confined exclusively to the regulation of "any Sled, Cart, Truck, Dray or other Carriage for the transportation of any Goods, Wares, Merchandise, Firewood or any other Thing whatsoever", including such good old-time items as "hogsheads of sugar, puncheons of rum, and pipes (*i.e.*, 105-gallon casks) of wine".[2]

Supplementing the pleasure waggons and gigs that one might hire in the city at that period were the stage lines, which operated in all directions and were of special value for longer trips. The first stages entering York appear to have commenced about 1816-17 on the Kingston Road eastward, and on Dundas Street westward. At least as early as 1828 Playter's Stage Line was running on Yonge Street; while from the thirties to the coming of railways in the late fifties numerous stages were leaving and approaching Toronto at all hours. In 1850, for example, four stages

[1]George Walton: *York Commercial Directory for 1834*. 1833. p. 147.
[2]The original document may be seen at the City Hall.

left for points east each day, two or three for the west, and four or five northward up Yonge Street, the macadamising of which in 1847 induced several new lines to commence operations. In 1841 ninety four-wheeled open or closed carriages and 130 gigs and pleasure waggons were returned upon the assessment rolls of the city, and if the public vehicles of various types were added the total would be quite large.

The first vehicle to be denominated a "cab" in Upper Canada is said to have been the *City*, built in Toronto in 1837 by Paul Bishop, a French-Canadian whose name had originally been the French equivalent, L'Evêque. It was constructed for Thornton Blackburn, a negro who had obtained a pattern of a type of vehicle then in use in Montreal, whither it had been introduced from London, England. Blackburn, who had come from the United States in 1834, lived at 54 Eastern Avenue, east of Parliament Street, in a very small one-storey frame building, and had found employment for some years as a waiter in the dining-room at Osgoode Hall. Bishop was a skilful mechanic and an expert lockmaker, and built the new vehicle in his shop at the north-east corner of Sherbourne and Duke Streets. Yellow and red in colour, the *City* was drawn by one horse and accommodated four passengers, who entered from the rear; the driver sat on his box in front. For a short time Blackburn had a monopoly of the cab business in Toronto, and over half a century later his pioneer cab was to be seen in the York Pioneers' log house at the Exhibition Grounds.

Since cab-driving proved to be a remunerative business, others soon entered into competition with Blackburn. Concerning these later cabs and their builders and drivers, John Ross Robertson collected a large amount of interesting information, which is best rendered as he wrote it:

"One Monday morning Owen, Miller & Mills, carriage-makers on the south side of King Street, a little west of York Street, turned out for Guest & Griffin, the proprietors of a livery stable on King Street East, about the site of Hugh Miller's drug store, six cabs. These were like a little dark-coloured sentry box mounted on wheels. They were drawn by one horse and carried two persons. The driver sat in front. They were called after the names of the

An Act

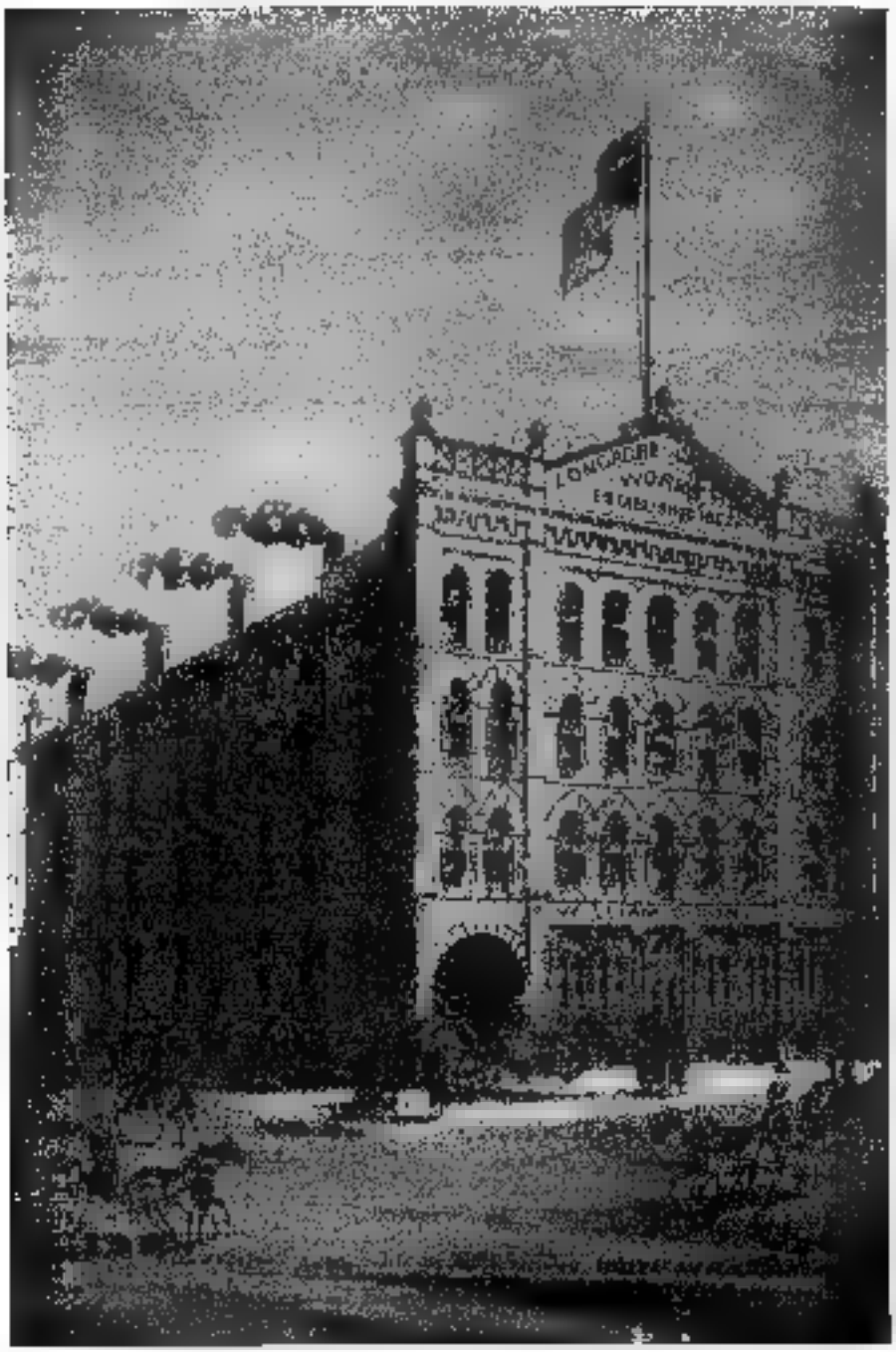
to license and regulate the Drivers and Cartmen of Common Carriers in the City of Toronto.

Be it enacted by the Mayor, Aldermen and Commonalty of the City of Toronto in Common Council assembled -

Section 1

That if any person shall drive any Mud, Dust, Sand, Dung or other Carriages for the transportation of any Goods, Wares, Merchandise, Mud, Stock or any other thing, without having the Number of Thousand Bills for Hire or Wages without being licensed as hereinafter before the same by the Mayor and Aldermen he shall forfeit and pay for each Offence the sum of the Second Ten Shillings, and if any person who has been licensed as a Cartman shall be convicted or adjudged by the Mayor and thereafter shall drive any Cart, Sled, Truck, Dung or other Carriages for Hire or Wages aforesaid he shall forfeit and pay the Pounds for each Offence.

THE FIRST PAGE OF THE "CARTMEN'S ACT", 1885



Tinsmiths's *Illustrated Toronto*, 1877.

Dixon's Longacre Carriage Works

This manufactory, established in 1857, was long one of the most prominent in Canada. It was situated at 53-55 Adelaide Street West.

principal lake steamers: the *Chief Justice Robinson*, *Britannia*, *Queen*, *Transit*, *Niagara* and *Princess Royal*. Other cabs built by Owen, Miller & Mills, a few years after Mr. Blackburn's initiation of the movement, were called after the saints who had furnished names to the wards of the city. At first there were no fixed rates, but later, as these public conveyances increased in number, certain fares were fixed for one, two or more persons, according to the distance, and also by the hour. For ordinary distances the fare was one shilling for one person and one shilling and sixpence for two. The cab stand was on Church Street, at the west side of St. James', where it now is. At first no license was paid. Then a tax was fixed, varying from six to twelve dollars a year. Of late years this has been somewhat increased. The numbering of the vehicles also came into practice at this time.

"The first cabman made so much money that soon the business was overdone. Many servants left their masters and went into the new occupation. Amongst these were Charles Abbott, a servant of William H. Boulton, at The Grange; James Alexander Fitzpatrick, and Judge Hagerman's coachman. George Davis, who had been in the service of Lord Tullamore, built a cab which he named after his old master. Later two brothers, John and William Newell, went into the business, and about the same time Robert Paul. Mr. Joseph Hazleton is an old Toronto cab-owner. His life in one respect is remarkable. He has never travelled in any vehicle but a cab. He was never on a steamboat, a railway train or a street car. He came out to this country in a sailing-ship.

"Some of the cabmen, finding the competition too strong, abandoned cabs altogether and went into the livery business. The first two-horse cab was driven by Louis Walker. Like Bishop, he was a French-Canadian, and like him, too, his name was changed from the French La Marche into Walker. He lived on the north side of Duchess Street, a few doors east of Sherbourne Street. From this time onward cabs, stages, busses and public conveyances of every kind increased with the growth of the city. Mr. Blackburn, the first cab-driver in the city, retired from the business with a competency a score of years ago, but he is not forgotten,

for grey-haired men now (1888) frequently greet him with the exclamation, 'Ha! It is you who drove me to my wedding,' or 'You are the man who drove my eldest boy to his christening'."[3]

A number of the early cabs in use in Toronto were constructed in John Bell's Carriage Factory on Victoria Street, and named after prominent generals. The first three made there were called *General Wolfe*, *Wellington*, and *General Brock*; but the custom of naming the vehicles passed away when their numbers so greatly increased. In 1850 Toronto had 68 licensed cabs, though a man who lived in the city at that time recalled in later years that "the number of horses and vehicles of all kinds was so small as to make it an easy matter for any inquisitive person to know the owner of every particular turnout in the town. The only city omnibus at this time was one that ran to Yorkville every hour, and a ride in this was not very exhilarating at certain seasons, especially when the frost was breaking up. The jolting was terrific, but, as few or none of the Toronto people lived in Yorkville, there was not much travel up or down. An hourly omnibus started from the Market to Parliament Street, but it did not pay and was soon discontinued."[4]

Reminiscences are, of course, limited in accuracy, and cannot be expected to include anything outside the scope of one's experience and knowledge. It is very unlikely that Mr. Taylor or any other "inquisitive person" was familiar with all the vehicles on the streets at the middle of the century; and in addition we are informed by a *City Directory* published at the time that apart from the service on Yonge "every half hour from 7½ o'clock a.m. to 8 p.m., ... omnibuses also run between the Blue Bell Tavern, corner of Queen and Dundas (Ossington) Streets, and the Market Square, and between the Garrison and the Clubhouse and various hotels, every hour".[5]

H. B. Williams is credited by John Ross Robertson with being the first to operate omnibuses on Toronto streets.

[3]John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*. 1894-1914. Vol. II, pp. 677-8.

[4]C. C. Taylor: *Toronto Called Back*. 1886. pp. 55-6.

[5]Henry Rowsell: *City of Toronto and County of York Directory, 1850-1*. 1850. p. xxxiv.

The best evidence that there were others before him is afforded by the specific mention of omnibuses in the 1843 "Act to Regulate Common Carriers" in the city—six years earlier than the appearance of Williams' first omnibus on Yonge Street. We have also the statement in Francis Lewis' *Directory* of 1843 that "cabs and omnibuses ply to all parts of the city, at very moderate fares".[8]

Williams' first omnibus was built in his cabinet shop at 140 Yonge Street, near the present Loew's Theatre. In 1849 he inaugurated a bus line from St. Lawrence Market and from the corner of King and Yonge Streets to the Red Lion Hotel, Yorkville. Four omnibuses were in operation, running every ten minutes (later half-hourly) from both ends of the line. The fare was 6d., and the first buses were six-passenger vehicles with movable windows which could be closed in with leather curtains. In 1850, however, Williams built four large buses with a capacity of ten passengers. These he continued to operate for twelve years, and as Yonge Street was often in bad condition the travelling was frequently unpleasant.

When horse-cars were inaugurated on Yonge Street in 1861 Williams tried to meet the competition by narrowing the gears of his buses so that they would run on the street railway track; but after a year of opposition he gave up the fight as hopeless and sold out to the Company. One more type of transport had passed into the discard, and—as was to become so much more prevalent as the years passed—one more man saw his livelihood disappear.

When York assumed the dignity of city status in 1834 a large number of regulations were added to the by-laws of the Corporation. Among others was the first regulation of vehicles of public transportation. In 1835 "An Act to License and Regulate the Duties and Charges of Common Carriers in the City of Toronto" was passed by the City Council. In the following year an amending act was adopted, and in 1843 it was thought wise to combine all previous regulations in a new "Act to License and Regulate the Duties and Charges on Coaches, Carriages, Cabs, Carts, and other Vehicles, kept for Hire in the City of Toronto".

Section II of this Act required that all drivers of such

[8]Francis Lewis: *The Toronto Directory and Street Guide*. 1843, p. 110.

vehicles, and of sleds, carts, trucks and drays as well, must be licensed by the mayor or two aldermen. Proprietors of livery stables, whose vehicles did not "occupy any of the Stands hereinafter named and described", were omitted from this requirement. Any person over eighteen years of age who could give proper security might be granted a license on payment of the fee, which was as follows:

For every Coach, Omnibus or Carriage, drawn by two horses,—£3.

For every Cab or other such vehicle, drawn by one horse,—£2.

For every Cart, Truck, Dray or other such vehicle of transport,—£1 10s.

The security required from every driver upon obtaining his license was £30 in two sureties of £15 each, this being subject to use in payment of damages to other persons if accidents should occur, or for fines and penalties resulting from the neglect of his duties as driver. The renewal of a license from year to year cost from 10s. to 25s. per vehicle *per annum*.

Section VII of the Act named as follows the only stands where drivers might place their vehicles for hire:

"Number One,—that side of West Market-place adjoining the Market Buildings, provided that the vehicles on this stand be in single line, with the horses' heads toward King Street.

"Number Two,—the east side of Church Street, between King Street and Adelaide Street, provided also that the vehicles on this stand be in single line, with the horses' heads towards King Street, and north of the south Churchgate on Church Street.

"Number Three,—the southerly side of King Street, extending westerly from the west side of McDonald's Hotel, provided also that the vehicles on this stand be in a single line, with the horses' heads towards Bay Street."

The maximum charges which might be made for transporting persons or goods are elaborately detailed. The city was divided into three divisions—which recall the taxicab zones of today. There was, however, no tariff of minimum rates such as has been enforced in 1933 for

taxicabs. For the purpose of regulating the charges the divisions of the city were as follows:

"First Division—That portion between Simcoe Street on the west, Queen Street on the north, and Parliament Street on the east.

"Second Division—That portion between Simcoe Street and Brock Street on the west, the northern limits of the city on the north, and the River Don on the east.

"Third Division—That portion of the City and Liberties beyond the last-described division, and within the limits thereof."

The schedule of charges for passenger carriage was based upon these zones, together with the number of persons and the type of vehicle—whether two-horse coach or one-horse cab. There was also an hourly rate of 4s. for coaches and 2s. 6d. for cabs, with slightly lower charges for hours subsequent to the first.

It is stipulated that if a passenger had no more than five minutes' business at his destination he should, if he wished, be carried back to the point of departure without extra charge; if from five to fifteen minutes, for one-half additional: if from fifteen to thirty minutes, for two-thirds the original fare; and if beyond half an hour the driver might charge by the hourly rate. It is further provided that one-third additional to the schedule may be charged for night travel, *i.e.*, after 9 p.m. from May 1st to September 30th, and after 7 p.m. between October 1st and April 30th.

Among miscellaneous provisions of interest is that which stipulated that no driver might "wantonly snap or flourish his whip", nor use any "abusive, obscene or impertinent language of any kind whatever", the latter restriction being limited, however, to the time that he was in charge of his vehicle! Night travel was carefully regulated, and, "unless it be moonlight", each vehicle of passenger transport must have "two well-lighted lamps with glass fronts and sides", and on them must be printed in black paint in letters at least an inch high the number of the vehicle. At all times each cab or coach must carry a card with the owner's name and number and the tariff of rates.

Similar provisions, and a similar tariff of charges, were

laid down with respect to the activities of carters, of whom there were 57 in Toronto in 1843. Some of the more minute regulations of the entire Act may be assumed to have been, like many others before and since, ignored or evaded by the drivers, though the general spirit of the law was no doubt obeyed, for one's license might depend upon it.[7] Until 1867—and even later, on occasion,—the carters of Toronto might be seen racing with puncheons of water to help extinguish fires; it was, in fact, their duty to do so owing to an ineffective waterworks system, and prizes were offered by the City Council for the earliest arrivals.

In 1883 the *Globe* published, for the information of Exhibition visitors, the tariff of cab charges. It was still based on zones, though of course the zones were different. For the benefit of travellers it is stated that children over 8 and under 12 years are charged half price; and that "one trunk and articles may be placed inside the cab, free"; but each article placed outside added 5 cents to the cost.[8]

The "Act to Regulate Common Carriers" has been superseded by others designed to apply under conditions of motor transport; but for nearly a century the old order ruled, and the disappearance of the last livery stables has occurred within the memory of most adults. William Wilson's Livery Stable, in fact, still remains at 586 Yonge Street. "I still keep a couple of old horses around," says the proprietor, whose establishment is now largely a motor livery. And even yet one or two private carriages continue to appear on the streets in leisurely, if incongruous, progression,—objects of curiosity in a world of speed.

[7]The provisions of the 1843 Act may be found *in extenso* in William Brown's *Toronto City and Home District Directory, 1846-7*. pp. 7-17.

[8]*Globe*, September 16, 1883.

CHAPTER VIII

Horse Railway and Trolley Car

With the passing of stage-coach days and the coming of the railway, attention began to be focussed upon the provision of some type of rail transport on city streets. Steam locomotives were obviously unsuited to the purpose, but, in the absence of self-propelling carriages, the use of horses to haul cars suggested itself as the best available method of making use of the popular "rail-cars" for the purposes of passenger carriage. The advantages of such a service were undeniable, for the streets were in most cases not even macadamised; cabs and carriages consequently made their way slowly, and their employment was expensive. Omnibus services with comparatively cheap fares had, it is true, been available for some twenty years over a few main routes in Toronto, but in 1860 it was the opinion of one man at least that the time was ripe for the inauguration of a horse railway.

On October 1, 1860, Alexander Easton, an Englishman resident in Yorkville, but formerly of Philadelphia, applied to the City Council for the exclusive right to build and operate a street railway. His plans as outlined in the application provided for a double track on Yonge Street from King Street to Yorkville village; a single track on Queen Street from its junction with King, near the Don River, to the Lunatic Asylum; and a single track on King Street from the same junction to Niagara Street, and thence to Queen. He proposed to charge a fare of five cents on each line; and, in return for the franchise, offered to keep in good repair 14 feet of roadway where the track was double and 7 feet on single-track lines.

Although there were at that time no street railways in Canada, several were in successful operation in the United States. In 1832 one was opened between New York and Harlem, but its unpopularity led to its abandonment for some years, and it was not revived until 1852. The projector of the Toronto railway wrote in 1859 that "street

railways have been tested in New York, Boston and Philadelphia and are found to be 'the improvement of the age', being so successful in their operations as to excite the surprise of their most sanguine projectors, and the admiration of the community at large". Comparing the street car with the omnibus, Mr. Easton was a firm believer in the great superiority of cars. One of his strongest arguments was humanitarian, for he considered that the street car "can be enjoyed by none so forcibly as by the horse, whose loads, though increased in weight, require a minimum of tractive power."[1] In spite, however, of this enjoyment on the part of the horse, there stands the experience that the animals seldom lasted more than a year in railway service in Toronto.

The Council did not immediately act upon Easton's application. It was proposed to refer the matter to a special committee, but Alderman Moodie thought that the question was so important that it called for a public meeting of citizens; he wondered what would become of cab and omnibus drivers if a railway were built. Alderman Conlin thought the country already had too many railways, and, in addition, he objected to encouraging Yankee speculators; but he modified his remarks when he was informed that Easton was an Englishman. Alderman Carruthers was also in opposition, stating that the franchise was worth $100,000 and should not be given away. Legal doubts provided ammunition for opponents of the scheme, and subsequent meetings were frequently disorderly.

Petitions from citizens, the *Globe* and other newspapers, and public bodies, were sent in favouring the proposed railway, and finally, on March 14, 1861, a special committee brought in a report recommending the acceptance of the proposals under certain conditions. Several of these were the result of investigations into lines in operation in the United States. The following provisions were included in the agreement of twenty-four paragraphs which was executed:

1. That all work was to be substantially constructed

[1]Alexander Easton: *A Practical Treatise on Street or Horse-Power Railways: Their Location, Construction and Management* . . . . 1859, pp. 4 and 8.

under the supervision of the city surveyor to the satisfaction of the Council.

2. Easton was required to pave and keep in repair the track allowance; while the city could take up the pavement for sewer repairs.

3. The flat rail "as used in Philadelphia" was to be employed, and the cars must similarly be of modern type.

4. Each car was subject to an annual license fee of $5.

5. In place of the lines proposed by Easton the city suggested that the Yonge Street route be from King to Bloor, the Queen Street line from Yonge to the Asylum, and that on King from the Don to Bathurst Street. As a matter of fact, however, the six miles of track laid in 1861 was on Yonge Street from King to the Yorkville Town Hall, just below the toll-gate at Davenport Road; on King Street from the St. Lawrence Market to Yonge Street; and on Queen Street from Yonge to Dundas Street (now Ossington Avenue). In the future extension of service Easton was to be given the option first, and, if he refused, others might be granted rights on other streets.

6. During the summer the cars were to operate sixteen hours, and in winter fourteen hours per day; they were to run at intervals of not more than thirty minutes, the speed limit was to be six miles per hour, and the fare five cents.

7. Among other contingencies provided for in the agreement was the impeding of traffic by ice and snow. While "every effort" was to be made to clear the tracks it was recognised that drifts might prevent the use of the regular cars in winter, so it was stipulated that sufficient sleighs should be provided to accommodate the public.

8. Paragraph eighteen of the agreement was of great future importance, for it stated that the franchise should extend for thirty years, "at the expiration of which the Corporation may, after giving six months' notice of their intention, assume the ownership of the railways and of all real and personal property in connection with the working thereof, on payment of their value, to be determined by arbitration". If this right was not exercised at that time it might be after any five-year interval thereafter; and if the proprietor should default in operation of the lines for

a period of three months the property would be forfeited to the city.

Before this agreement was completed another proposal was laid before the council by H. B. Williams, omnibus operator, who offered to lease the Yonge Street line if built by the city, on the basis of one-third of the gross receipts, the fare to be three cents per passenger. The committee declined to consider this proposal, however.

When the street railway was inaugurated in 1861 Toronto had a population of 42,000, and was about nine square miles in extent. The Don River, Bloor Street, Dufferin Street and the waterfront were the boundaries, except for an arm which ran eastward some three miles along King Street. Associated with Alexander Easton when the Toronto Street Railway Company was incorporated on May 16, 1861, were Alexander Bleekley and Daniel Smith, who, with Easton, were named directors, while Easton was the first President.

At a meeting of the City Council on September 9, 1861, it was resolved that "as a courteous invitation had been received from the Reeve and Council of Yorkville to attend the street railway festival at Yorkville on Tuesday, that the same be accepted"[2] Long before one o'clock, the time set for the starting of the first horse-car, large crowds had made their way to the village, and all were bent on enjoying themselves. Yorkville presented a gay appearance with its flags and banners, and every window had its full quota of spectators. "Seldom," says the *Globe*, "has the quiet village seen such a bustle and excitement, and when the first car came out of the depot and was placed on the track a grand cheer arose from the assembled multitude." Some difficulty in clearing the lower part of the line led to a delayed start, and it was four o'clock before the car commenced its momentous journey. On board were the Reeve and Council of Yorkville and several members of the City Council, and on the roof was the Artillery Band playing spirited airs suitable to the occasion.

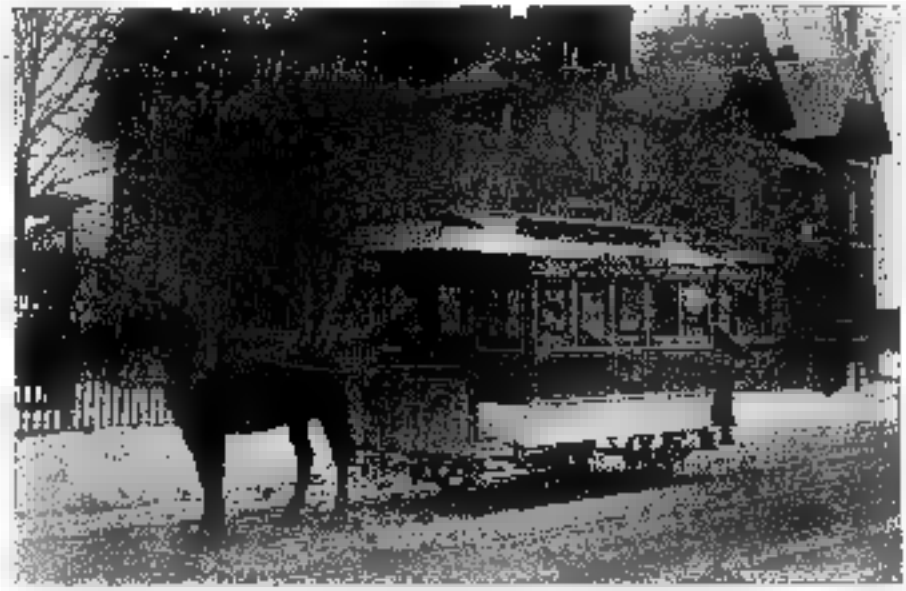
It was planned that only civic dignitaries and other invited guests should participate in the first trip; but a general rush enabled a large number of others to obtain

[2]See the *Globe* of September 10, 1861.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

H. B. WILLIAMS' BUS, AT THE RED LION HOTEL, 1850

Williams' omnibus line on Yonge Street served the public until it was displaced in 1862 by Easton's horse railway.



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THE SEATON VILLAGE HORSE-CAR

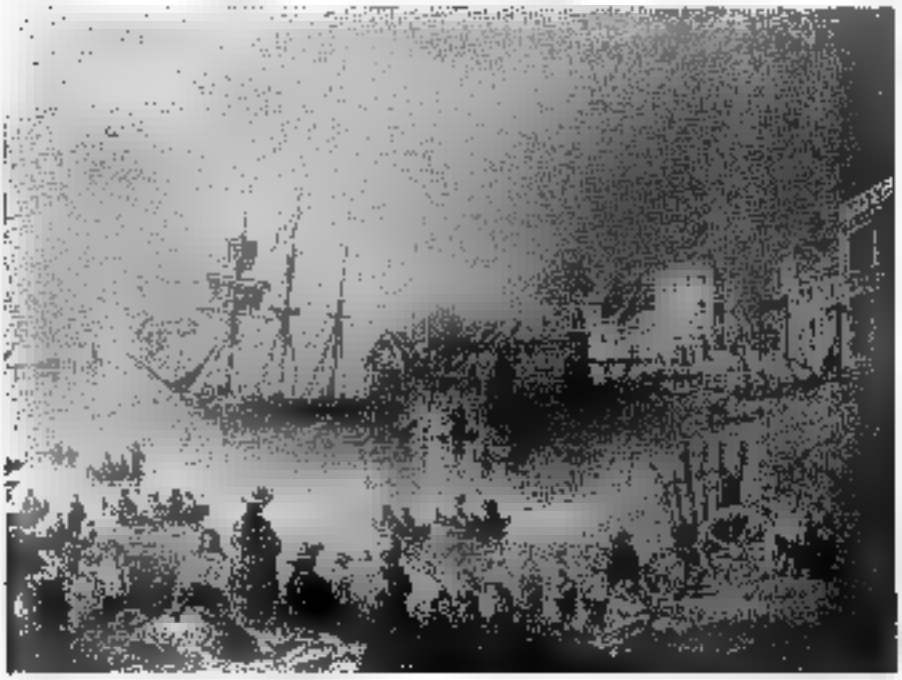
Seaton Village centred at the Bloor-Bathurst intersection. Two horses were used on lines where traffic was greatest, as well as during rush hours and to surmount heavy grades.

WILLIAM WELLER

Famous stage proprietor.

H. B. WILLIAMS

Operator of an early omnibus line.



W. H. Bartlett.

THE FISH MARKET, 1840

Weller's Stage Office and the City Hotel (formerly the Steamboat Hotel) may be seen on Front Street, near Church. The fish market was directly south of the present St. Lawrence Market.

seats in the next three cars, and they held them "in spite of every remonstrance". After proceeding a few hundred feet to Bloor Street the first car ran off the tracks, but the passengers soon had it back in place. "This occurred several times with all the cars", says the *Globe*, "but the passengers treated the delay as a joke, and the crowd were always ready to give a shove or a lift to keep moving". The reason for these occurences is stated to have been that President Easton had not intended the opening to take place until two days later, but in his absence the wrong date had been announced; and though all was not in readiness he would not disappoint the public.

As the cars passed down Yonge the citizens who lined the streets cheered the advent of the new system of transport, and the members of the Independent Fire Company turned out *en masse* in front of Engine House No. 2. At St. Lawrence Hall the National Anthem and three cheers for the Queen welcomed the appearance of the cars, which were thereupon started on the return journey, though the rough state of the road prevented their running continuously during the evening as had been intended.

The *dejeuner* in honour of the auspicious event was held in Yorkville Town Hall at 5.30, when some 300 gentlemen "sat down to a very elegant entertainment, which was got up in a style exceedingly creditable to the skill of Mr. Steers, who was the caterer on the occasion, and to the liberality of the Yorkville Committee, under whose superintendence it was provided". Colonel W. B. Jarvis, long a leading figure in the development of Yorkville, presided, and most of the notabilities of the village and the city were present. The chairman incidentally referred to a projected railway between Yorkville and York thirty years earlier, when the magnificient sum of $50 was voted by the Corporation of York and entrusted to himself to expend on the line; which, needless to say, never advanced beyond preliminary plans. Among the speakers who responded to toasts were Mayor Bowes and Mr. Easton. The latter referred to his street railway activities in the eastern United States, and regretted that he had been unable to build any in his native England—where, paradoxically, an American was the chief promoter! He acknowledged the equitable

treatment he had been accorded by the governing bodies of Toronto and Yorkville, stating that all delays and doubts were merely the result of "due deliberation" before entering upon a pioneering project.

The festivities of the day were concluded by a Concert and Ball in the Yorkville Town Hall. A "very fashionable audience", including "the prettiest daughters and handsomest sons" of Yorkville, attended the entertainment. A heavy rain was considered a fortunate circumstance, for it prevented overcrowding. From eight until eleven-thirty a program "much superior to most entertainments of this description" was given. Mrs. J. Beverly Robinson, Miss Davis and Mr. Armstrong were the vocalists, and the band of the 30th Regiment rendered several selections. The only objection to the concert was in the nature of a suggestion that the "anxiety to get through the first part of the entertainment . . . . is scarcely fair to the singers"; while at the same time many dance-lovers "felt that too little time had been left for the dancing which was to follow"—an opinion characteristic of youth.

A rush to the supper room, followed the conclusion of the concert, and Mr. Coleman, King Street caterer, supplied with refreshments those who succeeded in entering. At midnight the ball commenced, and it "was kept up with vigour until the whole of the program was disposed of". A complaint often voiced before and since is playfully made by the *Globe* in suggesting that officers' uniforms at dances have a distinct tendency to catch maidens' eyes and monopolise their attention:

"Some of the officers of the 30th Regiment who were present have doubtless found out that their 'red jackets' are not unrivalled by the regimentals of some members of the Active Force. If these gentlemen would take a hint, the black-coated civilians who desire sometimes to dance with the fairest specimens of the better part of creation would be just as well pleased if the warlike attire were left at home."[3]

The railway so auspiciously inaugurated had been constructed in less than three weeks, the work on depot, stable and tracks being commenced on August 22nd, when 200

[3] *Ibid.*, September 11, 1861.

mechanics and labourers set to work under the superintendence of David Smith. The first cars were built in Philadelphia, and are described by the *Globe* as "having a neat and comfortable appearance, and are well lighted and ventilated. The larger ones are calculated to seat 24 passengers and the smaller 16. There are seven cars in all in the depot, but it is only intended to run four of them, the others being designed for Montreal". There is something pathetic in the statement that "Mr. Williams ran his 'busses' yesterday in opposition to the railway, and it is stated that he will continue the competition".[4]

In October the construction of the Queen Street line—the remainder of the project—commenced. The *Globe* of December 3, 1861, carries the following item with reference to the opening of this section:

"The Queen Street Railway was opened yesterday afternoon from Yonge Street to the Lunatic Asylum. Many persons, including several members of the Corporation, took advantage of the first free ride over the road. The cars were gaily decorated with flags, and although the novelty of a street railway has to a great extent worn off, the sidewalks were crowded with spectators as the cars passed along. The track has been admirably laid, and the cars moved very smoothly. This road promises to be very popular, and will, no doubt, prove a paying speculation. The double track is now completed from St. Lawrence Hall to Queen Street."[5]

The first report of the Company, dated December 31, 1861, shows that six miles of track were in operation, and that an average of 2,000 passengers daily used the lines, the service being at intervals of about forty minutes. Eleven cars, 70 horses, and several wagons and sleighs comprised the equipment of the railway. The roadbed for the railway track was originally macadamised rather than paved. The 30 lb. rails, placed on wooden ties, were laid on a gauge of 4′ 10½″, which is still the standard of the system, and were of the iron strap or "gutter" type. Not until 1889 was concrete placed under the ties. The technical details of the method of constructing the roadbed dur-

[4]*Ibid.*
[5]*Ibid.*, December 3, 1861.

ing the seventies and eighties is thus described in an official publication:

"A trench, twelve to fifteen inches deep, was dug along the single track right-of-way and 4" x 6" x 7' 0" sleepers were set every six feet on gravel ballast. Placed on the sleepers were 6" x 8" stringers fastened to the sleepers by spiked cast-iron angle cleats and extra long spikes passing through rail, stringer and sleeper. The strap rail, weighing thirty pounds to the yard, was laid on the stringers. This rail was a rolled section about 1¼ inches deep at the head and ⅜ inch deep on the flat part. The rail was 4½ inches wide and was fastened to the stringers by spikes through counter-sunk holes drilled at intervals of 18 inches. When the track structure was completed the trench was levelled to the bottom of the 6" x 8" stringers, and sufficient sand was spread to bring the level six inches below the finished surface of the track. As a paving surface, blocks 6 inches deep were cut from cedar poles, and these blocks, of varying circumference, were laid in a manner to allow minimum space between blocks on the surface. The space between blocks was filled with sand, and the surface of the block paving was levelled by pounding on boards laid across the blocks."[9]

The improved surface of that portion of the streets on which horse-cars were operated led to the interesting habit of jerking the cars off the track in case of fire, in order that the fire-engines might proceed with all possible speed. The introduction in the eighteen-seventies of cedar block paving resulted in the Company's being called upon, under the local improvement by-law, to contribute towards the new pavements. After paying some assessments the Company refused to pay more, on the grounds that they were neither permanent pavements nor suitable for street railway purposes. After considerable litigation it was finally agreed on January 19, 1889, to pay all overdue assessments, as well as $600 *per annum* per mile of single track, the city assuming the cost of all repairs and renewals during the remaining years of the lease.

The characteristics of horse-cars as they appeared to the citizens of that generation will be of some interest. In

[9]*Ten Years of Progressive Public Service*. 1931.

most respects they resembled omnibuses. The wooden bodies of the "single-truck" type were sixteen feet long, and there were no window panes to protect passengers during bad weather. At either end was an open platform, and the car might be entered at the front or the rear. The one-horse car was operated by the driver, who sat entirely in the open without protection from the cold of winter except that he had a box fitted with pea-straw in which to place his feet. No tickets were used at first, and, it is said, not even a fare-box, the driver being given some change at the commencement of the trip and handing in what he had accumulated at the end, without any check on his returns. In the days when six miles of railway served a population of from forty to fifty thousand, conductors frequently knew their passengers; it is even said that upon occasion a car would wait for a suburban citizen who was finishing a hurried breakfast! Certainly the service was slow, and the cars stopped with a sharp jerk whenever the bell was rung. No turn-tables or other elaborate equipment were necessary to turn the cars at the end of the line, this being effected merely by unhitching the horses and placing them in position at the opposite end.

The primitive method of collecting fares soon came to an end, and a fare-box was placed just inside the front entrance. Those entering at the front placed five cents in this box, while those from the rear were expected to come to the front to do so, and if they did not the driver would rattle the box and try to intimidate any who sought to avoid fares by a brazen countenance. To provide change for those who needed it there was a small wicket in the partition between the body of the car and the driver. Two-horse cars, which were generally used on the main routes, were operated by a conductor and a driver, and the former carried the fare-box and collected fares from the passengers after they were seated. The cars carried no stoves in winter, and the only protection from the cold was a deep layer of pea-straw on the floor.

In winter some outlying routes, such as McCaul Street and Spadina Avenue, were served by sleighs not greatly different from the cars. The entrance to these was usually at the rear, and it was consequently still more difficult to

collect fares from all passengers. The sleighs made their way through the snow-drifts, sometimes aided—as on the McCaul Street grade—by the male passengers, who frequently had to get out and push if any progress was to be made. Such help was rewarded by a free-and-easy attitude on the part of the drivers, who, on these routes at least, had no objections to stopping in front of one's house instead of the next corner.

The railway did not prove financially remunerative. Early in 1862 Easton assigned to the Company his contract with the city, and it was soon afterwards conveyed in trust to the Hon. William Cayley to secure certain indebtedness and mortgages. On January 23, 1869, "An Act for the Relief of the Toronto Street Railway Company" was obtained, and as a consequence the property was sold to William T. and George Washington Kiely on April 7th following, the price being $48,848, though the actual cash payment was only $7,500. A new Company under the old name was incorporated in 1873, and it commenced service with six miles of single track, 40 horses, 12 two-horse cars, 2 one-horse cars, and four or five buses. The first full year's business, 1869-70, showed that the street railway earned a net profit of $11,221.31.

The former Company had shown no disposition to extend its lines, but Mr. Kiely, when approached by the city, wrote in 1871 that further developments would be undertaken. A few years later the Toronto Railway Company, though finding that it inherited the obligations of its predecessor in the matter of upkeep of the roadway, secured from the legislature a peculiar amendment stating that, if the old block pavement was to be replaced by a more modern type, the city had to construct "that part of the street which the Toronto Street Railway is bound to repair". This intensified the strained relations which usually existed between the two bodies. As time passed, a more satisfactory profit was derived from the railway. In 1889-90 the net revenue was $242,983, an amount nearly half the total of $553,830.22 which represented the dividends, bonuses and salaries drawn from the Company by its proprietors between 1869 and 1890. The only revenue received by the

city, meanwhile, was the tax of $5 *per annum* per car—in 1871, for example, the paltry sum of $55.

In February, 1881, Toronto was considerably excited over a battle royal between the employees of the Street Railway and storekeepers, particularly along the Yonge Street route. During heavy falls of snow the cars carried snow ploughs to keep the track clear, and as a consequence the snow was piled high on either side, making the road impassable for all other vehicles. Shop hands turned out *en masse* and shovelled the snow back on the tracks, and in the ensuing battle the car-drivers were worsted, their cars, after a short defence, being blockaded and more or less buried in snow. A dozen of them, eight of which were piled up at one point, were temporarily rendered helpless by the determined assaults of shopkeepers and clerks.

By 1884 there were car lines on ten main streets, thirty miles of track serving a population of 105,211. The service at that time was on Yonge, Queen, King, College, Spadina, Church, Front, Sherbourne, Carlton and Parliament Streets. In the previous year the end of horse-cars was forecast when a practical electric railway, the first in Canada, was in operation in Toronto. The 1883 program of the Exhibition called for the "First Trip and Excursion on the Electric Railway" on Wednesday, September 12th. It was delayed a day, but on the 14th the press announced that "the locomotive and track having been completed yesterday, the trial trip of the electric railway was made. The wheels and bearings of the different parts of the locomotive were stiff, having never been in use before, and it was thought that some difficulty would be experienced in making this first trip. When the engine that generates the electricity was started and the lightning caught up by the little locomotive it started away at a good speed and ran from the little station near the ring to the terminus of the track at the road leading to the ferry wharf. The locomotive ran over the track several times, and once drew the car over it. The car is a neat little platform arrangement with ordinary back seats, affording accommodation for about 16 persons. It was thought by some that the electric railway would be a failure, and its ultimate success was not expected to come up to anticipations. The success of the

railway, its promoters say, may now be looked upon as certain, and the silent steed will be ready to do service for an admiring crowd of passengers to-day."[7]

On the 17th, however, it is stated that "the idea of attaching a passenger van to the engine on the Electric Railway has been abandoned owing to the non-arrival of a large dynamo machine from New York, and the engine in the main building not possessing a sufficiently strong motor to enable a car to be drawn behind the railway engine. The cap of the engine will be taken off, and the whole of the mechanism of the machine will be displayed to view, which will probably prove as instructive and interesting as the original scheme. On Saturday afternoon the engine made several trips with no car attached, and a few of the many persons who displayed an interest in the railway were enabled to enjoy the novelty of a trip along it".[8]

At the close of the Exhibition the *Globe* commented editorially as follows:

"The electric railway was not so great a success as the people expected. Enough was shown to demonstrate that electricity can be used for traction purposes, but those who witnessed the performance of the model must have left the grounds fearing that it would be their grand-children's time before electric railways would be of practical use. It is understood that while attending the Exhibition of Railway Appliances in Chicago some of the members of the Association saw the electric railway at work. They did not want to pay the large sum demanded for the use of this railway, so they came home and made one 'out of their own heads'. The confidence in their own ability thus exhibited was a manifestation of the very qualities which have made the Exhibition a success, but the failure of the Exhibition should not be imperilled by the use of 'attractions' which are partial failures."[9]

In 1884, however, failure was changed to success. The inventor, Charles J. Van Depoele, (usually called Vandepole or Vanderpool in the press), came from Chicago to superintend the arrangements, and, though there were "a thou-

[7]The *Globe*, September 14, 1883.
[8]*Ibid.*, September 17, 1883.
[9]*Ibid.*, September 24, 1883.

sand and one annoying causes of delay", he good-naturedly surmounted them all. The *Globe* notes that he did not stand on his dignity but went right to work as chief engineer and proved himself "the best mechanic among them". Early in the Exhibition, on September 5th, a trial was made, but the car did not go far, "as the belt attached to the engine running the dynamo flew off". On the 6th the Canadian Electric Railway, as it was called, was "in every way a complete success" as it performed before a large number of ladies and gentlemen invited by H. J. Hill, Manager of the Exhibition. The cars in use were "like small open street cars, and are nicely built and fitted up"; and on the 10th it was noticed that the train of cars went 15 miles per hour around the curves! The *Globe's* account of the invention and its awe-inspiring effect upon onlookers describes that "the electricity, which is generated by two large-size generators in Machinery Hall, is conveyed into two copper bars which run the whole length of the railway track between the rails. The bars are partly covered over, both for protection against shock and from the rain. Attached to the motor are two pieces of metal which run along the copper bars, and the electricity is thus carried to the dynamo on the car, which, when put in motion, drives the car wheels by means of a system of pulleys and belting.

"The electrician on the car has full control of the movements of this motor, just as if he were running a marine engine or a locomotive. By means of a handle he immediately reverses the motion of the dynamo on the car. He controls the speed of the cars by means of a governor, just as the amount of electricity given to a man from a galvanic battery is controlled. To stop the car he simply breaks the current of electricity through the car, and the motor stops. There is a heavy grade on the line of the track, but the cars climb that grade without the slightest difficulty. . . . The thought of a motor run by an invisible force and drawing a car with fifty people aboard seems almost an impossibility, but it is even so."

On September 12th, in fact, the *Globe*, which had been pronounced in its criticism of the failure of 1883, commented that the railway was "one of the principal attractions of the Exhibition". The cars were "under perfect

control and brought to a stop without jerking", providing "an exhilarating ride", as well as being "a perpetual delight to the small boys. . . . Nothing could be more satisfactory".[10]

As will have been observed, there was neither electrification of the rails nor a trolley wire in the early years of this line—at the time the longest in America. In 1885, however, the underground conduit was replaced by a rough trolley-pole. In an address given in Baltimore early in 1886 and printed in the *Electrical Review* of March 6th of that year Mr. Van Depoele stated that he entered into a contract with the directors of the Exhibition in 1885 to operate a train of three cars and a motor car:

"Having only a single track I had to prepare here for a light train and good speed. . . . We began placing poles, etc., on the 1st of September, and made our first trip on the 5th. From beginning till end not the slightest hitch occurred, running regularly from 8 a.m. until 10.30 p.m. without stopping a minute. On many occasions we carried from 225 to 250 people. . . . The distance was a mile and the round trip never exceeded eight minutes; so, including starting and stopping, we made, for part of the way, at least thirty miles per hour. During the last five days of the Fair we carried 50,000 people".

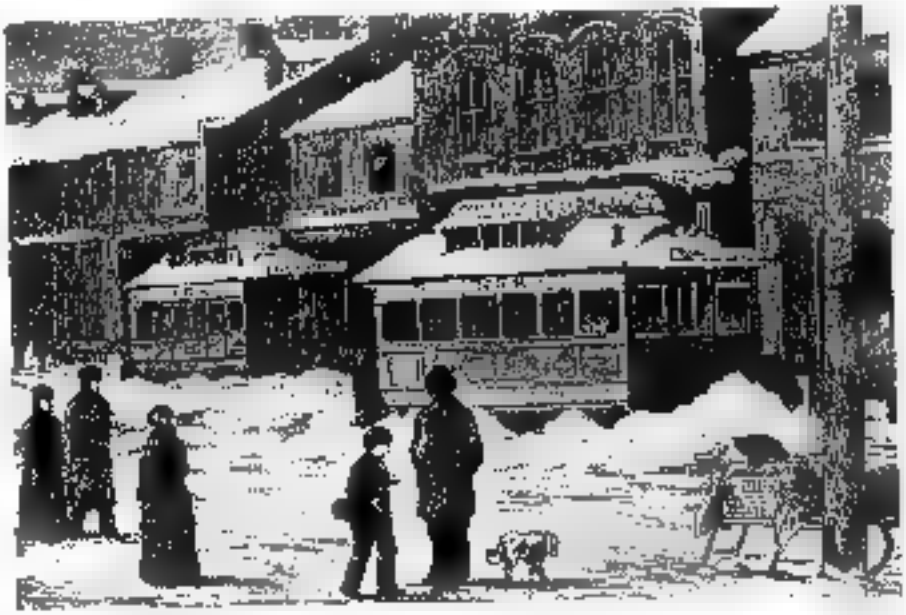
The small railway ran from the Exhibition entrance at Strachan Avenue through the grounds to the vicinity of Dufferin Street. It thus provided for a fare of five cents a service supplemental to the King Street horse-car line nearly half a mile distant. Its use was discontinued in 1892 when the King line was extended along Dufferin Street to the grounds. Meanwhile, in 1887, there was in successful operation the first large electric railway in Canada—between Thorold and St. Catharines—and it is said that all the watches within several miles had to be demagnetised!

The Toronto Street Railway, however, continued to use horse-cars, which provided a slow and inconvenient service. The experimental railway at the Exhibition grounds had aroused widespread interest, and thousands of people had patronised it; but, while the Company was willing to extend its system if the privilege were accorded them of using

[10]See the *Globe* of September 6, 8, 10, 11 and 12, 1884.

Canadian Illustrated News. W. N. Langton.

THE FIGHT BETWEEN THE STOREKEEPERS AND THE COMPANY'S EMPLOYEES

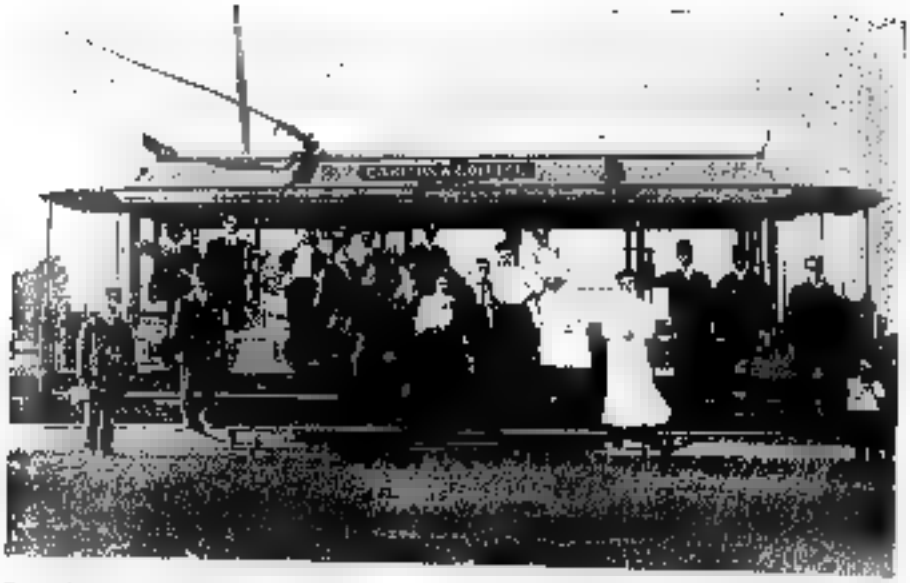


Canadian Illustrated News. W. N. Langton.

THE BLOCKADED CARS AFTER THE BATTLE

SNOWING UP THE TORONTO STREET CAR COMPANY, 1881

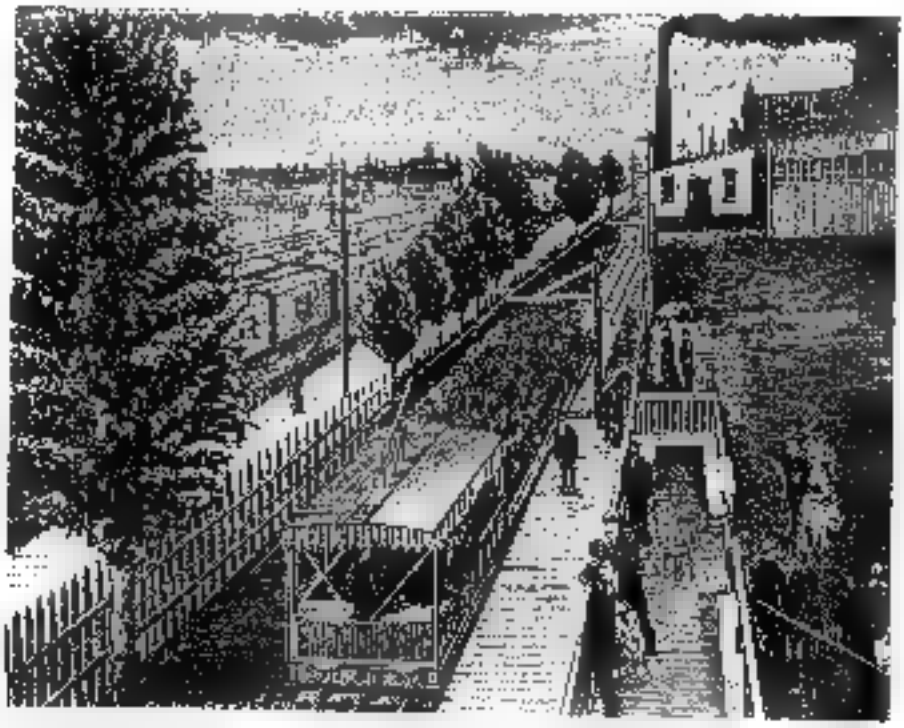
Twelve cars were temporarily rendered helpless by exasperated Yonge Street storekeepers when they found that the Railway employees had blocked the approach to their establishments.



Reproduced by Courtesy of the Toronto Transportation Commission.

An Open Street Car, 1906

For many years open cars were used in summer, and closed cars in winter. Convertible bodies were later employed.



Electrical World, 1890.

The Exhibition Electrical Railway, 1883-92

A failure in 1883, this pioneer Canadian line was in successful operation in succeeding years. Two generators in Machinery Hall provided the electricity.

"electricity cables" or other motive power, there was no disposition to add to the horse-car lines or to replace obsolete equipment. The city, on the other hand, opposed the applications by which the Company tried to obtain from the legislature variations in the agreement, for the franchise was due to expire on March 14, 1891, and it was feared that legal rights might be prejudiced by any changes prior to that time.

The lack of effective street railway service was one reason for the promotion of the Toronto Belt Line Railway,[11] commenced in the "boom" times of the late eighties. This twenty-mile steam line followed the course of a series of ravines outside the city, passing up the Valley of the Don, crossing Yonge Street a short distance north of the boundaries of Mount Pleasant Cemetery, and returning southward *via* the Humber Valley—a section along the waterfront serving to connect the eastern and western sections. By 1891 the railway was ready for traffic. Not only did it become a fashionable diversion to take a trip on the Belt Line, but real estate brokers seized the opportunity to show clients the amazing possibilities of speculation in land in its vicinity. But after a few months the line closed down, its bonds being taken over by the Grand Trunk, to which it had been leased. Another "South Sea Bubble" had burst, and property values almost disappeared. As for the railway it became a pathway of rotting ties and tumble-down stations, a pleasant walk amid the quiet beauty of the ravines, and an example of the philosophy of Robert Burns:

> "The best laid schemes o' mice and men
> Gang aft a-gley."

At the expiry of the thirty-year agreement between the city and the Toronto Railway Company the population of Toronto was 170,000 and its area 17 square miles. The boundaries were, approximately, Greenwood Avenue, Danforth Avenue, the North Toronto line of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and the westerly limit of High Park. There was 68 miles of single track, and the assets of the Company, valued by arbitrators at $1,453,788, included 90 two-horse

[11] For a longer account of the history of the old Belt Line see an essay by the present writer, in the Toronto *Mail and Empire*, January 11, 1934.

closed cars and 56 open, 116 one-horse cars, 99 buses, 100 sleighs and 1,372 horses. The stable for the Company's horses was a large building, 444 by 68 feet, extending from the Esplanade to Front Street and from George Street to a lane. Apart from its size the building is of interest from the circumstance that on July 10, 1902, while it was the storage warehouse of P. McIntosh & Sons, five firemen lost their lives when its walls collapsed.

Valuable reminiscences of the circumstances attendant upon the transfer of the street railway to the corporation are given by Dr. Lockburn B. Scott, formerly a reporter on the staff of the *Empire*, and in that capacity in close touch with Mayor E. F. Clarke and the administration:

"For months prior to midnight of the 31st December negotiations were carried on, but with little satisfaction to the City. It was freely rumoured and quite generally believed that the Company would use every ruse in their power to prevent losing control, and all sorts of plans were considered and discussed in the public press and among the City's politicians; but nothing definite was given out by the Company. For a day or two previous to the 31st, and especially on that day, it was currently reported that the Company was going to mass its large force of employees and forcibly resist any attempt on the part of the City to take over the property. While the members of the Council were generally of opinion that the Company would not take such an evidently illegal position, yet there was much unrest among them. So much so, that without any public announcement the City Police Force was held in readiness to interfere in any untoward events. The City Fathers were firm in determination to put the thing through irrespective of any offered opposition. Bloodshed was freely prophesied by men on the street.

"It was planned that the Street Railway Committee of Council with the press representatives should gather at the City Hall at 10.30, where a luncheon was served and the latest developments (which were exceedingly meagre and uncertain) discussed. Having arrived a little late, I found the only vacant chair at the left of the Mayor, and we indulged in quite a little private discussion of the matter. Mr. Clarke, always optimistic, was inclined to think there

would be little or no trouble; but was not so sure of [redacted] as to fail in necessary precautions. When the clock pointed to a few minutes before midnight, he rose, told me to keep close to him, and the entire company, probably some 16 or 18, set out for the office of the Street Railway Company situated but a short distance from the City Hall, which at that time was located close to the old Grand Trunk Railway Station. The distance being so short we went on foot, scouts being sent out to warn of any impending danger.

"However, though there were crowds of citizens on the streets, we arrived at the office without molestation and entered [redacted] commodious room, where just before the stroke of the clock we were very quietly joined by Sir Frank Smith and several of the higher officials of the Company. As the big clock boomed out the midnight hour, Sir Frank stepped forward and in a neat little speech in which no jarring note was sounded, he formally handed over the Railway to the City and received a check for, as I recall it, some million and a quarter, but I am not sure of the amount. It was the largest check that most of us had ever seen, and had been previously photographed and was featured in all the city papers. After a very few words of friendly chat we all started for our homes in peace and harmony. The actual transfer, which did not take more than 10 to 15 minutes, was indeed a very peaceful function."[12]

Some people favoured public management of the Street Railway property which was taken over in 1891, but the consensus of opinion was that the risk was too great for a municipality to operate an electric railway—though the electric car was then a commonplace and practical apparatus. Mayor Clarke and his council decided, therefore, to lease the system to the highest bidder, the city managing the horse-car lines only during a four-months' interval between two franchises. The service during this period was irregular and deficient, and many were the protests of citizens. At times fares were refused and the passengers rode free; and the drivers themselves reflected the general uncertainty by showing a lack of interest in their work.

Four rather involved tenders were received by the city,

[12]Reminiscences of Dr. Lockburn R. Scott, Norfolk, Virginia, December 26, 1933.

the best being that of Messrs. George W. Kelly, William Mackenzie and Henry A. Everett (of Cleveland), which was accepted. The new Company undertook to pay the award of nearly a million and a half dollars; to change the whole system to electricity or cable within three years; to heat all cars during the winter; to give transfers over main lines and branches for one fare; to run all-night cars; to give cheaper fares during rush hours; to pay $800 *per annum* per mile of single track; to uniform all conductors; to lay down a 70-lb. grooved girder rail in place of the light 30-lb. rail on timber stringers; and to restrict hours of work to ten per day, while paying a minimum wage of 15c. per hour. That the city secured a very favourable agreement is further shown by the provision stipulating that the Company should pay to the corporation percentages on gross receipts varying from 8% on the first million to 20% on amounts over three million dollars.

On the afternoon of Civic holiday, August 15, 1892, the electric railway was inaugurated in Toronto. Prominent citizens had been sent cards of invitation by the Company, and they began to assemble at the old City Hall, Front Street, long before 3 p.m., the time set for the event. The *Mail* describes the celebration in considerable detail under the head "A Successful Test":

"It was nearly 3.30 p.m. before the first electric car left in front of the City Hall on its way to the terminus of the Church Street route, at the upper end of North Sherbourne Street. Among the party on board were several aldermen and ex-aldermen and some prominent citizens in addition to several city officials. The progress of the car was watched by crowds at several intersecting points, and twelve minutes after a start had been made it reached the bridge at Sherbourne Street. The trip was made without a stop, the car slowing up occasionally at the crossings, and no incident of note occurred during the journey. After arriving at the terminus the party adjourned to a large marquee where they were welcomed by the officers of the Company. On the arrival of the second detachment of invited guests all were asked to partake of the hospitality of the Company, which had provided solid and liquid refreshments."

A long toast list was still fashionable at such events,

and the custom enabled a large number of men to express their opinions on various topics more or less related to the matter in hand. The report in the *Mail*, however, emphasises Mr. Grace's speech in behalf of the Company of which he was Secretary: he noted that men of the greatest integrity had been entrusted with the franchise, for which the city had been recompensed by remuneration unequalled in any other city on the continent; "and he begged to state that it was only by the united efforts both of the city and the Company that the earnings would be increased and the wants of the public satisfied". The proceedings terminated after five o'clock, "a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon having been spent by all".[18]

In the *Globe* appeared the delightfully whimsical "Impressions of Uncle Thomas" concerning the proceedings of the opening day. He commences by noting that "'Your trolley is off' has already obtained a recognised place in the slang of today", yet "the great inaugural was a success in every department from start to speeches. . . . The new cars are wider than the old horse-cars, and a man of ordinary dimensions can sit reasonably cross-legged in them without his boot on the shin of his travelling companion on the opposite side. They have a fresh store-like appearance and are as bright, inside and out, as the new paint on the City Hall door. The springs and padding in the cushions are in perfect order, and long rows of commodious and upholstered straps hang invitingly from the roof for the suspension of standing passengers. Everything connected with the trip was auspicious, even to the weather, and when the motorman, whose title has recently enriched the language, clanged his bell in front of the City Hall, the rows of distinguished personages that festooned the front steps foregathered into the cars. The binder-poles on top were fastened in their places with ropes, and as the motorman turned on the taps the cars started."

"Uncle Thomas" describes in lively style the trip up Church Street. The first part of the journey was made "at an easy jog-trot" and those on board had time to pass comment on "the artistic merits of the new pavement in front of the public library, and the extent and beauty of

[18]The *Mail*, August 16, 1892.

the King Street excavations". After passing Queen, however, the car bounded forward, "the trolley overhead struck up *Scots Wha Hae*, and I held my breath and the straps waiting for what tragic writers call the final plunge". Dogs barked, children screamed, and telegraph poles looked like rungs of a ladder as the car flew past. Horse-cars on the down trip went by at their best speed, "as if they were in dread of losing their job"; groups of smiling ladies on street corners were out of sight before one could smile back; the car "walked carefully around the corner at Bloor"; and finally "the conductor rang the bell to announce that we had arrived at the end of the Sherbourne Street track in Rosedale".

Everyone present at the ceremonies was impatiently anticipating the refreshments. "Good Mr. Webb had provided mountains of enticing sandwiches, olive-crowned salads, feather-weight cakes, watermelons carved to imitate gigantic tulips, oceans of lemonade, and bottles of liquid, stimulating and sedative. . . . Ex-Ald. Hewitt was there to witness the triumph of his statesmanship and diplomacy, and Senator Frank Smith was on hand to give away the bride. . . . Whatever may be said of the Company, every one present must admit that they provided an excellent lunch. And though the transfer of the franchise may produce 30 years of bickering and litigation, it has also yielded a most enjoyable celebration. And a free lunch covereth a multitude of sins."[14]

The introduction of the new type of transport was unfortunately not without accident. Charles Z. Zwick, of Rochester, a visitor at the St. James Hotel, was riding on a horse-car on Front Street, "and in his eagerness to note the progress of one of the new electric cars, which was approaching that in which he was seated, he stretched over too far, lost his balance, and fell in front of the electric car, which struck him on the shoulder and inflicted an ugly scalp wound. Dr. Garrett was called in, and the injured man was removed to St. Michael's Hospital, where he was reported to be doing as well as could be expected."[15]

On the 17th the *Mail* commented editorially on the ac-

[14]The *Globe*, August 16, 1892.
[15]The *Mail*, August 16, 1892.

cident, suggesting that only those easily alarmed would find cause for apprehension and suggest that electric cars be abandoned; for "the victim would have been just as much hurt had he acted as he did towards an ordinary horse-car. . . . The new cars are so arranged that passengers cannot get on and off between the tracks. The public must get accustomed to using the cars from the starboard side. The idea is an excellent one, and when thoroughly understood should inure to safety rather than danger".[16]

The opposition to electric railways came in part from horse fanciers and buyers. A local paper, in supporting them, asked: "What will be the result of the trolley's application to King, Queen and Yonge Streets? The trolley will drive carriages off these streets, decrease the value of property, and increase the danger to life. . . . It is a mistake to accept it, and it will be a curse when it does come." A similar feeling was sometimes evident in the United States, where in 1892 a Brooklyn publication, in referring to interference with telephone services owing to electricity escaping from trolleys, stated that "this will be thought a minor inconvenience when the demon begins his daily harvest of victims. Then this town will rise up and call blessed the man who would deliver her from the trolley".[17]

The argument as to whether the storage battery or the trolley system of power should be adopted did not end when the first electric cars were placed in operation. The city engineer recommended the trolley as speedier and more reliable, but investigations in American cities were instituted before his opinion was accepted, for many citizens objected to any increase in the already numerous poles. In 1894 the remaining horse-cars disappeared from the streets, the last one, on the McCaul Street route, being withdrawn from service on August 31st. Trolley cars, somewhat larger and heavier, but differing chiefly in that the front platform was closed in and the windows contained glass, were then in use throughout the city. The electric cars

[16] *Ibid.*, August 17, 1892.

[17] Quoted in the Fellows manuscript account of the Toronto Street Railway, in the possession of the Toronto Transportation Commission. For a copy of this material, which contains considerable information not available elsewhere, the writer is indebted to D. W. Harvey, Esq., General Manager of the T.T.C.

necessitated heavier rails and a more substantial roadbed, so that a very considerable financial outlay was immediately essential. As to the operation of the early cars it may be said that they were none too certain, for short circuits, the filling of air-brake tanks, disconnected trolleys and other troubles often delayed them. Many a citizen recalls the slow trip homeward at the close of the day, and the reactions, good-humoured and otherwise, of the occupants of the crowded cars as they not infrequently aided the motorman to keep his vehicle in operation.

In construction the first electric cars did not differ greatly from horse-cars. The bodies were of wood, sixteen feet long. Platforms were not at first covered by a roof, but about 1895 the front end was protected in that manner. The motors were of 20 horse-power, and the trolley poles were of wood, the current being carried from the wheel to the trolley box through a bare copper wire stapled to the side of the pole. In 1893 the introduction of tubular steel trolley poles was a great improvement. A stationary lifeguard protruded some five feet in front of the car, about eight inches above the rails. It was unsatisfactory, however, and there were a number of fatal accidents before an automatic fender replaced the old type. The first steel double-truck cars built in Toronto in 1895 were among the earliest on the continent. For many years an equal number of open and closed cars were built, the former being used in the summer months and the latter during the winter. In 1904 the construction of convertible bodies obviated the necessity of building two types. The use of open cars with running boards was prohibited by the Ontario Railway and Municipal Board in 1908. About 1905 air brakes were introduced, and the filling of storage tanks at stations along the route caused many tedious delays. The modern Westinghouse air brake as used by the T.T.C. put an end to this inconvenience.

It is characteristic of Toronto that the proposed introduction of Sunday cars caused a violent upheaval of public opinion. The "gay nineties" were, perhaps, not so gay in this city as elsewhere, but in any case there was five years of agitation before Sunday street cars were allowed. The agreement prevented their introduction until the electors

approved the principle at the polls. On January 4, 1892, there was a majority of 3,836 against, and one can readily imagine the heated discussions in church and street prior to the acceptance of the revolutionary idea on May 15, 1897, by a scant 300 majority.

It is not intended to give a detailed account of the operation of the Toronto Railway Company between 1891 and 1921, when the franchise expired once more. Most citizens remember the various civic street railways that had to be constructed in suburban districts after the extension of the city boundaries in 1910, for the Privy Council upheld the Toronto Railway Company in its refusal to extend service beyond the limits as they existed in 1891. The Gerrard, Greenwood, Danforth, St. Clair, Lansdowne and Bloor West lines were consequently operated by the city, which had to assume the deficit resulting from the two-cent fare.

There were no transfers issued during the horse-car period—not, at least, until its closing days. Passengers paid a separate fare on each line until about 1891, when a transfer "by verbal statement" was allowed; and this—which must have been most unsatisfactory—was superseded by a free transfer system in the following year. Conductors and drivers were not provided with uniforms during horse-car days, these being first issued upon the commencement of the electric service in 1892. In 1882 their wages were $7 a week for a twelve-hour day, and, in 1891, $10 a week for a ten-hour day. According to the agreement with the new company in 1892 no adult employee was to receive less than 15c. per hour, and up to 1902 that was the rate for the first year, and 16⅔c. thereafter. Since that date the wage rate has steadily risen. In 1918 it was 39c. an hour for a ten-hour day. In 1919 an eight-hour day was inaugurated, and the rate was raised to 55c., and to 60c. an hour in 1920. The latter is still in effect, except that operators of one-man cars receive 5c. an hour extra. Between 1902 and 1920 four strikes occurred, varying in length from 2¼ to 13 days. During the first of these there was considerable rioting, and troops were brought to Toronto from Niagara Falls.

Between 1913 and 1921 proposals and negotiations concerning the acquisition of the system were continually in

1896 strike?

the forefront of municipal politics. In 1917 the electors voted 40,328 to 3,725 in favour of the operation of street railways as a public utility. A company carrying on under an expiring franchise can hardly be blamed for refusing to sanction extensive capital outlay, and the service, never particularly satisfactory, became worse and worse. It may be interesting now to see historical illustrations of old types of cars "in use as late as 1921", but trips on a deteriorated roadway in antiquated vehicles overcrowded with exasperated and perspiring citizens vainly attempting to reach home an hour or two late by hanging on to someone's coat-tails while precariously perched with one foot on the running-board—such journeys were comparable only to an ocean voyage in the hold of a slave-trader during a sudden squall; and even if the ride was free—for the conductor could hardly hope to intimidate all of those whom he could reach with his coffee-pot fare-box—it was not appreciated, for in no particular did it even approach satisfactory street railway service.

In December, 1910, the first P.A.Y.E. (Pay-As-You-Enter) cars were instituted, the entrance being at the rear by a narrow passageway. Serious delays in traffic resulted from the use of this type of car, and an indignation meeting of citizens was held in Massey Hall. At its close numerous people boarded the cars and refused to pay their fares; and there were disorders in which bricks were hurled through windows—all of which goes to show that fights and riots, so common in pioneer days, are by no means merely a memory of the past.

On June 4, 1920, the Ontario Legislature passed an Act incorporating the Toronto Transportation Commission and authorising it to assume the operation of the lines of the Toronto Street Railway, together with the city suburban lines; and, in addition to the unification of the city's street railways, the Commission took charge of "the construction, control, maintenance, operation and management of lines of motor-buses, or of subways, or of tubes, or of any other method of underground or overhead local transportation". The rolling stock taken over by the Commission from the Toronto Railway Company numbered 832 passenger cars, and there was at that time 138 miles of single track under

the Company's control, the daily number of passengers totalling about 600,000. The Privy Council were the final arbitrators in the matter of the price to be paid for the property, and they fixed its value at $11,483,500.

In order to protect itself from excessive competition the Commission has also the right to acquire control of coach lines radiating from the city, and in 1927 substituted this service for several outlying electric railways, the use of which was no longer feasible. In the same year the city's transport services were further unified when the ferry boats running across the bay were placed under the control of the Commission. Since that time the islands have assumed much of their former importance as pleasure resorts.

In 1931 there were 254.5 miles of track in Toronto—nearly four times as much as at the close of the horse-car period. The rolling stock has increased in much greater proportion, for there were in that year 987 passenger cars, 93 service cars, 214 buses and coaches, 37 motor trucks and 9 motor snow plows and sanders. The modern pay-as-you-enter cars are of the double-truck type, and constructed of steel. Compressed air brakes, electric lights and an automatic stove are among the features which form a notable advance over the cars of other days. In spite of the fact that but one man operates many of the cars, a ride is normally (a qualification which eliminates the remarkably severe winter of 1933-4) much more comfortable than ever before, and at the same time the movement of traffic has been very considerably expedited by careful management. In the first eleven years of service under the control of the Commission street cars and coaches have travelled over 320 million miles and carried more than three billion passengers, and not one person was fatally injured during this period—certainly a notable record of efficiency. In recent years the patrons of the street railway have steadily decreased in number, a condition due in part to economic depression but to a greater extent to the motor-car; and as the congestion of traffic on the main downtown streets will become greater as the city expands, it may be necessary to relieve it by an underground railway on Yonge Street, which would not only replace the surface line but would greatly expedite travel.

CHAPTER IX

The Old Town Pump—and Its Successors

A supply of pure water has always been one of the most important problems of the human race, for pestilence and plague frequently resulted from impure water. During the first thirty years of Toronto's history, 1793-1823, the only public water supply available to the few hundred citizens who composed the population was that in the Bay, the Don River, or the several creeks which at that period emptied into the Bay. Those inhabitants who lived near enough carried water to their houses in buckets, while others hired carters to deliver it to them. A considerable number sank wells on their own property, and were thus provided with an independent supply. For example, John Hutchinson, one of the builders of the first public well, had two wells providing excellent water on his property on Duke Street, between Ontario and Berkeley. His house, by the way, is said to have been the first (or possibly the second) building in York constructed entirely of stone, and it remained until recent years. Many early citizens of the town had also underground tanks, barrels or cisterns in which to store rain water for washing and other similar purposes, and snow was sometimes melted to provide a supply in winter.

We do not know when the first well was sunk for official purposes; but the minutes of the Court of Quarter Sessions for 1800 show that advertisements were issued in that year asking for tenders "for the Sinking of a well in the Gaol Yard"; and that "the Sheriff be authorised to procure Six Water Casks and Six Water Buckets for the use of the Gaol, also a pump for the well".[1] It would appear likely that but few wells had been sunk in York prior to that time.

Nearly a quarter of a century elapsed before there was a public well in York. In the *Gazette* of June 9, 1823, an advertisement called for tenders to be sent to S. Heward, Clerk of the Peace, "for the sinking of a well, stoning and

[1]Minutes of October 15, 1800. *Report of the Archives of Ontario, 1932*, p. 9.

sinking a pump therein, in the most approved manner, at the Market Square of the said town, for the convenience of the Public". All proposals were to be in his hands by the first day of July.[2]

John Hutchinson and George Hetherington offered to do the work "for the sum of £25 currency on coming to the rock, with the addition of seven shillings and sixpence per foot for boring into the rock until a sufficient supply of water can be got, should [illegible] be required". Their tender was accepted, and on July 30th they were paid by the County of York for the work. They received £3 1s. 3d. for boring 8′ 2″ into the rock, and Hugh Carfrae, pathmaster, was paid £5 2s. 4½d. for placing around the pump a flagging of logs and stone; consequently the total cost of the well was £33 3s. 7½d.

The digging of the well [illegible] described by Dr. Scadding as "an event of considerable interest in the town. Groups of school boys every day scanned narrowly the progress of the undertaking; a cap of one or the other of them mischievously precipitated to the depths where the labourers' mattocks were to be heard pecking at the shale below may have impressed the execution of this public work all the more indelibly on the recollection of some of them".[3] In winter the pump sometimes froze up, and around it was usually to be found glare ice, but it served its purpose well. Many a citizen of later days recalled carrying jugs and pails to the well, either for his own home or for a neighbour's use, and a little pocket money was sometimes obtained in this way by the small boys of York.

It is believed that the old well was never filled in, but merely covered over. In 1831, when the wooden market building was torn down and replaced by a brick structure, the well was first covered; and after the great fire of 1849 the new St. Lawrence Hall and Market was commenced and the well again hidden from view beneath the flooring of the Market, probably at the southern end of King Street arcade. At the commencement of the present century the premises were again remodelled, and it is said that the well was uncovered during the laying of a new floor. Mrs.

[2]*Upper Canada Gazette*, June 9, 1823.
[3]Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old*. 1873. p. 41.

James Riddell, who is now caretaker of St. Lawrence Hall and whose father held the same position when the new floor was being laid, recalls the excitement among the workmen when the huge well was uncovered "exactly in the centre of the arcade leading into the market":

"Everyone around the market at the time went over to have a look, and the workmen threw a pail down and brought up water as fresh as though it had come from a spring. I was living here at the time so, of course, would take greater interest in an old well being found than other persons.

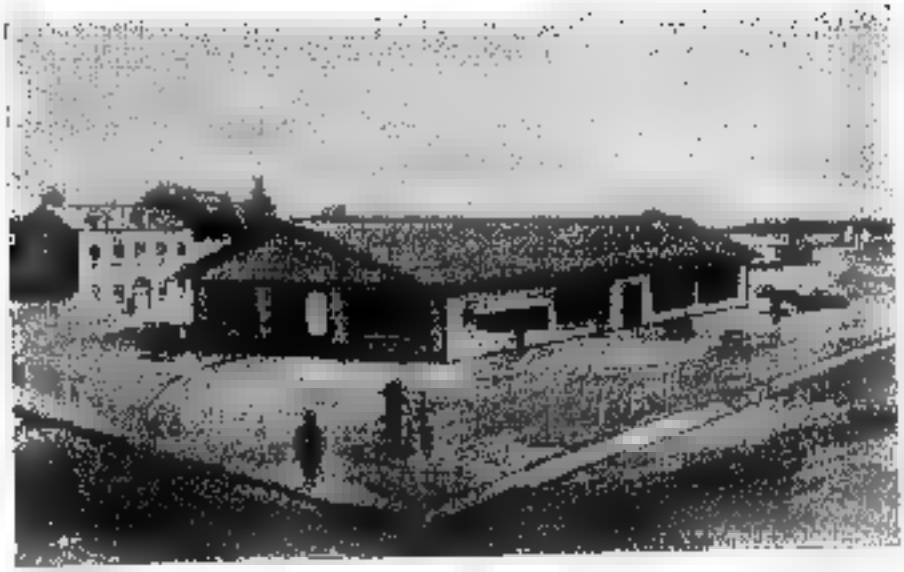
"But the well was there and it was very deep. We couldn't see the bottom, but the pail went down a great way. The market was empty for the remodelling and I doubt if anyone but the workmen and a few people around here saw it. They were laying the new floor at the time, so I doubt if it was uncovered for long, perhaps only an hour or so.

"I certainly don't remember them filling it in. I'm positive they didn't. I'm certain I'd remember that because it would take time, it was so deep a well. If I recall correctly they covered it over with something and laid the floor on top."[4]

Mrs. Riddell's statement is corroborated by Fred Duffy and John Wickson, butchers, whose families have for generations held stalls in the market; it would appear certain, therefore, that the old well might be revealed at small expense and trouble, to provide a remarkably interesting sight during the city's centennial celebration.

In 1824 the Market Square was, by the direction of the county magistrates, closed in on the east, west and south sides "with a picketting and oak ribbon, the pickets at ten feet distance from each other". The accessibility of the well was not greatly impaired, however, for there were three openings or footpaths on each side; though many a boy characteristically preferred to climb the fence. A second public well was sunk in the same year at the northwest corner of King and Princes Streets. On the 19th of August John James was paid £36 17s. 6d. for doing the work and providing a pump at this location. There do not appear to have been any other public wells in York.

[4]Quoted by Jessie E. MacTaggart in the Toronto *Mail and Empire*, July 17, 1933.



John Ross Robertson Collection.

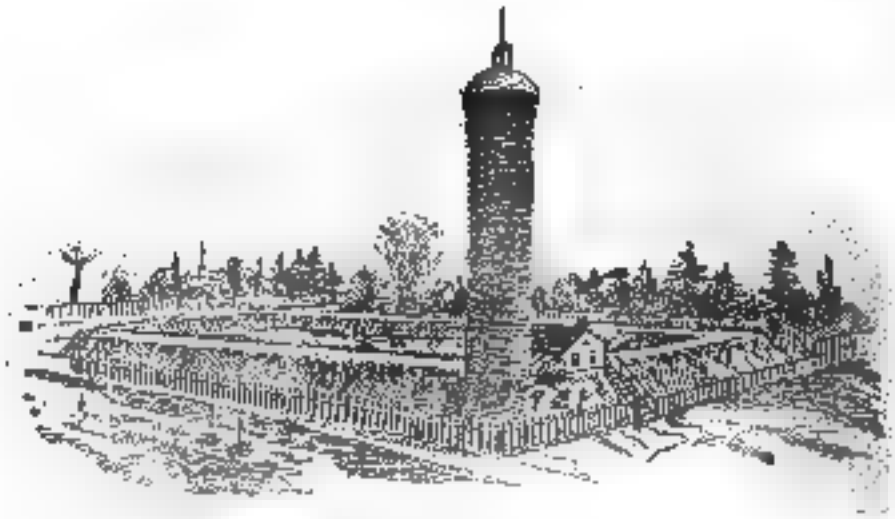
THE FIRST MARKET AND TOWN WELL

The market was established in 1803, and the well sunk in 1823.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

ST. LAWRENCE HALL AND MARKET, KING STREET

The old City Hall on Front Street may be seen in the rear. The market region was long the centre of municipal and social life.



John Ross Robertson Collection.

ST. GEORGE RESERVOIR, HURON STREET, 1864

A part of the plant of the old Waterworks Company, this reservoir was in use until the late seventies.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

THE TECUMSEH WIGWAM, 1820-1874

A notorious tavern on the north-west corner of Bloor and Avenue Road. Later the site of Albert Nordheimer's residence, the corner now contains an uncompleted "depression skyscraper", a most unattractive addition to an otherwise beautiful intersection.

Sewers were provided in York previous to any public water supply,—before even the first town well had been sunk. Among the regulations drawn up in 1817 and enforced by the police of the town was one stating that "no person be permitted to carry a Private Drain into any of the Sewers sunk at the expense of the public in the Town of York, without especial permission obtained from the Magistrates in Quarter Sessions assembled; and payment of such sum for the privilege as under all the circumstances of the case shall be considered reasonable and just".[5]

Improved sewer accommodation commenced in 1835 after a lengthy report by the Committee on Draining and Paving. Over $5,700 was eventually spent in laying a main sewer on King Street from York to Berkeley, and thence southward to the Bay, and in constructing smaller drains down York, Bay, Yonge, Church and Jarvis Streets. At the same time a small creek crossing King Street near the old Government House at Simcoe Street was diverted into the main sewer. The Local Improvement System was instituted at this time by levying a tax on the properties adjoining the sewers.[6]

Though the sewer system was improved at that time, the day of incinerators and garbage disposal plants was far distant, and in May, 1835, a select committee reported that there were suitable dumping grounds for offal and rubbish near the old Parliament Buildings at the southern end of Berkeley Street, at the southern extremities of York and Church Streets, and in the fields at the rear of Jesse Ketchum's house and stables on Yonge, where Holt, Renfrew's and Birks-Ellis-Ryrie's are now. Presumably Ketchum used some of the refuse in his tannery, for it was suggested that the Council give him what he wanted, or that he pay 7½d. a load at the turnpike gate. One or more carters were to be employed to remove filth from the streets, and the same men no doubt buried "all dead dogs, cats, and other animal substance", which, as Alderman Turton pointed out on May 20, 1834, abounded in most sections of the city.

Among the streams which supplied water to early

[5] *Regulations for the Police of York, 1817, as amended in 1828.*

[6] The best summary of the proceedings of Toronto's City Council is to be found in J. E. Middleton: *The Municipality of Toronto, a History*. 1923.

citizens of York was one running north of Davenport Road. At least as early as the eighteen-thirties this creek was being used for the purpose, for in November, 1834, the following advertisement was inserted in the *Gazette*:

"Notice is hereby given that application will be made to the Legislature at its next session for an act of incorporation of a company to convey water by pipes to the city of Toronto, from the stream running in the rear of Davenport, Spadina, and Russell Hill, in the second concession of York Township.

Toronto, 25th October, 1834."[7]

Nothing appears to have come of this project, however. In connection with the use of water from the Bay and the streams which flowed into it, one must remember that even in 1834 York had a population of less than 10,000; consequently there was not that pollution which is characteristic of centres of population with numerous factories and extensive harbour activities. A contemporary writer, in describing York as a suitable location for intending emigrants, notes that "water in the town is not generally good from the wells, but excellent from the Bay which runs up to the town, most well water being to a certain extent brackish, and impregnated with limestone, which strangers instantly perceive; this may easily be remedied by boiling, and all immigrants should use this precaution; in most parts I consider the water perfectly good."[8] The first City Council was interested in the possibilities "of bringing into the city the water of the Humber or any other source in its vicinity", and an exhaustive report on the matter was submitted by Deputy Surveyor David Gibson on January 24, 1835. No action was taken, however, the necessary expenditure appearing prohibitive.

Fire-fighting was a difficult matter in the days when Toronto had no adequate water supply, as the primitive methods in use testify. A bucket brigade, consisting of two lines of men from the Bay to the fire, at first provided a rather precarious service of filled pails and empties, and this was succeeded by a "puncheon" supply provided by the carters of the place, all of whom were compelled by law

[7]*Upper Canada Gazette*, November 13, 1834.
[8]*Sussex Emigrants for Canada*. 1838. p. 54.

to hasten with all convenient speed to every conflagration. Water so supplied was pumped by eight men with an ancient hand pump which was carried on a wagon to all fires. This machine, possibly Toronto's first pumper for fire purposes, was to be seen at the Canadian National Exhibition a few years ago.

In a day of wooden buildings fires were very frequent, and it was everybody's business to aid in putting them out. In addition to furnishing their homes with ladders and buckets suitable for the purpose, each man was expected to aid in the carriage of water by hand. After the formation of the first Fire Company in 1826 somewhat better hand fire-engines were available, and prizes were offered to "licensed carters and others" who appeared promptly on the scene with barrels of water. In the *Gazette* of May 22, 1834, the City Council under Mayor W. L. Mackenzie advertised* among other inducements a first prize of £1 5s.

This method may be assumed to have been productive of results, though it is more than hinted that some carters reached the scene of conflagration with such speed that they were suspected of foreknowledge of the likelihood of the fire, whether or not they actually had anything to do with setting it. There were, it is perhaps unnecessary to add, numerous incendiary fires in the pioneer period.

On February 18, 1836, the City Council received a communication from Thomas Roy, engineer, concerning a plan to bring water into Toronto from neighbouring springs, possibly in Scarborough Township. A special committee was named to investigate the matter, and on October 13th a motion was passed adopting its report and pledging the Council "to aid and assist (except by appropriation of the city's funds) in every possible way any company or corporate body which shall be formed, the object of which shall be the bringing of pure, wholesome water into the city, either for domestic use or any other purpose connected with the city either in a manufacturing or mercantile point of view". The absence of financial assistance must have put an end to Roy's scheme, for we hear no more of it.

In 1841 Joseph Masson, Albert Furniss and John Strang were authorised by Parliament to form the City of Toronto

*The advertisement is quoted in full on pages 190-1.

Gas-Light and Water Company, the capital not to exceed £40,000. This Company obtained the right to dig trenches and lay pipes wherever necessary, at the same time guaranteeing to take precautions against accidents and to restore the streets to their former condition—not a difficult matter, for the roads were merely of mud and gravel. Within two years the waterworks system was to be established, and the Company secured a franchise for fifty years. Neither the gas nor the water service provided was satisfactory, and at the same time the charges were high. Imported metal pipes were too costly, so wooden ones of small size furnished an irregular supply of water which frequently failed, particularly at fires, when it was most needed. The first pumping engine of the Company was located at the southern end of John Street, and the water thus obtained from the Bay was stored in a reservoir on Huron Street. Many citizens depended, in preference, upon their own wells or the carter service, and especially outside the limited range of the waterworks system were chain pumps and big wooden cisterns in evidence, rain water being largely used for washing. Some memories of the old St. George Reservoir on the north-east corner of Huron and St. Patrick Streets, which was in use until the late seventies, will be of interest here:

"The structure was built in 1843 of red brick surmounted by a metal-covered top, ornamented by a diminutive flagstaff. . . . The supply was for the purpose of serving the western part of the city, but it was miserably inadequate for the purpose, and the authentic statement was made in September, 1858, that 'while we have nearly 100 miles of streets opened, there is not now in all more than 15 to 20 miles of pipe laid, and a great proportion of that is useless'."[10]

The Lunatic Asylum, Queen Street West, far outside the

[10]John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*. 1894-1914. Vol. III, pp. 309-10. The source of the "authentic statement" quoted herein is [G. P. Ure]: *The Handbook of Toronto*. 1858. While somewhat prejudiced, this book contains a great deal of valuable historical information, the section on the history of the waterworks being on pp. 150-9. As an example of the defective supply of water this account notes that in 1858 the New Masonic Hall, Toronto Street, had a storage cistern just under the roof, but a force pump was necessary to distribute the water to the various offices.

very limited service attempted by the early waterworks system, had equipment of its own, for we are told that "the centre building is surmounted by a lofty dome covered with tin, (which can be seen for thirty miles on the Lake), within which is the wrought iron tank or reservoir, capable of containing 11,000 gallons of water, which is pumped up daily from the Lake by a steam engine. The water is distributed through lead pipes to all parts of the building".[11] The building, it may be added, was heated by hot water circulated through 25,000 feet of small wrought iron pipes and supplied by no less than sixteen furnaces burning anthracite coal.

Meanwhile the Waterworks Company was supplying parts of the city with an unsatisfactory service. Manager Furniss replied to the rather general complaints by some of his own. On July 16, 1846, he wrote asking permission to erect six "waterhouses" at street corners, in order to enable his Company to sell water to carters and others. He complained that the outlet of the Peter Street sewer was too close to his intake pipe, and that the levelling of King Street brought some of his pipes within 3 feet 7 inches of the surface, subjecting them to frost. The city, however, refused to allow the erection of the six tanks because they would be unsightly and inconvenient; and the Council replied to Mr. Furniss that the Company certainly knew of the grading of King Street, for they left certain pipes on top of the road with the expectation that they would be covered in the process.

In 1839-42, the four years previous to the inauguration of the waterworks, the city paid £419 16s. 3d. to carters for hauling water to fires. Commencing in 1843 the sum of £250 a year was paid to the Company for the hydrant service, but the deficient supply from this source necessitated continued reliance upon carters, and the total annual expense was about $400 during the next few years. In 1847 the Fire and Water Committee added its criticism of the hydrant service to that of the firemen and the press. In fact it was at that time the opinion of most citizens that the existing waterworks system was more of a nuisance than a convenience and deluded people into a false feeling

[11] Alfred Sylvester: *Guide to Toronto*, 1868, p. 25.

of security in no way justified by the service rendered. It was worse than useless for the extinguishing of fires, and it was largely to serve this purpose that the Company had been formed in 1841. Even as late as 1867 carters were still occasionally employed to haul water for fire-fighting.

The City Council, however, appears to have been considerably to blame for the deficient hydrant service. On November 15, 1842, an agreement was made under the terms of which twenty "fire-plugs" were to be provided at an annual charge of £250. It was stipulated that additional plugs were to be furnished if the twenty were insufficient, so as to "equal the number supplied in the New York or Philadelphia Water Works in the same distance or length of pipes". The agreement[12] was to be in force 21 years, and although over fifty hydrants had been installed by 1858 the city took advantage of the loose wording and refused to pay more than the original £250. The hydrants were presumably for use only in case of fire, but their employment for other purposes became usual, and detracted from the available pressure when fires necessitated their use.

A few years after its formation the City of Toronto Gas-Light and Water Company had split into two, devoted respectively to the supply of gas and water. In 1851 Furniss sold the Toronto Water Company to a joint-stock company under Charles Berczy, the consideration being £22,020 12s. 6d.; but the City Council refused to enter into a new agreement, and Furniss, who had been sole proprietor and shareholder of the former company and had obtained a mortgage to ensure payment of the sale price, was soon afterwards once more the owner when the Metropolitan Gas and Water Company defaulted. Improvements instituted at that time included "a large Bath and Washing establishment". There were, however, great difficulties in the operation of the waterworks. To lay miles of pipes for the use of comparatively few customers, (there were in 1858 only from 800 to 900 "takers" in a city of 7,500 houses), was a problem which continually faced the directors of the Company; and they themselves admitted that the supply of water was not only deficient but impure, while at the same

[12]A discussion of this agreement, and the Company's side of the case, may be found in Ure, *op. cit.*, pp. 151-5.

time the consumers complained of the exorbitant rates. Yet many citizens who were able to keep up with the times were soon being supplied with the new utilities. "We are now in treat", wrote Mary Jarvis in 1851, "for a house in Bay Street, which is of moderate size and has the advantages of water and gas."[13]

In 1854 the City Council made the first move towards the construction of a civic waterworks when "the Committee on Fire, Water and Gas, of which Alderman Romain was chairman, was authorised to offer two premiums—one of £100 and one of £50—for plans and estimates for supplying the city with water. In response thereto four designs were sent in by the competitors for the premiums. The two premiums were paid, and there the matter appears to have ended".[14]

On December 28th of the same year the large cabinet factory of Jacques and Hay was consumed by fire, and many persons were thrown out of employment. Urged to further action by this disaster, the Council gave some attention to a movement, probably inspired by the Waterworks Company, which had as its object the taking over of the works by the City. On September 10, 1856, a committee of the Council recommended the purchase of Mr. Furniss' plant, and to supplement this definite declaration of policy in favour of municipal ownership a committee was appointed to investigate the matter further. In the following April they reported that the Company would sell at its own valuation of £38,246 16s. 5d. But it was estimated that an outlay of £160,000 would be necessary to provide an adequate service, and T. C. Keefer, a noted civil engineer, was asked to draw up plans and surveys. Later in the year (1857) he submitted a long report. He estimated that the lowest cost possible to establish an effective water supply was £79,000, and to do this he advised pumping the water into a reservoir on Scarborough Heights and allowing it to

[13]Mary Jarvis to Fanny Jarvis, October 29, 1851. See Alden Meredith: *Mary's Rosedale and Gossip of Little York*, 1928. p. 205.

[14]*Toronto's Water Works*, in the Toronto *Evening News*, September 30, 1895. This good account, particularly of developments between 1872 and 1895, was "collated with much difficulty from official sources", and its publication in the press shows the public interest in the waterworks system.

settle in a number of basins before being drawn off for use in the city. Nothing definite, however, was decided one way or the other. On June 10, 1858, the Metropolitan Gas and Water Company under F. C. Capreol purchased the waterworks, and elaborate plans were made for a £450,000 plant. There was to be a reservoir on Scarborough Heights, and [redacted] streets were to be provided with pipes during the proposed extension of the service; but the whole program fell through when the opposition forces in the Council succeeded [redacted] securing the approval of a rival civic scheme—though the Act of the Legislature obtained at the time was never acted upon. In succeeding years the City Council's interest in the waterworks rose and fell from time to time, but no definite decision was reached in the matter.

One of the outstanding problems of the city in 1867 was still the water supply. The Fire Chief observed in his report that municipal tanks, private cisterns and the Bay had often to be used to combat fires when the hydrants failed to yield what was necessary. Citizens complained of "finding things in the water", living as well as dead, and the supply of it to homes was lacking in quantity as well as quality. Finally [redacted] 1872, following many ineffectual attempts to purchase the plant of the Toronto Waterworks Company, the city obtained the passage of an Act enabling the corporation to "construct, build, purchase, hold, improve, and generally maintain, manage and conduct waterworks and all buildings, matter and machinery and appliances therewith connected or necessary thereto in the City of Toronto and parts adjacent". This Act has been called the Magna Charta of the city's water supply. It provided also for the election of a commission to control the waterworks, and for the issue [redacted] three instalments of debentures totalling $2,000,000. When an agreement was finally executed in April, 1873, to purchase the Furniss waterworks the price to be paid for the existing plant was $227,000.

In 1873 and 1874 the works were taken over, and [redacted] start made in their improvement. The Board of Water Commissioners decided in 1875 to establish a municipal plant of sufficient capacity to serve three times the population—

then 68,000. During the reorganisation of the plant various suggested sources of supply were considered. The Don and Humber Rivers were found unsuitable. Bond Lake and Lake Simcoe entailed too great expense in piping, for it was estimated that $3,000,000 would have to be expended on a pipe of sufficient size to carry the water from Lake Simcoe, and that for several miles the pipe would have to be sunk about 900 feet in the earth through the ridges or highlands forming the watershed. Toronto Bay was rejected as unfit for use. Consequently Lake Ontario was the only alternative remaining, and, after consideration of various sites from Scarborough to the Humber, Toronto Island was chosen as the logical location. For the time being, therefore, the source of supply was settled, but the argument recurred from time to time. Two methods of obtaining water were then considered: one was to pump the water to an elevation at the north end of the city, and the second to form filtration basins on the Island and then draw water from them. On account of the expense involved the first proposition, which would have entailed an intake about two miles from shore, was abandoned, and in its stead a basin was excavated near the lighthouse. The basin was 500 feet long and 150 feet wide, and into it, by natural infiltration, about 4,000,000 gallons found its way. The water was then carried under the Bay to the pumping house between John and Peter Streets, and thence by a basin pipe to the north end of the city and into the distribution pipes which carried it to consumers.

The progress made in the two or three years after the acquisition of the plant had been satisfactory, and by 1876 the system was considered to be in good condition. The map of the waterworks for that year shows the extent of the service. Bloor Street was the northern boundary, except that one of the new mains extended through Yorkville village to Summerhill Avenue, and eastward to the new reservoir. Dufferin Street was then the western boundary of the city, but there were many thickly-populated areas to which the service did not extend. The Don was the limit in the east, except for a small extension beyond the river and south of Queen Street. The map shows also the new hydrants, marked by a dot, replacing the old ones which

are designated by a cross. The Company's reservoirs, which were used to store water and to increase pressure, are also shown—St. George's, on Huron Street from D'Arcy to St. Patrick Streets, and the Clover Hill Reservoir, on the south side of St. Mary's Street a block west of Yonge. As soon as the new plant was in operation these were drained off and later filled in. The characteristics of the water supply in the late seventies are outlined in a publication of the time, where some attention is also given to the contemporary controversy over the source of permanent supply:

"There are ten fire stations in various parts of the town and a complete system of fire-alarm signal boxes. Attached to the brigade are a large number of hose-reels, salvage waggons, horses, and the necessary apparatus for fire escape. Water is supplied from hydrants connected with the waterworks system, which tap the mains at all convenient and necessary points. The water is obtained from the lake at a point regarded as beyond the contaminating influence of the city sewage. Recently the suggestion has been made to draw the city's water supply from Lake Simcoe, about fifty miles northward. The water would be exceptionally pure, and the supply as large as desired; while the fall from Lake Simcoe to the level of Lake Ontario, about four hundred and forty feet, would give sufficient pressure for the extinguishing of fire in the loftiest building. Surplus water could be stored in reservoirs in the neighbourhood of Yorkville, and the waste turned to aesthetic purposes in the Valley of the Don."[15]

Reports issued from time to time by the Commissioners describe new plant installed and improved service. The ravage of fire had been curbed, one report noted, for there was not a street in the city where water was not available in sufficient quantity: "The business portion is particularly well off in this respect, as there is a hydrant equal in power and capacity to a first-class steam fire-engine every three hundred feet, so that, if a fire occur in any locality in any of the five central wards, ten to fifteen heavy streams can be thrown with not more than four hundred feet of hose in use for any one stream. This was exemplified in the fire which occurred in Hamilton's Foundry last summer (the only

[15]G. M. Grant (Ed.): *Picturesque Canada*. 1879. Vol. I, pp. 412-13.

large and disastrous fire we have had), when eleven streams from the hydrants were brought into play." The same report also notes that "not half the inhabitants take water" from the plant, and that the average daily consumption is 14,000,000 gallons, well within the capacity of the pumps.[10]

Old habits are hard to change, and many citizens had continued to use their wells, even though such a water supply in a growing city was dangerous. During 1879 and 1880 the water rates were reduced [illegible] *per cent.* largely through the efforts of Mayor Beaty, formerly Secretary of the old Metropolitan Water Company. An attempt was then made to close up the wells on the property of numerous citizens, and to induce them to take water from the city waterworks system; and as a result of this campaign 8,000 new customers were placed on the lists. In 1881 those who had persisted in their refusal were compelled to abandon the use of wells, and the same rule was applied thereafter whenever any territory was added to the city.

The difficulties were not all solved at once, however, for wooden stave pipes and cast iron pipes with flexible joints were frequently the cause of trouble. The filter basin proving inadequate, channels were cut connecting it with the lake; but this did not remedy the failure sufficiently, though for a time things went merrily along as usual. The proverbial last straw which broke the camel's back was provided by the report of a special committee, which found no evidence of infiltration on the south side and but little on the north, and observed that the water in the basin "was exceedingly filthy, of a putrid, fishy smell, in colour a dirty yellow"; while frog spawn and rank weeds covered the bottom and sides of the reservoir. No more was needed to get action, and in 1881 the basin was abandoned in favour of a six-inch wooden stave pipe, nearly half a mile long and drawing water from a depth of twenty-five feet.

Between 1874 and 1894, inclusive, debentures totalling over $3,700,000 were issued by the city for the development

[10]Report of 1877. The Hamilton Foundry fire occurred on November 21, 1876. At this period the village of Yorkville had a waterworks of its own. A *Directory* announces with some pride that the plant inaugurated in 1875 provided water "from a living stream" and distributed it "by iron pipes" to fire hydrants and customers. (See *Sloane & Purves' Directory of the Village of Yorkville*, 1876, p. 15.)

of the waterworks system. $227,000 of this was paid to the Furniss estate in 1874 as the purchase price of the old plant, and the remainder was expended in laying mains, supplying meters, purchasing engines, and in other ways developing the service. Included in the debenture issues was one for $75,000 by Yorkville village, and another for $140,000 by the town of Parkdale, both of which municipalities were incorporated within the city soon afterwards.

In 1892 there occurred what the *News* called "a Christmas Day surprise for the citizens".[17] A bad break in the conduit pipe under the Bay caused a considerable section of it to float to the surface. This disaster, caused in part by the extremely low level of the water in the lake, created a serious condition, which was repeated in 1895 when other breakages once more aroused the citizens. The topic of the day was "the water supply", and almost everyone had his opinion of the existing waterworks and how it might be improved. A writer noted that the defects of the system at that time were numerous, and suggested that "the impure quality of the water frequently introduced into the houses and, necessarily, into all domestic uses—drinking, cooking, washing—demands immediate consideration. . . . . The health of the citizens is of the first importance, and it is menaced by the unsanitary water. The uncertainty and inadequacy of the supply for fire purposes brings home to every property owner the necessity of demanding a radical and permanent change in the system".[18]

Edward H. Keating, City Engineer, reported on October 20, 1893, that seven proposals had been made to him with reference to the water supply. Three of these suggested Lake Ontario as the origin, the vicinity of Mimico and Scarboro being added to the existing source off the Island. A fourth suggestion combined the Oak Ridge Lakes and the Rivers Don and Rouge, from which water was to be supplied by the force of gravity. Lake Simcoe, wells sunk in the gravel beds north of the city, and springs and artesian wells in the Township of Erin made up the other three suggested sources of supply.

In discussing these proposals at length Dr. Beaty found

[17]Toronto *Evening News*, September 30, 1895.
[18]James Beaty: *Civic Relief*. 1896. pp. 37-8.

many objections to Lake Ontario, which may be summed up in his statement that "the trouble is to get it in its pure state". Engineer Keating, however, whose opinion might be assumed to be more valuable, favoured the development of the existing supply from Lake Ontario. As to Lake Simcoe it had been estimated that its level would be reduced one inch every 23½ days in order to supply Toronto with water. Since it was fed by creeks and rivers many authorities believed that the water would grow neither purer nor more abundant as settlement progressed; and Keating was certain that the cost would be enormous. Although other engineers had highly recommended the Oak Ridge lakes and rivers as a source of supply, Keating believed that the water would be "impure and unfit for domestic consumption".

In discussing the value of "wells north of Toronto, near Eglinton", Keating noted that "the North Toronto pumping station is supplied from a well adjoining, about 18 feet in diameter and 24 feet in depth, the normal depth of water in the well being about eight feet". The daily consumption of 8,000 gallons was raised in about 2½ hours, but the water was lowered some four feet in the process. While Dr. Beaty considered that "enough water of the purest and best quality could be obtained in that way for all purposes of the city", Mr. Keating dismissed the idea as a theory of no importance. The "springs and rivers in the Township of Erin" contained "a considerable quantity of water", and the prospects, he believed, were much better than in North Toronto; but the water was so hard as to be unfit for general use unless modified by that from other localities.

Dr. Beaty adds some proposed sources of his own to those already described. He elaborates upon his idea of constructing aqueducts and tunnels to bring water from Lake Scugog, Balsam Lake and Sturgeon Lake; and suggests also Lake Tice, west of Milton, and Lake Medad on the mountain north of Burlington. He appears, however, to have convinced no one but himself that either source had any possibilities. It is of interest here to note that a sewage disposal plant, then to be found only in a few great cities like London, England, was not seriously advocated, but it was merely hoped to keep sewage away from "the marsh

at the mouth of the Don" and from the Island, and to conduct it a mile or so out in the lake.[19]

The numerous suggestions advanced concerning the water supply, and the conflicting opinions of experts (to say nothing of the general public), resulted in the decision that James Mansergh, a noted English engineer, be retained to report upon the efficacy of the existing waterworks. He appears to have been very efficient, for between November 2nd and November 20th, 1895, he surveyed the entire system, visited all possible sources of supply in the vicinity, and assembled all the detailed information necessary for his report. Eliminating as impossible the Oak Ridge Lakes and the Don and Rouge proposals, he considered in detail Lake Simcoe and Lake Ontario. Chemical and biological examination showed definitely that the water in Lake Simcoe was inferior to that of Ontario. The report outlines in detail the advantages and disadvantages of obtaining water from each source, either by gravitation or pumping. While expressing an inclination towards Lake Simcoe, Mansergh advised the retention of the existing source at the Island.[20]

In 1898 a 72-inch steel intake pipe almost half a mile long was laid, and in 1905-8 a tunnel of concrete and brick construction was pushed nearly a mile into the lake. In 1910-11 a typhoid fever epidemic was blamed upon breakages in the intake pipe, and during repairs the water supply was obtained from basins and channels on the Island. A duplicate system near Scarborough Heights was advocated, but the Great War prevented its commencement and limited operations to the extension of the Island system. In 1913 a second intake pipe was placed in commission, and improvements were made in the connection with the filtration plant on the shore of the Island; and in 1916-18 a second filtration unit was constructed.

In recent years work has been progressing upon the duplicate system located off Scarborough Bluffs. An account of the work appeared in the Toronto *Mail and Empire* of June 20, 1933, and gives us some conception not only of

[19]See Beaty, *op. cit.*, pp. 38 *et seq.*, for the various proposals and a long discussion of their value.

[20]See James Mansergh: *The Water Supply of the City of Toronto, Canada*, 1898.

the plant itself but of the remarkable accuracy and precision characteristic of modern methods of surmounting engineering difficulties. The description affords an interesting comparison with waterworks projects of early times:

"With the laying of the last section of the pipeline and intake of Toronto's new duplicate water system by the Foundation Company of Ontario, Ltd., yesterday, one of the most hazardous and difficult feats of engineering ever undertaken in connection with city works came to a close, and a definite advance was made towards the completion of the entire system.

"The construction of the lake section of the system was begun a year ago last March by the Foundation Company, and since that time work has continued through fair weather and foul, as many as 200 men being employed upon it at various times. Not only had the bed of the lake to be prepared for the line, but the gigantic tubes of concrete and steel had to be built, carried to the scene of operations, and lowered into position with an accuracy, end to end, of amazing precision, some 50 and 60 feet below the surface of the lake.

"The intake, lowered yesterday, is actually the mouth of the pipeline which extends a mile and a half out from the shore off Scarboro Bluffs. Leading to the shore from the intake the pipeline of concrete and steel extends 4,100 feet, joining a tunnel extending from the shore, which takes the water to the filtration plant. Despite the fact the last section of the line, or the actual intake, weighed 183 tons, the *Foundation Scarborough*, derrick boat especially built for the job, lowered the section with ease in less than half an hour.

"The building of the *Foundation Scarborough* was but part of the enormous amount of preparation and equipment necessary for the handling of the contract. She has the highest lifting capacity, 300 tons, of any such derrick ship in the world, with the exception of naval ships, and to prepare her design R. E. Chadwick, president of the Foundation Company, visited Europe to study lifting gear in the Port of London, Hamburg, Bremerhaven and the Zuyder-Zee.

"Before actual laying of the pipeline began last July, a

trench was prepared along the bottom of the lake for the pipe to lie in. Difficulty lay in the necessity of the levelling of the trench and the carrying on of the work through all kinds of weather. In the meantime, pipes for the line were prepared. They were built in sections 100 feet in length, each weighing 250 tons. Each is actually a steel tube, lined and covered with concrete, the inside diameter or bore being eight feet.

"A casson, or steel cylinder, was sunk to a depth of 65 feet at the point where the pipeline begins, 8,000 feet from shore line. From the casson the pipeline was laid 4,100 feet out in the lake. The sections of the pipe were built in the Foundation Company's yards at the foot of Spadina Avenue, and were carried by the derrick boat seven miles down the shore to the point of operations. Part of the difficulty of this work came from the hazards of the weather. A corps of eight divers assisted in the actual laying of the line. As each section was lowered a diver at either end of the site of the section, under water, informed operators of the lifting equipment by telephone of the position of the section. Indicating the difficulty of the work, each section had to meet the adjoining one with an accuracy of a quarter of an inch. Divers then sealed sections together with concrete, . . . and the line will be covered over with earth to protect it from disturbances."[31]

In the meantime, pending the completion of this enormous piece of work, our water supply is obtained from two 72-inch intakes, is filtered and chlorinated at the plants, and distributed to all parts of the city. The average daily consumption is 118 gallons *per capita*, and 714 miles of water mains combine with 752 miles of sewers to supply the needs of the population in a manner vastly different form the primitive and restricted service of the first waterworks system. And how much better the water is in Toronto than elsewhere may readily be observed by a comparison with that of many inland communities who have to depend upon small rivers or mud-bottomed lakes for their supply.

[31]Toronto *Mail and Empire*, June 20, 1933.

CHAPTER X

From Candle to Electric Light

Jean Baptiste van Helmont (1577-1644) made the first important discoveries of the existence of gases other than air, noting that a heated crucible "did belch forth a wild spirit or breath"; and the name "gas" which he bestowed upon it is thought to be derived from the Flemish *geest* (ghost). But the first employment of gas for purposes of illumination occurred in a chemical laboratory in Louvain in 1784. In the seventeen-nineties an English engineer, William Murdoch, was experimenting in the use of gases from coal, peat, wood, and similar inflammable substances, and was able to illuminate his house and grounds by conducting gas through tinned iron and copper tubes. It was, however, the perseverance of a German scientist, Frederic Winzer (Winsor), that led to the ultimate adoption of gas distribution from a central source. He came to England in 1803, and his National Light and Heat Company, the first system of public gas lighting, was responsible for the illumination of the Pall Mall, London, in 1807.

Winsor's project met with but little enthusiasm at first. Sir Walter Scott wrote to a friend: "There is a madman proposing to light London with, what do you think? Why, with smoke!" Napoleon commented "*C'est une grande folie*", and his opinion was held by many people.[1] But the success of the first gas company in London resulted in the organisation of many others, and by 1829 there were over 200 gas works in Great Britain. In the United States, meanwhile, Baltimore had the first gas company in 1816, to be followed by Boston in 1821 and New York in 1823. In 1836 a committee of the Toronto City Council was formed to consider lighting the streets with gas supplied by a plant to be erected near the old Parliament Buildings at the foot of Berkeley Street. Nothing was done at this time, however,

[1] See *75 Years, 1848-1923*, compiled by Edward J. Tucker for the Consumers' Gas Company of Toronto.

and Albert Furniss introduced the use of gas in Canada when he established a company in Montreal in 1840. In the following year he extended his enterprise to Toronto.

The early inhabitants of York, however, used other means to supply themselves with light. The blazing fireplace itself was not infrequently sufficient, for most people went to bed early. There were no matches, and the red coals were carefully covered with ashes to keep them alive till morning. To strike a light, many were expert in rubbing together dried pieces of pine, or the flint of a gun against the blade of a knife. Tallow dips—candle wicks dipped in sheep's tallow—were long in common use, particularly in the rural districts, and there were moulds in which candles of regular size and shape could be more easily manufactured. It is probable that at first most candles used in York were imported, but the chandler soon became an important manufacturer, while many citizens engaged in candle-making and soap-making for their own households. Inns, homes, stores and public buildings were equipped with sconces in which to place candles, or were fitted with hanging lamps with oil-dipped tapers; while many an early traveller considered himself fortunate to be able to replace the rushlight torch by a primitive candle lantern. Sperm-whale oil was a luxury available only to the rich, for it was frequently 9s. a gallon. As an illustration of the type of lighting usually found in halls may be taken the first Methodist Chapel, on King Street, which was illuminated "by a liberal supply of tallow candles in eight old-fashioned sconces, one at either side of the pulpit, and three down each side of the building. A short intermission was always a necessity at each service while the lights were being snuffed."[z]

In 1839 steps were taken in Toronto to investigate the possibilities of the use of gas for purposes of illumination. A joint committee of citizens and aldermen discussed the matter in that year, and Messrs. Blachford and Cull, civil engineers, submitted specifications and estimates. Mr. Cull was sent to Montreal to inspect the plant in operation there,

[z] W. H. Pearson: *Recollections and Records of Toronto of Old*, 1914, p. 286.

and his diary[3] gives particulars of the cordial reception accorded him by Mr. Furniss and of the information he obtained. Tenders appear to have been requested by the Toronto City Council, and several persons, including Mr. Furniss, sent in estimates. An early example of the desire for public ownership is provided by the proceedings of Council at the time, but the Chairman of the Finance Committee temporarily set the minds of the members at rest when he assured them that there was no way to finance such a project except by loan. A public meeting was called, Mr. Furniss spoke, and the work was undertaken by a private company under his management.

In July, 1840, Thomas Gregg, architect, proposed that gas lamps of a style designed by him should be used in Toronto. He wrote as follows to the City Council:

"To the Right Honourable the Mayor, Aldermen and Common Council of the City of Toronto, this elevation of an obelisk, suggested to be erected at the junction of King and Yonge Streets, is most respectfully inscribed by their obedient humble servant, Thomas Gregg. It is proposed that this obelisk be lighted with oil until it is decided to introduce gas into the city. The requisite number of lamps similar to the above to be made and the lamp posts to be cast of a pattern as near as possible to agree in design with the obelisk."[4]

Mr. Gregg's proposition does not appear to have elicited much comment, and no action was taken. Albert Furniss and his associates, Joseph Masson and John Strang, secured the right "to break up, dig and trench so much and so many of the streets, squares and public places" of the city as should be necessary. The Toronto Gas-Light and Water Company was incorporated by these men in November, 1841, and their small plant at the foot of Princes Street was situated on land granted as an inducement and a mark of civic encouragement. An authority states that "the city was partially lighted in the winter of 1840", and that

[3]Cull's diary appears to have been published in 1839. It is quoted in [G. P. Ure]: *The Handbook of Toronto*. 1858. p. 159, a work which contains much historical material not available elsewhere.

[4]The original design of this lamp is in the Board of Works Office, City Hall.

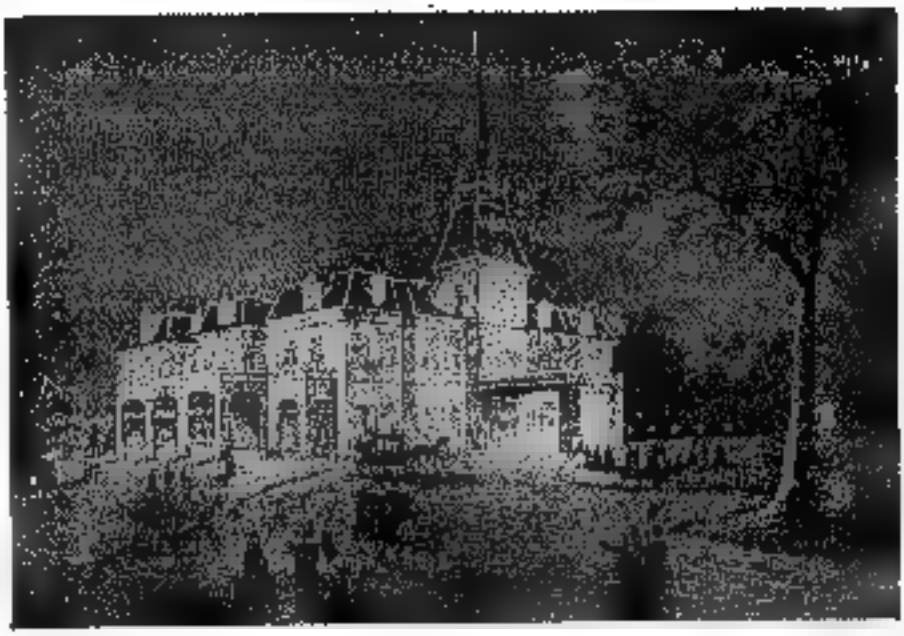
twelve lamp posts comprised the original street equipment.[5] Possibly an experimental illumination was arranged at that time, though references in the press a year later imply that gas lighting commenced then. In any case a considerable number of lamp posts were erected in December, 1841, on King Street and at a few main intersections elsewhere. It appears to have been originally planned to inaugurate street lighting on the 20th of the month, as the *Toronto Herald* stated:

"It is, we believe, Mr. Furniss' intention to commence lighting the City with Gas this Evening, when we hope merited success will attend the undertaking. Our good City, therefore, will present a brilliant display, the advent, we may term it, of that general illumination which of course will take place in honour of the birth of a Prince of Wales."[6]

The notable event was postponed until the 28th, however, for in the issue of Thursday, December 30th, we are informed that "on Tuesday evening the city streets and several of the stores were lighted with gas for the first time; and the novel and brilliant spectacle thereby presented was highly interesting. The whole arrangements are not yet complete—when they are we shall return to the subject: in the meantime we congratulate Mr. Furniss upon the success of his spirited undertaking".[7]

Thus did the first important substitute for the candle become available to Toronto citizens. "Illuminations" had been from York's earliest days the most notable means of celebrating victories, Royal marriages, and other occasions of the kind—even though the celebration was commonly from seven weeks to five months after the event. At first every window in town was expected to have a light—not particularly easy in the days of candles; but as fireworks became available they tended to replace some of the illumination. On January 4, 1842, Toronto was lighted in honour of the birth seven weeks earlier of an heir-apparent to the throne. Presumably the new gas lights aided in making the illuminations "most brilliant", though no direct reference to them is made in the press account.[8]

[5]Ure, *op. cit.*, p. 160.
[6]The *Toronto Herald*, December 20, 1841.
[7]*Ibid.*, December 30, 1841.
[8]The *Examiner*, January 5, 1842.



Canadian Illustrated News. M. Mathews.

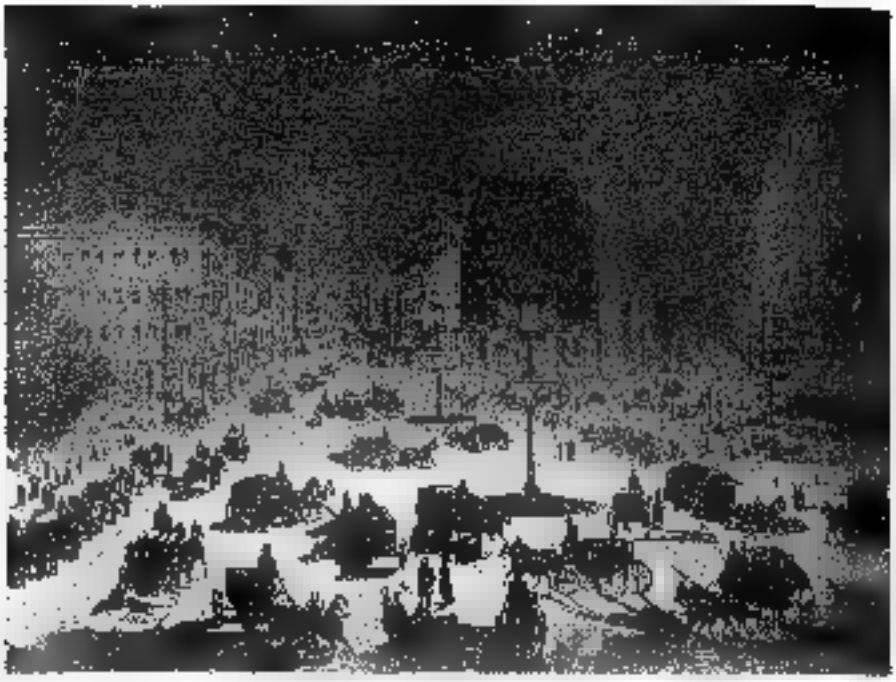
An Illumination

Government House on *fête* in 1872 in honour of the visit of Lord and Lady Dufferin.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

The Theatre Royal, 1836–40

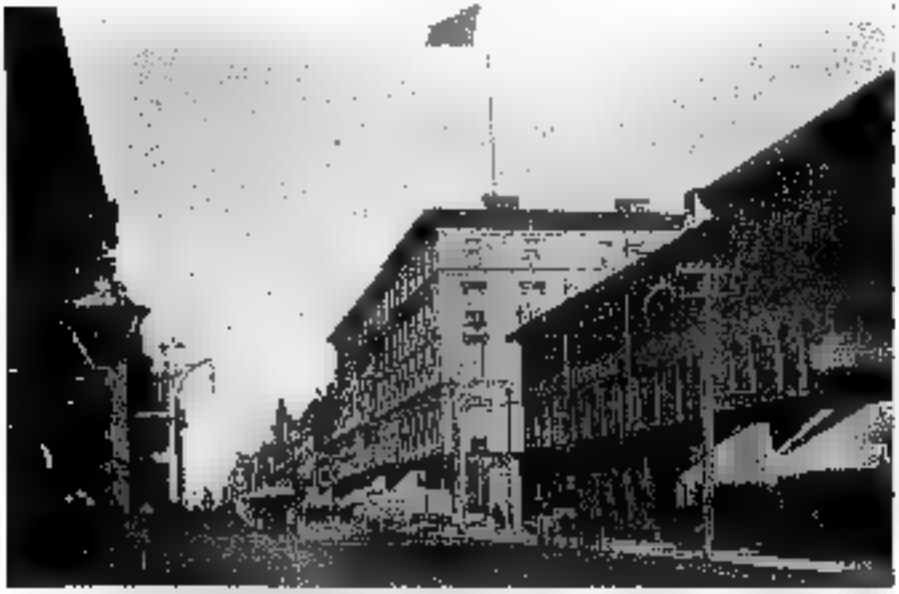
This theatre was situated just east of the Shakspeare Inn, on the north-east corner of King and York Streets, and was approached by a lane.



Canadian Illustrated News.

FIRST ELECTRIC STREET LIGHTS IN NEW YORK, DECEMBER 28, 1880

Twenty-two 2,000-candle power arc lamps were used to illuminate Broadway from 14th to 34th Street. The streets of Toronto were first lighted by electricity in 1884.



LOOKING EAST ON KING STREET IN THE EIGHTIES

Gas lamps, early electric arc lights and a street watering-cart may be seen. The Rossin House and the Revere Hotel are prominent at the corner of York.

For some years the use of gas in Toronto was largely restricted to the lighting of streets and a few of the larger stores and public buildings. The Court House was illuminated by gas in 1846, and the Gaol in 1850. In 1845 a 21-year agreement was executed by the Company and the City, by which the former agreed to light the streets of Toronto for £6 13s. 4d. per light per year, the Company to bear all expenses of erecting, cleaning and lighting the lamps. In 1848 the cost to city was £1,108 ($4,432), so that there were then about 166 lamps. By 1857 the number had increased to 828, the cost in that year for illuminating the streets, the City Hall and certain other municipal buildings being £5,135 12s. 6d.

Owing to the high cost of the gas provided by the original company but few citizens could afford to use it, and, since coal oil was not introduced until some fifteen or twenty years later, an early inhabitant recalled that "tallow candles were in general use for lighting. People had moulds and made their own candles—I have made them myself. They were sold by the pound by the grocer and chandler, some six to the pound and some nine. . . . The soap and candle manufacturers used to send around to the residences for grease, for which they exchanged candles or soap".[8] These conditions applied to a very considerable extent until the seventies and eighties, though by that time the use of gas and coal oil was quite general except among those whose poverty or inclinations prevented them from keeping up with the times. The uncertain supply and poor quality, as well as the high cost of the gas provided by the original producers, led in 1847 to the formation of the Consumers' Gas Company, which purchased the plant of the Furniss Company for £22,000. A better service and cheaper rates were soon available, and gas lighting was consequently rapidly extended to the homes of many citizens. In the late fifties the introduction of coal oil lamps provided a serious competitor. Their coming was forecast in the following news item appearing in the Toronto press in 1855:

"A new light produced from an oily liquid extracted from bituminous coal or native bitumen—rock oil or naphtha—has been tested lately in New York and is said

[8]Pearson, *op. cit.*, p. 121.

to afford a light exceeding the best gas in brilliancy and whiteness. A company in New York have erected a manufactory and will soon supply it in abundance. It is called Kerosene and is very cheap in its manufacture."[10]

The characteristics of early illumination by oil are well exemplified by Parson's Improved Coal Oil Lamp, which was advertised in 1858 under the caption "The Great Coal Oil Lamp!" People are assured that it is "perfectly safe, and cannot be blown up! There is no longer any reason for using Explosive Fluids—IT IS AT THE RISK OF YOUR LIFE—don't tamper with them!" The advertisers, Parson Brothers, "Coal Oil Lamp Manufacturers and Sole Agents for Canada for Pure Coal Oil", were located at No. 51, Boulton's Block, Front Street, and they announce that their lamp "produces a light of UNSURPASSED BRILLIANCY, and combines economy with simplicity—affording a better and purer light than any other known substance, at one-fourth the cost! Call and examine our LAMPS, and we pledge ourselves to demonstrate:

"1st. That no accident can occur by explosion!

"2nd. That they emit no offensive odour while burning!

"3rd. That they are very easily trimmed!

"4th. That they are easily regulated to give more or less light!

"5th. That they burn entirely free from smoke!

"6th. That it is the most economical light now in common use!

"This is not a random statement, but can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the most incredulous." And the advertisers guaranteed to cut anyone's annual lighting bill to one-third.[11]

The early history of the Consumers' Gas Company is coincident with advances in lighting in Toronto. In the forties, under the old Company, and for some years also under the new, gas was supplied either by meter or by flat rate contract. When supplied by contract some rather amusing stipulations were laid down:

"Lighting must not commence on any day until the sun

[10]The *British Colonist*, June 21, 1855.

[11]The advertisement is from the *Descriptive Catalogue of the Provincial Exhibition, 1858*, p. 4.

has set, and all lights must be extinguished each night within ten minutes after the hour contracted for. If otherwise they will be held as used for an additional hour each night, and for the quarter charged accordingly. In like manner, if the flame is allowed to burn higher than stipulated a corresponding price will be charged; and, if on any occasion more burners or jets are used than contracted for, the additional number will not only be charged but the offender will besides subject himself to a penalty provided for by the statute."[13]

While it at first appeared that the purchase of the Toronto Gas Company's works in operation would enable the Consumers' Gas Company to specialise upon improvements in the service, yet the old plant was soon out-of-date. The laying of larger and better pipes, and other improvements, resulted in cheaper and better gas; but the success achieved necessitated a better office, concerning which the Director's Report of 1851 said:

"Suffering inconvenience from not having a sufficiently roomy office, with a workshop attached thereto, and not finding a house that answered the purpose in a proper situation, the Directors determined upon building one for the use of the Company, which is now in course of erection in Toronto Street, where they will have their board-room, office, show-room and workshop, with a residence for the manager above; the latter they consider of importance, that the Consumers and others should know where to apply in case of any emergency."[13]

The limited and rather crude plant purchased from Mr. Furniss soon proved entirely inadequate in the manufacturing division also, and in 1855 the Company erected new works on another site. The Directors' report states that "these works are considered by all who have examined them to be equal, if not superior, to any on the continent, and are capable of still further extension when required, the plan of the works having been laid out with a view of supplying a population of over 100,000."[14]

[13]Quoted in Pearson, *op. cit.*, pp. 203-4.

[13]*75 Years, 1848-1923*, p. 61.

[14]Quoted in Pearson, *op. cit.*, pp. 204-6. A full description of the new plant is given in Ure, *op. cit.*, pp. 227-8.

In 1854 there was a manager and two clerks in the office of the Consumers' Gas Company, as well as four gas-fitters, about twelve main and service pipe layers, and some twenty men at the works. In 1913 the employees of the Company numbered 1,417, but twenty years later there were only 1,300. The 300 consumers of 1848 gradually increased as the years passed. In 1854 there were 924 meters in use, in 1913 the total was 91,284, and in 1933 there were 172,528; while from $5 per thousand cubic feet in 1848, and but half that charge in 1854, the cost of gas has been gradually reduced until it is now [redacted] cents per thousand—ten cents higher, however, than it was in 1913.[13] For many years, too, a gas jet produced a light of but ten or twelve candle power, but by the eighteen-eighties the intensity had been increased about 50%. There are now in Toronto very few users of gas for illumination.

In 1853 the first extension of service beyond the city limits took place when pipes were laid to the village of Yorkville, above the Bloor-Yonge intersection. So numerous were the applications for gas in that year that the Company could not keep pace with the demand, and attempts were made to bring an additional gas-fitter from England. In 1861, however, the number of consumers diminished owing to an attempt to limit the supply of intoxicating liquors. Toronto had for many years been notorious for the number of its taverns and beer shops; but in 1861 the City Council sought to remedy the condition, for we find in the Directors' report that the falling off in consumers had been "occasioned principally by a reduction of tavern licenses issued by the city in January last, thereby compelling many tavern-keepers to close their doors".[14] In the following year the price of gas was reduced from $3 to $2.50 per M in the hope that the use of coal oil, which was noticeably interfering with the consumption of gas, would be to some extent lessened; but in 1863 the Company reverted to the former rate upon finding that the reduction had not caused an increase in consumption.

When the streets of the city were first lighted with gas

[13]For several items of information concerning the Consumers' Gas Company the writer is indebted to Edward J. Tucker, Esq., Assistant General Manager and Secretary.

[14]*75 Years, 1848-1923*, p. 65.

on December 28, 1841, only ten other cities on the American continent had preceded Toronto in this respect. About 100 gas lamps provided the first equipment, but by September 30, 1847, there were 164 street lights. With the growth of the city these increased to 2,557 in 1885. In the intervening years, however, some interesting developments occurred. In addition to the introduction of coal oil for illuminating purposes, the Company was worried by civic economy in 1861. The country was experiencing a severe depression at the time, and the City Council decided to discontinue the lighting of about one-half the street lamps; furthermore, probably in imitation of the policy adopted for the lighting of London, England, a century earlier, it was determined to have the remainder extinguished for eight nights per month during the time of moonlight! It is to be hoped that there were not many cloudy nights during this period of intense economy.

Prior developments in arc lighting, and the invention by Thomas Edison of the incandescent light in 1879, placed electricity definitely in the field of illumination, and in that year the Consumers' Gas Company obtained the power to use and sell electric, galvanic or other artificial light, provided that permission was obtained from the city of Toronto. In 1889 the Company sought the right to wire the streets, but their request was refused by the City Council.

That the competition of electricity was not felt more seriously by gas companies is due to the development of heating and cooking with gas, a department which electricity has entered only recently. As the use of gas for illumination was gradually superseded by electric lighting, there was a coincident increase in the employment of gas for these related purposes, commencing in Toronto in 1879, a few years prior to the inauguration of electric lighting as a public utility. The high cost of imported gas stoves and appliances exerted a deterrent effect at first, but in 1881 the price was greatly reduced by local manufacturers, and consequently the consumption of gas greatly increased year by year thereafter. In many old homes where gas jets had long been installed the wiring for electric lights was delayed, but before the closing years of the century the use of gas for purposes of illumination became old-fashioned, and

houses, stores, churches and other buildings soon came to be lighted by electricity as a matter of course.

For some years the use of electricity for illumination was not in the form of the incandescent bulb but by arc lamps. The inauguration of electric lighting in Toronto was under interesting auspices. The management of McConkey's Restaurant, long the best-known in the city, arranged in 1879 to have two arc lamps exhibited in their establishment at 145 Yonge Street, on the east side between Adelaide and Richmond Streets. Free ice cream was served until 9 p.m. to those who came to see the exhibition, and Mr. J. Manser recalls that he saw the lights on this occasion and also received the free refreshment.[17]

In May, 1881, R. H. Lunt applied to the City Council for permission to inaugurate electric lighting on the streets of Toronto. He was granted the right to use temporarily the fire-alarm poles on several of the principal streets in order to exhibit the new type of illumination. There was also in that year an experimental installation in the Golden Lion dry goods store on King Street, where the King Edward Hotel now stands; and one Sperry of Chicago had four arc lights at the corner of King and Yonge Streets, in an effort to obtain the contract for lighting city streets. On October 10th Alderman Hallam, seconded by Alderman Ryan, moved that "whereas the electric light for the illumination of public thoroughfares has passed beyond the region of experiment and is now an accomplished fact, being adopted in London, Liverpool, Edinburgh, and the large cities and towns on the continent, and is designed at no distant period to entirely supersede coal gas as a street illuminator, be it resolved that this Council take means as early as possible to have the centre of the City lit up with electric light, and that a Committee be appointed and named by His Worship the Mayor to get all the information necessary as to the cost of construction and maintenance, and that the Council keep the same under their control, and that the Committee report to this Council at an early date". The motion carried.[18]

[17]Reminiscences of J. Manser. For this interesting item, as well as for considerable other information concerning early electric lighting in Toronto, the writer is indebted to H. C. Powell, Esq., Chief Statistician of the Toronto Hydro-Electric System.

[18]Minutes of the City Council, October 10, 1881.

In 1882 the Industrial Exhibition showed the city the way by arranging for an installation of electric lights by the Fuller Electric Light Company of New York and the Ball Company of London. The buildings and grounds were in a state of unprecedented illumination, and the show continued each evening until 10 p.m. instead of closing at sundown as had always been the practice prior to that time.

Messrs. J. J. Wright and Howard Blizard were early operators of electric generators in Toronto, and Wright was in control of the use in Canada of some of the most important electrical patents. In the early eighties these men were working in Wright's shop in the basement of the Firstbrook Box Factory on King Street, east of Sherbourne; and later their generators were situated in a lane off Yonge Street, near King. Mr. Wright, born in England in 1850, was among the foremost early workers in the electrical field. In a biographical notice it is recorded that he was "in the United States at the time of the Centennial Exhibition of 1876, at which time electricity was beginning to attract attention as a possible means of giving light. He there became acquainted with Prof. Thomson, who was then occupying the Chair of Chemistry in the High School in Philadelphia, Pa., at which time he, in conjunction with Prof. Houston of the same school, was commencing experiments which have led up to the brilliant results of to-day. Mr. Wright built all the machinery during these experiments; he also built and put up the first electric street lamp on the continent of America, which was placed on the corner of 21st Street and Washington Ave. in the year 1879. He was amongst the first to handle electric light wires in the construction of underground service".[18]

After some years of residence alternately in Philadelphia and Toronto, Mr. Wright located permanently in the latter city in the spring of 1883, and became the manager of the Toronto Electric Light Company, which grew out of the small plant of C. J. Van Depoele of Chicago, promoter of electric railways and, with Wright, the operator of the line inaugurated at the Industrial Exhibitions of 1883-4.[19] In

[18]*Canadian Electrical News and Steam Engineering Journal*, Vol. I, No. I, p. 1, January, 1891.

[19]For a full account see Chapter VIII, pp. 135-8.

1882 his plant was in the old Bolt Works, corner of Sherbourne and Front Street, and in the following year the machines were removed to the Gerrard Heintzman Company building on Sherbourne Street, where the Toronto Electric Light Company assumed control of them. Such were the beginnings of the generation of electrical power in Toronto.

In 1883, when the Toronto Electric Light Company was instituted and was granted the right to place poles on the streets, there were 2419 gas lamps in the city, including 88 in Queen's Park. The erection of poles and other apparatus in that year appears to have been regarded as temporary and experimental, and it was stipulated that any other company might use the poles on payment of a proportion of their cost. The territory in which poles and wires might be erected was bounded by the Esplanade, Sherbourne, Carlton, Beverley and John Streets. Like old customs, out-of-date utilities die hard, and an attempt was made by the Gas Company in 1883 to meet the challenge of electric lights. The *Globe* carried the following news item on September 22nd of that year:

"Last evening the Consumers' Gas Company gave an exhibition on King Street between Yonge and York Streets, of 14 improved street lamps and burners, known as the Whitehall & Lambeth lanterns, manufactured by William Sugg, the well-known inventor of London, England. These lamps, which are of 100 candle effective lighting power, are similar to the lamps erected by Mr. Sugg on Charing Cross, Whitehall Place, and Trafalgar Square in London, England. The Gas Company have erected them with the view of meeting the requirements by the city for high candle-power lamps, being ten times that of the street lamps now in use in Toronto. The management of the Company say they feel satisfied that they can supply a larger amount of effective lighting for a less sum than can be obtained by the electric light. These lamps, they affirm, have superseded the electric light in the city of London."[21]

In the spring of 1884 the City Council adopted the recommendation of the Committee on Fire and Gas "that the Toronto Electric Light Company and the Canadian Electric Light and Manufacturing Company be requested

[21] The *Globe*, September 22, 1883.

to put up 25 lights each, to be tested for a period of [redacted] months, the company not making the best showing to the satisfaction of the Corporation to withdraw from the contract. The amount to be paid to both companies to be 62c. per light per night. The test to be commenced on or before May 15th next".[22] The Toronto Electric Light Company eventually received the contract, and the fifty 2,000-candle-power lamps were placed chiefly at street corners. The *Globe* was immediately suspicious, owing to the high price which was being paid for the new lighting. Successive editorials appeared on "The Electric Light Job", the editor claiming that the cost was three times that of the gas lamps displaced, and suggesting that the price should be less than 40 cents per light per night.[23]

These early electric lights were large sputtering arc lamps—the kind that the light-keeper visited periodically in order to renew the carbons (the boys and girls were usually on hand to pick up the used "pencils"). John J. Wright was the principal maker of arc carbons, and he used to copper-plate them at Fred Divers' electroplating plant, 14 King Street East. Two lamps were in the Council Chamber and their success may, perhaps, be gauged by Alderman Moore's motion that, "as the two electric lights in the Council Chamber are a nuisance, they be removed forthwith". The same alderman moved that immediate steps be taken to terminate the use of electricity in Toronto, and to remove all wires and poles from the streets. No such reactionary policy turned back the wheels of progress, however. Gas lamps immediately began to be displaced. Early in January, 1885, it was reported to the Council that 91 electric lights had been erected since May 1, 1884, and that 294 gas lamps had been discontinued. The annual cost per gas lamp had been $22.75, while the first electric lights entailed a yearly expenditure of $226.40. Mr. Howard Blizard recalled[24] in that connection that, if a light was out, a policeman would disconnect it and the Company would not receive its [redacted] cents! The rate was gradually reduced until in 1906 it was but $69.35 per light per year.

[22]Minutes of the City Council, April 15, 1884.

[23]See the *Globe*, September 2, 1884, *et seq.*

[24]Mr. Blizard retired from the Toronto Hydro-Electric System on December 31, 1933.

The use of gas for street lighting long persisted, however. In Queen's Park, and in certain downtown areas where wires were not desired, gas lamps remained; but gradually they were relegated to small back streets and lanes, from which the last finally disappeared in 1911—as did the remaining electric arc lights.

The Toronto Incandescent Company was established in 1889. Prior to that date several Toronto hotels and steamships had steam-driven plants of their own, and were served by incandescent lighting in emulation of the first plant of the kind—that inaugurated by Thomas Edison in New York in September, 1882. Short-lived lamps and the high cost of the inadequate wiring of the times made early incandescent lighting a costly luxury, and there was at first no thought of extending the service to the streets of Toronto. In 1896 the Toronto Incandescent Company was absorbed by the Toronto Electric Light Company, but more than ten years passed before there was any intention of superseding the street arc lights. In 1907 lines were installed to bring power from the Falls of Niagara, and in 1910 a start was made in the use of incandescent lights in the parks and streets of Toronto, 22,000 such lamps being installed by 1911. There are at present (1934) 574.7 miles of paved streets in the city, and 551 miles are lighted by electricity; and there are also 31 miles of lights in parks, islands, etc. The lamps on residential streets are 100-watt, and on main streets 300- and 500-watt. Operating on the multiple series circuit, some 58,095 bulbs are fixed in cast iron brackets 9½ feet from the ground, placed on cement poles one hundred feet apart. While we have no record of the hiring of torch-bearers in early Toronto, as was long customary in European cities, the darkness of pre-gas days must have been most inconvenient for nocturnal travellers; and even the hundred gas lamps of the eighteen-forties provided street lighting scarcely comparable in any respect to the illumination made possible by Edison's great invention.

CHAPTER XI

Fire-Fighters of Old

For many years after the founding of the town in 1793 practically all of the buildings of York were of wood. In the early years of the new century there were two brick buildings—Quetton St. George's general store and the two wings of the Government Buildings. Log buildings predominated, though frame clap-board houses were occasionally found. Even the residence of the Lieutenant-Governor is described as "likewise formed of wood, in the figure of a half square, of one storey in height, with galleries in the centre. It is sufficiently commodious for the present state of the province, and is erected upon a bank of the lake, near the mouth of Toronto Bay."[1]

The first fire of which we have any record occurred on January 26, 1797, when "the dwelling-house of his Honour the Administrator, lately built at York, and in considerable forwardness, took fire by some accident and was entirely consumed."[2] This house, in which the Hon. Peter Russell was to live, was located on the north side of Palace (Front) Street, near Princes Street. The fire was, of course, by no means the first in York, for conflagrations were common in the days of wooden buildings. Consequently laws were passed both by the Provincial Government and the Magistrates in an attempt to lessen the possibilities of devastation by fire.

In 1800 it was ordered, in pursuance of an Act of the Legislature entitled "An Act to Guard against Accidents by Fire", that "every housekeeper in the Town of York shall, on or before the first day of October next ensuing, provide and keep TWO BUCKETS for carrying water when any house shall happen to be on fire, which buckets shall be made either of wood, leather or canvas, painted on the outside and covered with pitch on the inside, and shall hold at least two gallons of water. And the said buckets shall be marked with the Christian and surname of the

[1]George Heriot: *Travels through the Canadas*, 1807, p. 138.
[2]*Upper Canada Gazette*, February 8, 1797.

housekeeper to whose house they belong, and shall not be used for any other purpose than the extinguishing of fires". The regulation was also adopted that every householder "shall keep two ladders, the one to reach from the ground to the eaves of the house, and the other to be properly secured and fixed with hooks or bolts on the roof near the chimney".[3] In Lieutenant Stretton's water-colour of the York Barracks may be seen these ladders on the roofs of the log buildings, and there are still people living who can recall seeing decayed ladders on early Toronto structures.

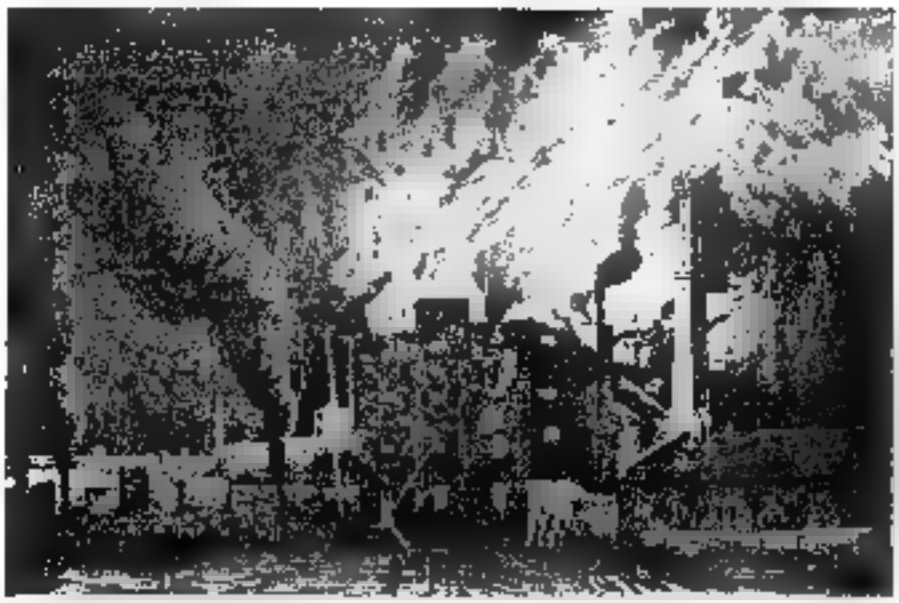
In 1802 the Hon. Peter Russell presented a fire-engine to the town; whereupon the citizens, to show their gratitude, erected a fire hall by subscription "for the preservation of the engine; and such measures will be immediately adopted as are best calculated to procure the most easy access to the engine at all hours of the day and night".[4] For many years fire-fighting remained everybody's business, buckets of water being carried from the Bay or the nearest cistern or well to the scene of the conflagration. In 1812 the stacking of hay was forbidden in York, presumably to lessen the fire hazard. In the following year the Americans are said to have carried away a fire-engine belonging to York, possibly the one presented by Governor Russell, or a military engine used at the barracks.

In 1815 there was a fire in the Rev. John Strachan's residence, and included among those who aided in saving his property were members of the garrison, and several strangers who were fortunate enough to be denominated "respectable" in the card of thanks:

"Card—Dr. Strachan begs leave to return his thanks to the inhabitants of York, and also to the military, and several respectable strangers, for their prompt assistance last Sunday in first endeavouring to extinguish the fire which broke forth at his house, and in afterwards saving his property."[5]

Chapter II of the Statutes of Upper Canada, 1817, provided for the establishment of a police in York, Sandwich and Amherstburg, and gave authority to the magistrates to

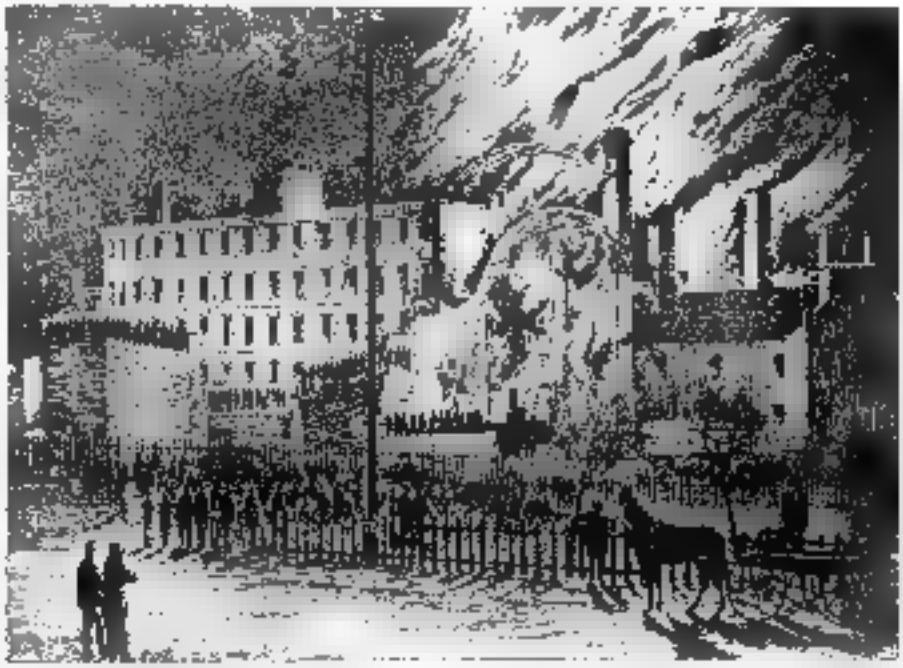
[3] *Ibid.*, April 12, 1800.
[4] *Ibid.*, December 18, 1802.
[5] *Ibid.*, March 11, 1815.



Canadian Illustrated News.

THE BURNING OF BOULTON'S MILL, NOVEMBER 18, 1870

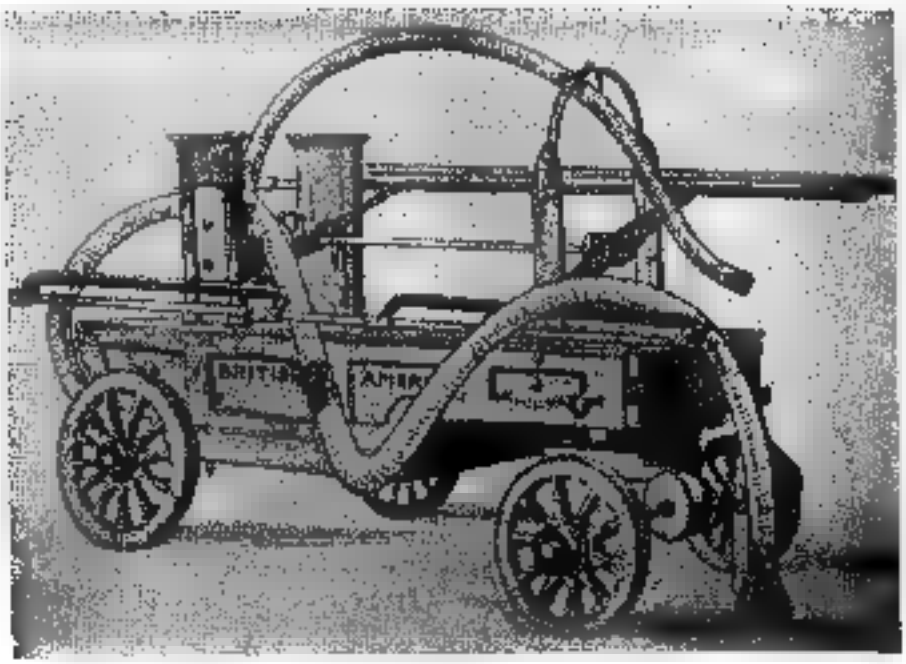
J. H. Boulton's Grist Mill was located at the corner of Bay Street and the Esplanade.



Canadian Illustrated News. W. Armstrong.

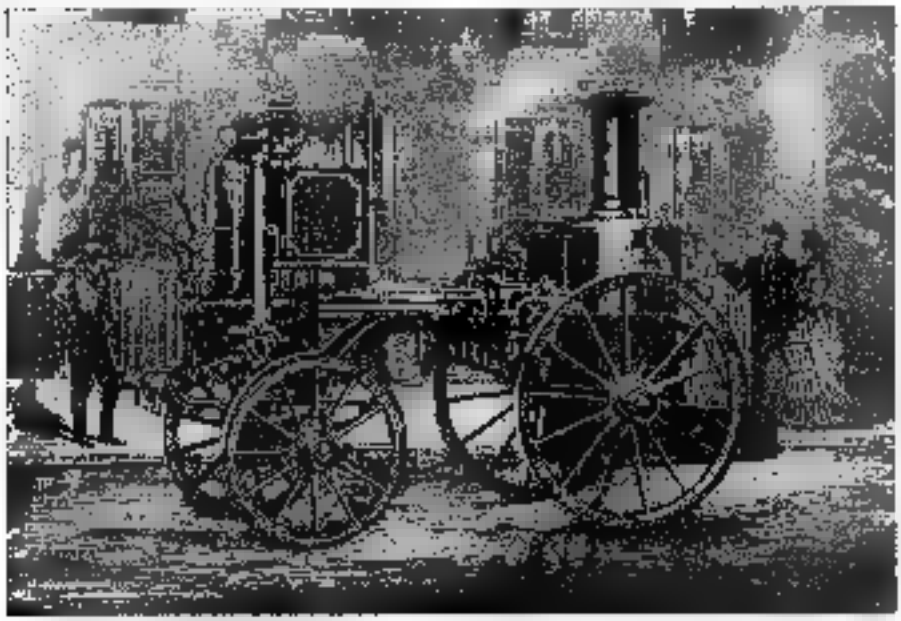
THE BURNING OF CLEMENT'S SASH FACTORY, DECEMBER 17, 1870

The building was situated on Front Street, opposite the Queen's Hotel, and its destruction was due to an incendiary.



THE BRITISH AMERICA, 1837

A "Montreal fore-and-aft" machine, much more powerful than the earlier "goose-neck" fire-engines. The *British America* was effectively used when Peter Matthews' men set fire to the Don Bridge in December, 1837.



Canadian Illustrated News.

A STEAM FIRE-ENGINE OF THE SEVENTIES

The introduction of steam fire-engines put an end to the old hand-pumpers, and the volunteer Fire Brigade did not long survive.

raise by assessment a sum not exceeding £100 annually for the purchase of fire-engines, buckets, etc. Pursuant to this Act the town of York issued a series of regulations, the violation of which led to the imposition of fines. Prominent among these were laws having as their object the prevention of fires. The various regulations were printed in 1823 at the direction of S. Heward, Clerk of the Peace.[9] They were amended at the General Sessions in June of that year, but it may be assumed that they were substantially the same in 1817.

To facilitate putting out fires in private homes it was stipulated that "every inhabited Dwelling-house shall, by the occupants of the same, be provided with one good and serviceable Ladder, long enough to reach from the ground raised, so as to give ready access to the roof; and two or more roof ladders suspended by iron fastenings from the ridge of the Roof, and reaching to the Eaves, and, where the Chimney or Chimneys rise more than three feet from the Roof, a small Ladder to rest against each Chimney, of sufficient length to reach the top of it. . . . That every Chimney or Flue in which a Fire is commonly made shall from the first day of November to the first of April, in each and every year, be swept under the direction of the Inspector of Chimneys at least once in every four weeks; and when the same are used daily, as in kitchens and manufactories, once in every year in the same manner. . . . Each and every owner, tenant or occupier of a Dwelling-house shall provide the said House with two or three good and serviceable leathern buckets, capable of containing three gallons each, which shall be hung up and exposed to view in the most convenient place nearest the front entrance of the said House, to be in readiness in the extinguishing of Fire". Persons disobeying any of the regulations were subject to fines of from ten to forty shillings.

In order to have someone in charge during fires, six "discreet and active persons", two from each ward, were appointed Firewardens, and their duties were "to command and enforce, with the help of Constables and other Peace

[9] *Regulations for the Police of the Town of York, in the Home District, Made and Ordained in Adjourned Quarter Sessions, May 14th, 1817—Revised and Amended in Adjourned General Sessions, June 21st, 1823.*

Officers, the aid and assistance of all the male inhabitants of the Town between the years of 16 and 60; and to preserve, as far as possible, order, regularity and despatch in the lines for the supply of water; and to appoint and establish guards for the preservation of furniture and other effects from injury and pillage". To prevent anyone from pleading ignorance of the Firewardens' identity, and so attempting to disobey orders, it was stipulated that each Firewarden should wear as a distinguishing badge of authority "a white handkerchief tied on the left arm below the elbow". Refusal to obey instructions subjected offenders to fines of twenty to forty shillings. The only bell in the town at that time was in St. James' Church, and the alarm of fire was sounded by ringing this bell and by shouting, at first solo and then in concert, until a large number had congregated. As speedily as possible a double row of citizens was formed from the burning building to the Bay, or the nearest cistern or pump, and along one line passed buckets of water, while the empties returned along the other. Prior to the formation of the first Fire Company an old pump, hauled to fires on a wagon, was worked by eight men, and such water as the bucket brigade and the carters provided was projected into the flames.

In 1818 a fire-engine costing £150 was ordered from London, England. In 1823, three years prior to the formation of the first organised fire brigade in York, thirty-eight citizens offered to serve as volunteer firemen, and among those who enrolled were representatives of the Jarvis, Small, Gamble, Ridout, McNab, Sullivan and other prominent families. Two years later cash prizes were offered to carters who earliest appeared with puncheons of water at fires, and this inducement was continued for over a quarter of a century. Among the members of the brigade organised in 1826 were, as before, "some of the most respectable merchants and tradesmen of the town".[7] There were Fire-Engine and Hook-and-Ladder companies, each with a full quota of officers, and the first captain of the brigade was Thomas Carfrae, Jnr. The engine purchased at the time was the *York*, and when worked by sixteen men it could

[7] [W. L. Mackenzie's] *New Almanack for the Canadian True Blues*, 1834, p. 11.

project a ¾-inch stream of water a distance of 140 feet. The engine-house of the original fire department was a two-storey brick building which stood on the west side of Church Street, between Court and Adelaide Streets. The *U. E. Loyalist* makes the following comment concerning the inauguration of the fire company:

"We are happy to hear a number of spirited individuals are taking the necessary steps for forming themselves into a fire company, under the provisions of an act passed during the last session of Parliament. The necessity of such a company having been severely felt on former occasions, much praise is due to those who came forward to enroll themselves as the protectors of the property of their fellow-townsmen when visited by the most dreadful of all calamities."[8]

In the same issue some space is devoted to impressing upon its readers that "too much attention cannot be paid by the police of the town in their regulations for the prevention of fires, and particularly where the buildings are of wood. At the commencement of the winter season more especially, when stoves are put up, the greatest attention is necessary in the manner in which they are placed, and the observance of regulations which relate to them should be strictly enforced. In carrying such regulations into due effect much depends on the efficiency of the police officer. In the event of fire breaking out, the offer of a premium to the person who shall bring the first puncheon of water has been found of infinite service".[9]

Regulations similar to those adopted in 1817 were in force in 1827, except that in that year they were amended to provide for the appointment of fifteen firewardens instead of six. When the town of York became the city of Toronto in 1834 a new set of regulations came into force, and the number of firewardens was increased to twenty-five, —five in each of the five wards which then composed the city. Instead of the former white handkerchief, each firewarden was to "have in his hand a baton or short staff with the words FIRE WARDEN painted thereon", and so accoutred he was to be master of ceremonies at all conflagrations.

[8] *U. E. Loyalist*, June 24, 1826. [9] *Ibid.*

The law of 1834 contains very detailed regulations[10] concerning stoves and stovepipes, ashes and ash-pans. The passing of pipes through floors, ceilings and partitions, and the securing of them to beams by wire, chain or iron hoop, are similarly regulated. Stoves must be at least twenty inches from partitions, and they must be furnished with metal ash-pans, which are to be at least four inches off the floor. Unused pipe-holes must be covered "with a tin or sheet-iron stopper".

The days when matches were uncommon, and when it was not easy to strike a light, are recalled by the regulation that "no person shall carry through any square, street or lane of the city, or through any yard, any lighted coals or wood, unless in a covered vessel made of iron or other safe material". To store ashes inside or outside the home a "safe receptacle" must be provided, and anyone not using one of such a type was subject to fine.

The burning of hay, straw, chips, shavings or other combustible materials shall take place only "on a damp day, when there is no wind; and all such fires shall be completely extinguished before seven o'clock in the morning from the first day of May to the last day of October, and before nine o'clock in the morning from the first day of November to the end of April, and the ashes or rubbish shall be removed without delay".

With reference to livery or other stables the law stipulated that no one shall keep or allow to be carried a lighted candle or lamp unless "enclosed in a lantern so constructed as to emit the light and prevent its communicating fire to any combustible materials". Smokers were similarly warned that anyone "who shall smoke or have in his or her possession any lighted pipe or cigar in any workshop wherein are combustible materials, or in any stable or barn, shall forfeit and pay for each and every offence the sum of five shillings".

In addition to the former regulation compelling homeowners to have ladders, there was one added stating that all buildings two or more storeys high which were thereafter erected must have "a scuttle on the roof, and a suitable stairway or ladder leading to the same from the

[10]See *Upper Canada Gazette*, May 22, 1834.

inside". Another regulation prohibited the setting off of any "gunpowder, squib, rocket, or any other fireworks, or to fire any firearms in any part of the city". No mention is made of the exemption from this rule of public holidays and similar celebrations, but it may be assumed that the rigour of the law was relaxed on such occasions.

The appointment of one or more fire inspectors was also provided for by this Act, and their duties were "to examine carefully at least once in every month every house, store or building, and to ascertain and note any violations of any of the preceding sections, and to report the same to the Mayor or any of the Aldermen".

As in earlier regulations, the periodic sweeping of flues and chimneys was ordered, and fines were to be levied against any persons refusing a visit of the fire inspector every six weeks between November 1st and April 1st. Peculiarly enough, there was a clause stating that a person need not have his chimney swept if he did not wish, provided that he was willing to pay 3d. to the inspector, and provided also that if a fire occurred in his home within the ensuing six weeks the tenant would be subject to a 40-shilling fine—eight times the penalty for a mere refusal. Even if the inspector swept the flue, however, the tenant was still subject to a 25-shilling fine if a fire occurred, so they got him one way or another no matter what course he followed!

The inauguration of the city of Toronto led to numerous other regulations calculated to reduce the fire hazard. A report in 1834 suggested that it would be preferable if new buildings should be constructed of brick or stone; but if a series of wooden structures were erected the contractor should, if possible, make the walls between them of brick. Another suggestion was that persons leasing or selling lots might aid in fire prevention if they preferred tenants who would build of brick or stone. In the first year of the city the total expenditure for fire-fighting, including the payment of carters for hauling water, amounted to the modest sum of £17 15s. 5½d.

In 1834 a number of regulations concerning the existing fire companies were also made. In the matter of organisation it was stipulated that "the different engine and hook-

and-ladder fire companies shall be under the control and direction of a captain, first and second lieutenant, secretary and treasurer". Those in charge were expected to have all apparatus in good condition at all times so that they could proceed immediately to every fire; though, of course, it must be understood that these volunteer firemen were on duty only on occasions of fire, and at such other times after working hours as they wished to practise or parade. The only full-time worker appears to have been a man to wash, clean and oil the engines and apparatus, and it is stated that he "will receive for such services out of the funds of the city the sum of twenty-five pounds annually, to be paid in quarterly payments by the chamberlain of the city".

An important provision in the regulations of early volunteer fire companies, and what may be considered as their only remuneration or reward, was that each member was exempted "from militia duty in time of peace, from serving as a juryman or constable, and from all other parish or city offices". There was a Common Council in the firemen's organisation, and, in addition to being the ruling body, its members were distinguished at fires by "a white sash, to pass over the right shoulder and under the left arm". The members of this council, as well as the firewardens and the officers of the various fire companies were empowered to demand obedience from all citizens who might be present at fires.

The all-important matter was to secure sufficient water, and the conduct of carters was therefore regulated very minutely. There was no waterworks system, and the deficiency of the water supply allowed many a fire to threaten the whole town, so in 1834 it was stipulated—and similar rules had for some years been in force—that "every licensed carter in the city shall at all times provide himself with a good and sufficient puncheon of water for the purpose of conveying to fires; and on the alarm of fire being given he shall forthwith procure and proceed with a puncheon of water to the place of fire, and shall continue to actively provide water under the direction of, and until discharged by the officers in command of the engines, under a penalty of twenty shillings. To insure the utmost promptitude in furnishing water at fires the following premiums shall be

awarded to licensed carters or others: for the first puncheon of water brought to the fire and furnished to any of the engines, the sum of £1 5s. 0d.; for the second, 15s.; for the third, 10s.; for the fourth, 5s.; and for each puncheon afterwards furnished, £0 1s. 0d."

It was essential for carters to exercise some care in speeding over the rough roads of "Muddy York", for William Lyon Mackenzie and his Aldermen inserted the wise proviso that "no carter shall be entitled to any premiums whose puncheon is not at least three-fourths full when delivered to the engine." Canvas covers for their barrels were found valuable by some carters in meeting this regulation. That the conduct of citizens at fires was not always above criticism may be seen from the regulation that "it shall be the duty of the High Bailiff or his deputy, as soon as possible after every fire, to report to the sitting magistrate any person or persons who may have been imprisoned for offences committed thereat".[11]

In 1834 the Church Street fire hall was divided into three sections, No. 1 Engine Company occupying the south portion, No. [illegible] the centre, and the Hook-and-Ladder Company the northern part. At the south-west corner was the bell tower, and the bell was rung by a rope in the lower portion of the building. At the rear was a long one-storey shed for drying hose. Fifty men, two engines and 750 feet of hose made up the equipment of the two engine companies in the closing year of the town of York; while the Hook-and-Ladder Company, formed in April, 1831, was sixty strong. In 1835 a second hook-and-ladder company was organised, and the city voted £55 for the purchase of uniforms.

Number 2 Engine Company resulted from the purchase by public subscription of a second engine, and in 1837 the British American Life and Fire Assurance Company donated a third, which went by the name *British America*. In 1839-40 a hall was built at the south-east corner of Bay and Temperance Streets for this engine. It was known as a "Montreal fore-and-aft" machine, and a full crew of twelve to fifteen men at each brake were in charge of its operation. This engine was much more powerful than the "piano" or "goose-neck" machine, which could accommodate only seven

[11] *Ibid.*

or eight men at each brake. No. 2 Company's engine was of the latter type, the name resulting from the fact that the hose was attached to a pipe curved like the neck of a goose, and rising about three feet above the deck of the machine. A cistern or water tank with a capacity of four or five puncheons was attached to the rear of the engine, and when it was in use a suction hose was fastened to a valve at the rear of the machine and the other end put in the cistern.

Competitions among volunteer fire brigades were frequently international in scope, and the chief stress was laid upon speed in reaching fires and in distance to which water could be projected from the hose by efficient working of the engines. On September 4, 1837, No. 3 Company was pleased to find during a practice that the *British America* could throw water 140 feet horizontally. In December of the same year this Company was particularly prominent during the scare that Toronto experienced when William Lyon Mackenzie and his "Patriots" gathered at Montgomery's Tavern on Yonge Street and seriously threatened to capture the city. On December 7th the fire brigade met for the purpose of forming a volunteer company to aid in resisting the invaders. A section was also formed to patrol the streets at night and keep order during the Rebellion, and it carried on until superseded by a body of 120 men enlisted at the suggestion of the Mayor. When Peter Matthews' men set fire to the Don Bridge and adjacent buildings on Thursday, December 7, 1837, the members of the British America played a notable part:

"With great spirit the members of the company started for the scene of action, most of them with a musket in one hand and the drag rope in the other; but ere their arrival at the building on fire the enemy had disappeared, not even waiting to see us, much less to fight, the heavy rumbling of the engine and cistern having frightened them into the belief that the cannon was on the track. On our arrival at the bridge our gallant captain ordered the engine into operation, but upon reconnoitring it was found the buildings were beyond salvation, with the exception of the toll-house. The bridge was saved by pulling up some of the planks and pouring water from buckets upon the burning embers. After

the fire was extinguished the company again made its way to the station into the Market Square about 9 in the evening."

Remaining there as a guard for the night, No. 3 Company was again called out by the Mayor at midnight, intelligence having reached him that 61 rebels were stationed beyond the Don Bridge. He asked for volunteers to go with him and capture the enemy, and with twenty men and "the High Bailiff on horseback" the doughty Chief Magistrate marched along the Kingston Road "to the lower toll-gate, or the fourth mile tree". Finding no one in the vicinity the detachment returned to the city, arriving about 3 a.m., and received hearty thanks from the Mayor. On the following day two members of the Company were expelled for refusal to take up arms in defence of the city.[12]

It must be kept in mind that for most of the nineteenth century these fire companies were composed entirely of volunteers. The chief attractions of the organisation, apart from the sense of public duty, were the excitement of the work and the social activities connected therewith, though the exemption from military and other duties in time of peace was no doubt pleasing to some members. Annual festivals at which the men paraded in uniform amid the applause of their friends, competitions with brigades from other towns, suppers, social evenings and grand balls,—all of these activities contributed greatly to the social life of a large number of people; and there were occasions, too, when a minstrel show or some other theatrical venture would be undertaken by the members of the brigade. There was a feeling of *camaraderie* in firemen's organisations that led to much wholesome rivalry between companies; and in some towns it was more than suggested that a spirit of bravado was responsible for many of the incendiary fires which were common almost everywhere. But in general the public spirit and self-sacrifice of fire-fighters has been a noted characteristic, and it is as true today among permanent civic employees as it was among the volunteers.

Processions were characteristic of the times, and the

[12]The Minute Book of the British American Company is quoted at considerable length in J. Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*, 1894-1914, Vol. II, pp. 588 *et. seq.*

Fire Brigade always took a prominent part. In June, 1838, the officers of the three fire companies met at Baker's Black Swan Inn to make arrangements for a firemen's procession on Queen Victoria's Coronation Day, June 28th. It was there agreed that the British American Fire Engine Company (No. 3) should lead, the Hook-and-Ladder Company be placed second, and the Toronto Company bring up the rear. The minute book of the British America describes that on the 28th "the hydraulic engine owned by Watkins and Harris, hardware merchants, King Street, drawn by a horse and having a handsome flag upon it, came up, when the Company, preceded by the assistant engineer No. 1, Richard Woodsworth, with the engine, drawn by four horses, with banner and flags of a splendid description, proceeded to the City Hall, in front of which they were joined by the other fire companies, and after being arranged by the Chief Engineer, accompanied by the united bands of the Queen's Foresters and Rangers, proceeded down King Street to Berkeley", ... and so over the chief streets until the City Hall was again reached. Here, "leaving the machines in front, they repaired to the Council Room, where a collation was being prepared for them by the stewards, of which they partook and then withdrew to their respective quarters, the display being considered one of the most gratifying the citizens of this place ever witnessed."[14]

On the 18th of July following, a similar parade was held as part of the reception accorded to Lord and Lady Durham. The *cortège* proceeded to the Parliament Buildings, "the steps being carpeted, and a crimson chair of state awaiting his reception". About 10,000 persons were present on this occasion, "the most numerous and splendid display ever made in the city". On the following day another procession was organised to give the Governor a send-off. As on the previous day, the members of the City Council and of the National Societies of St. Patrick, St. George and St. Andrew joined the fire companies in honouring the Earl of Durham, and at 3 o'clock "they proceeded to and lined Mr. Brown's new wharf, east of the foot of Scott Street", and there awaited the arrival of the party. As usual upon such occasions there was a long wait, but at five the official party

[14]*Ibid.*, p. 572.

approached the wharf and the boat, "when a most violent thunderstorm suddenly coming on drenched such as could not get shelter, and prevented the Earl from addressing the spectators". The cheers of the citizens, however, followed him far out into the Bay.[14]

The importance attached to appearances in these firemen's processions was very great. The Cobourg Brigade sported a "parade machine" which cost $1,500, but was of no value apart from the admiration it engendered on gala days; while in 1842 the Toronto British America Company resolved to purchase "a carved and gilt lion for the use of the Company on procession days, in consequence of the desire to be in possession of a lion of their own without the difficulty of procuring one for processions similar to the last, by being under obligation of borrowing from Mr. Parkiss or any other person".[15]

The by-laws which early fire companies passed to regulate the conduct of members are of considerable interest. As an example may be taken the regulations in force in No. 3 Engine Company in 1837. It was usual to meet one evening in each month, and any absentees were fined 2s. 6d., or if merely late, 1s. 3d. Sickness, or absence from the city on business, were the only recognised excuses. The fines went to a general fund which was drawn upon for such purposes as the majority approved, and any member failing to pay a forfeit was expelled. Similar fines were levied for disobedience at meetings or at fires; while "any member found guilty of smoking or swearing at any meeting of the company shall be fined one shilling for the first offence, two for the second, and expelled for the third". Similarly any member appearing at engine practice or on duty without his fire-hat was subject to fine. A typical regular meeting of firemen is that described by the minute-book of this company for June 4, 1838:

"On Monday, June 4th, 1838, the Company met at half-past six o'clock, called the roll, and took out the machine to King Street, where, having some hogsheads of water ready, the force was tried over the Commercial Bank. It was found that the machine worked well, throwing fully 20 feet over the tops of the chimneys of that high building.

[14] *Ibid.* [15] *Ibid.*

After trying her satisfactorily they returned to the engine house and collected twenty shillings in fines".[16]

In 1838 there was a reorganization of the various fire companies. Those men who wished to continue as members of the brigade had first to report to the City Council before they were considered eligible, whereupon they could choose which fire company they wished to join. The reorganisation was necessary because of dissension in the Brigade, probably caused by the ill-feeling aroused during the late Rebellion. Thomas Harris was placed in charge of the new brigade.

In 1842 Fire Company No. 4 was organised and equipped with a "goose-neck" machine. Three years later the Firemen's Benefit Society was established with the object of providing for firemen disabled at fires, or, in the event of their death, in some measure compensating their widows and children. This was the period of the first waterworks in Toronto, but the pipes were so small and the hydrants so few and so unproductive of water that an almost entire dependence was placed upon the carters and their water puncheons. The average puncheon would hold sixty to eighty gallons—about three times the capacity of a flour barrel.

The Toronto waterworks was in operation in 1843, but sufficient progress had been made by 1842 to cause the British America Company to write a letter to the Chief Engineer advising him that the hydrants should be increased to provide an adequate supply of water at fires. In 1847 the deficient hydrant service led the same company to suggest to the city that "the so-called waterworks, for which the citizens are taxed so heavily, are in general of little service in case of fire, and might with advantage to the safety of the inhabitants be at once shut up". It was suggested that unless by some means the Company could not be compelled to live up to their obligations in that respect "the members of the fire company cannot be expected to remain associated in the service".[17]

In the same year the Fire and Water Committee of the City Council suggested that the service provided was worse than useless at fires, since the arrangement with the Company "had considerably enhanced the danger by leading the

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 570. [17] *Ibid.*, pp. 572-3.

Reproduced by Courtesy of Members of the Gooderham Family. William Armstrong.

BURNING OF THE GOODERHAM MILL, OCTOBER 26, 1869

For over a century the Gooderham & Worts' establishment—at first a grist mill, then a distillery—has been located on the same site.

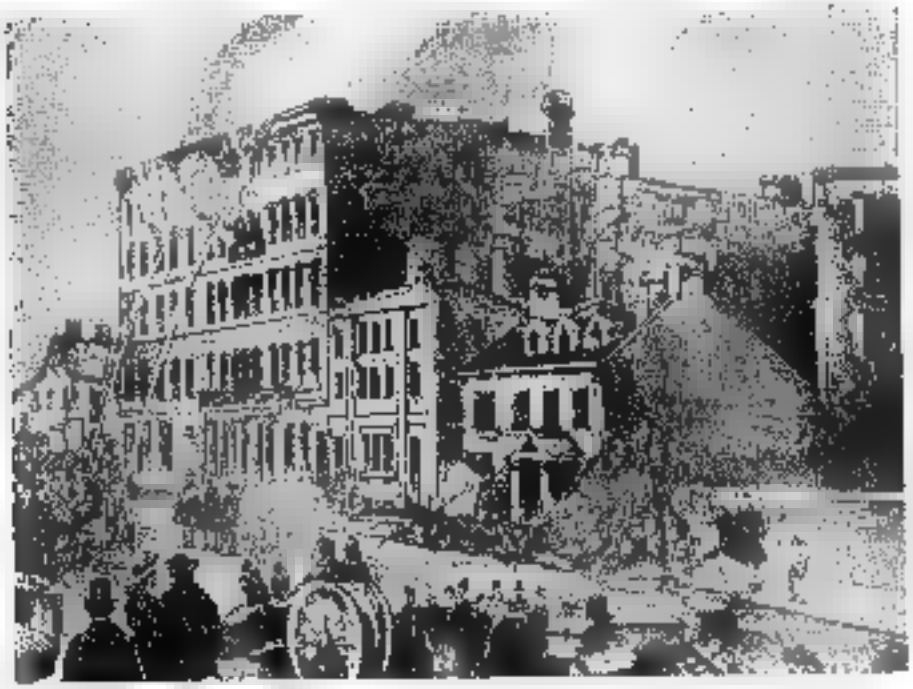
Canadian Illustrated News.

AN ALARM OF FIRE IN THE EIGHTIES

While public executions have long since come to an end, fires still remain notable spectacles, though modern fire-fighting equipment has rendered unlikely a repetition of the great conflagrations of the past.

History of the Toronto Fire Department.

THE TORONTO FIRE DEPARTMENT IN 1897



Canadian Illustrated News.

Shakspeare Inn | Rossin House | Club Chambers | Toronto Club

ROSSIN HOUSE FIRE, NOVEMBER 22, 1862

In 1833-4 John Cotter's New British Coffee House was erected on the site. Ellah's Hotel and the Rossin House (since 1909 the Prince George Hotel) round out a century of social life on the corner.

citizens to the entertainment of a deceptive dependence on a source of supply which had in almost every instance proved defective". One example will suffice. In the second week of January, 1848, there was a serious fire on Yonge Street, and in describing it the *Examiner* remarked: "As usual, the fire engines, although on the ground, were of no use for about a quarter of an hour. No water could be had at the hydrants, and when it did come it was insufficient to supply one engine. . . . The waterworks are justly regarded as a public nuisance instead of being a benefit".[18] At that time the Fire Brigade delivered an ultimatum stating that they would all resign if the system was not improved; some of them even suggested a march upon the Waterworks and the destruction of the plant. Three weeks later Rennie's Tavern was burned, but for an hour no water could be obtained from the Church Street hydrant, only the proximity of the fire to the Bay enabling a plentiful supply.

In the years just previous to the establishment of the Waterworks the annual cost of having carters haul water to fires averaged a little more than £100 a year. During 1839, 1840, 1841, and 1842 a total of £419 16s. 3d. was expended for this service. When the Waterworks opened in 1843 the city agreed to pay £250 for the hydrants, or "fire-plugs" as they were early called. As carters, of whom there were fifty-seven in that year, had still to be relied upon to provide puncheons of water, the total expense per year for having water supplied at fires was about £400 during the period 1843-1847. The puncheon supply system continued until 1861, and prizes of four, three, two and one dollar were awarded to the first four carters reaching a fire with a loaded puncheon, while a "York shilling" (12½c.) was paid

[18]The *Examiner*, January 12, 1848. It was not unusual for Mr. Furniss, owner of the waterworks, to appear at fires and tell the citizens in no uncertain terms that they were getting all the hydrant service the city was willing to pay for. In early years there was no pressure in the hydrants after nightfall, and the entire supply of water was afforded by the cartmen. An illuminating description of a fire under these circumstances in 1847 may be found in Patrick Slater's *The Yellow Briar*, 1933, pp. 50-52. Racing carters—many of them drunk,—volunteer firemen pitching house furnishings out of upper windows, the odd dishonest citizen scurrying home with what he could pick up, even the pumping equipment in flames—no wonder a fire long remained the most exciting public spectacle!

for every additional arrival. When a carter reached the fire with his cask he was given a round disc of tin or lead. On the disc was marked the number of the company which issued it, and upon its presentation to the proper official the bearer received his money. At times it was usual to pay cartmen on a time basis after the prize-winners were decided. Some carters were always in readiness for a race to a fire, keeping a full puncheon on their wagons both day and night. Concerning these good old days, C. C. Taylor recalled the prevalence of fires at week-ends:

"It was very remarkable that about this time scarcely a Saturday or Sunday night passed without a fire taking place. Some said they occurred opportunely on these nights, because everybody was at liberty, and, the firemen being volunteers, their occupations were not interfered with; and this, as a way to relieve the monotony that prevailed over everything, had led to the wilful acts of incendiarism which undoubtedly took place, but which were all overruled for the growth and general improvement of the city.

"The fire brigade in 1850 consisted of four engine companies, two hook-and-ladder and one hose company, Mr. Ashfield being then the chief engineer. The old hand-engines were not very powerful, and, when the firemen grew tired at the pumping, the law compelled any bystanders to 'lend an hand'; while many were willing, many more could be seen taking their departure when there was a prospect of a 'draft' for active service.

"There were some remarkable instances of destruction of property, one of which the writer distinctly remembers. A fire took place in a frame building on King Street, one door from the corner of Yonge, then occupied by Messrs. Betley & Kay. The flames from the wooden building were driven by an easterly wind into the millinery and mantle room over the store of Betley & Kay. On the arrival of the firemen the fine windows were immediately smashed in with axes, when the door might have served as well; and when the fire was extinguished it was found that a number of fine silk velvet mantles had been placed at the door of the room to prevent the water from spreading to other parts of the building."[19]

[19]C. C. Taylor: *Toronto Called Back*. 1886. p. 69.

Mrs. Anna Jameson, an observant traveller who spent some months in Toronto in 1837, was similarly impressed by the attitude of indifference which many of the inhabitants affected towards fires. She was assured that "whatever might be the private loss or suffering, a fire was always a public benefit in Toronto—a good brick house was sure to arise in the place of a wooden one".[20] However that might be in theory, few fires were ever a benefit to individuals in a day when fire insurance was unusual. In May, 1858, as a result of the great number of fires which were continually occurring, the Mayor called a special meeting of the Council to consider means of more effectively preserving citizens' property from destruction. It was resolved to organise a volunteer night patrol throughout the city, and to offer $1,500 reward for the apprehension and conviction of incendiaries.

A primitive means of spreading the news of fire was long in use in Toronto. Even in 1846 the bells to be rung in case of fire were the two in St. James' Cathedral, and it is announced in a publication that the key to the church may be obtained "at W. Atkinson, Esq.'s, City Buildings, and at the Police Station, West Market Place".[21] It is rather remarkable that any such antiquated and uncertain means of notifying the public should have been used at such a late date, but perhaps the town crier or bellman (for Toronto had one-in imitation of the custom prevalent in the Old Land) aided in spreading the alarm, though a citizen who remembered him recalled that his "principal duty seemed to be to call out the names and give a description of lost children and animals".[22]

Among fire regulations enacted in Toronto in 1850 was one requesting permission from Council prior to the erection of foundries, blacksmith shops or steam engines; while the manufacture of varnish, fireworks or other combustible materials was similarly controlled. Steamers in dock had to have screens over their smokestacks to prevent the escape of sparks, and the Mayor directed a surveyor to examine

[20]Anna Jameson: *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada.* 1838, Vol. I, p. 111.

[21]*Brown's Toronto City and Home District Directory, 1846-7*, p. 3.

[22]W. H. Pearson: *Recollections and Records of Toronto of Old*, 1914, p. 124.

"all fireplaces, hearths, ovens, boilers, furnaces, or any place where fires were made or kept". It was also stated that no person might keep more than twenty-eight pounds of gunpowder in one place for more than 48 hours, unless it was in an approved powder magazine.

These regulations followed closely upon the great fire of 1849, a conflagration of such magnitude that firemen and citizens despaired of being able to stop it. The fire commenced early in the afternoon of April 7th at Covey's Tavern, in the centre of the Frederick, Nelson (Jarvis), Adelaide and King block. There was a strong north wind, and the efforts of carters and bucket brigades availed but little when the chief fire-engine broke down. The total loss exceeded £100,000, and only a comparatively small amount of insurance was carried by the owners. The City Hall was among the many buildings destroyed, and one man, Mr. Watson, publisher of the *Upper Canada Gazette*, lost his life while trying to save manuscripts in the *Patriot* office. In describing the destruction of St. James' Church, Dr. Scadding states that the open space around it did more than anything else to check the fire as it rolled irresistibly westward:

"The energies of the local fire brigade of the day had never been so taxed as they were on that memorable occasion. Aid from steam-power was then undreamt-of. Simultaneous outbursts of flame from numerous widely-separated spots had utterly disheartened everyone, and had caused a general abandonment of effort to quell the conflagration. Then it was that the open space about St. James' Church saved much of the town from destruction.

"To the west the whole sky was, as it were, a vast canopy of meteors streaming from the east. The church itself was consumed, but the flames advanced no further. A burning shingle was seen to become entangled in the luffer-boards of the belfry, and slowly to ignite the woodwork there: from a very minute start at that point, a stream of fire soon began to rise—soon began to twine itself about the upper stages of the tower, and to climb nimbly up the steep slope of the spire, from the summit of which it then shot aloft into the air, speedily enveloping and overtopping the golden cross that was there.

"At the same time the flames made their way downwards within the tower, till the internal timbers of the roofing over the main body of the building were reached. There, in the natural order of things, the fire readily spread; and the whole interior of the church, in the course of an hour, was transformed, before the eyes of a bewildered multitude looking powerlessly on, first into a vast 'burning fiery furnace', and then, as the roof collapsed and fell, into a confused chaos of raging flame.

"The heavy gilt cross at the apex of the spire came down with a crash, and planted itself in the pavement of the principal entrance below, where the steps, as well as the inner walls of the base of the tower, were bespattered far and wide with the molten metal of the great bell.

"While the work of destruction was going fiercely and irrepressibly on, the Public Clock in the belfry, Mr. Draper's gift to the town, was heard to strike the hour as usual, and the quarters thrice, exercising its functions and having its appointed say amidst the sympathies, not loud but deep, of those who watched its doom; bearing its testimony, like a martyr at the stake, in calm and unimpassioned strain, up to the very moment of time when the deadly element touched its vitals."[28]

In 1856 there were the following six fire companies:

No. 1. Phoenix Company—29 men, at Court Street Hall. (One member, J. C. Steele, died March 20, 1934, aged 96.)

No. 2. Rescue Company—29 men, at Court Street Hall.

No. 3. British America Company—30 men, stationed at the Bay Street Hall.

No. 4. Victoria Company—17 men, St. Patrick's Market.

No. 5. Deluge Company—24 men, stationed at the Berkeley Street Hall.

No. 6. Provincial Company—35 men, at Bay Street Hall.

In addition to these engine companies there was the Hook-and-Ladder Company, comprising 23 men and stationed at the Court Street Hall; and the Hose Company, with 45 men at the Bay Street Hall. The total number of firemen was 227, in addition to the Chief and the engineers. In 1857-8 a Boys' Hose Company was attached to Phoenix Company, George McConkey being boy captain and John

[28]Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old*, 1873, pp. 172-3.

Ross Robertson first lieutenant. The annual loss from fire was not usually very great, the total in 1856 being but $12,376.

An interesting commentary on the condition of Toronto streets at that time is seen in the practice of running the fire-engines on the sidewalks, which were at least somewhat smoother. When in 1858 a fireman was run over and killed during this procedure it was decided to impose a fine of £5 on any company proceeding faster than a walk when returning from a fire, though it appears for some time to have been considered that any means to attain speed on the outward journey was excusable. In 1860 the Hose Company was divided into two, and largely in the expectation that the twenty men in each section might more readily be prevented from using the sidewalks.

In the late fifties the era of hand fire-engines was drawing to a close in Toronto, though smaller centres of population could not so quickly substitute the steam engine. At the time of the Provincial Exhibition of 1858 the large brigade necessary for the operation of hand engines represented the peak of effectiveness and prestige for the days of volunteer fire companies. A notable parade was held at that time in Toronto, and the fire brigades of London, Hamilton and Cobourg were invited to participate in the firemen's demonstration. Led by the band of the Toronto Fire Brigade, the procession was formed on Duke Street and proceeded *viâ* Frederick, King, York, Front, Yonge and Queen to Bathurst Street. Behind the band was James Ashfield, Chief Engineer, and his deputies; whereupon followed in order:

Hook-and-Ladder Company.
No. 1 Phoenix Company.
London Fire Brigade.
No. 2 Rescue Company.
No. 3 British America Company.
Mullvaney's Brass Band.
Hamilton Fire Brigade.
No. 4 Victoria Company.
No. 5 Deluge Company.
No. 6 Provincial Company.
Cobourg Fire Brigade.

Gaily caparisoned horses drawing engines profusely decorated, floating banners preceding each company, and the scarlet coats of the men, combined with the music of the bands to make the parade a colourful event which, with a torchlight procession in the evening, merited the comment in the press that the parades were "the grandest things of the sort that have ever taken place in Toronto".

Hand engines drawn to the fires by the men continued in constant use until 1861, the last one, the *Phoenix*, being sold to Oakville in that year. Although a committee recommended the purchase of steam engines in 1858, it was not until 1861 that two were bought at a cost of $6,000, of which one-third was donated by an insurance company. In later years, when these machines had outlived their usefulness, a junk dealer purchased the two for $30, while instead they might have been preserved for the historical education of later generations.

The change to steam fire-engines greatly decreased the number of men needed in the fire brigade. In 1862 there were only two fire stations, each with an engine, and the force, little more than one-sixth of the strength of the brigade of 1858, included the following men: 1 chief engineer, 1 assistant engineer, 17 branchmen, 11 hook-and-ladder men, 1 bugler, 2 engineers of steam fire-engines, 2 firemen, 2 drivers of hose carts, and 1 driver of hook-and-ladder truck; and the brigade had seven horses to pull the various engines and carts. It will be evident, therefore, that the heyday of the volunteer fire companies ended with the purchase of steam fire-engines, though some features of the old brigade were retained for over a decade longer.

In 1862, also, $2,000 was voted for the construction of tanks in various parts of the city, in order to afford a more adequate supply of water to extinguish fires. Twenty-eight tanks were erected during the year, and more added from time to time. In 1866 there were fifty-five fires in Toronto, and 750,000 gallons of water was used by the fire brigade at a cost of $11 per 1,000 gallons. Of the eighty-five hydrants in the city at the time twelve were useless because the pipes connecting them were too small for the purpose, or the hydrants were too far distant from the large water mains to provide an effective supply. The problem

was long one of the Council's chief sources of worry. The Fire Chief seized every available opportunity to belittle the service supplied by the Waterworks Company, and in his report in 1867 observed that municipal tanks, private cisterns and the Bay had frequently to be called into commission to supplement what little the hydrants could be forced to give. Undoubtedly Toronto's experiences with private companies in their effort to provide public utilities have been the most important factor in arousing such strong support for municipal ownership of such services. But the equipment of the fire brigade itself was not in every respect up-to-date. In the Chief Engineer's report concerning the year 1866 there is the following paragraph commenting on the crude method of sending an alarm:

"The bells in use for the purpose of giving alarm on occasions of fire in this city are not as effective as formerly, when the city could not boast of as many extensive blocks of high buildings as at present. There is no lookout or watch kept at any of the engine or fire-alarm stations, and it often happens that fires occur for which some of the principal bells are not rung at all. Along with this it may be noticed that there are many parts of the city in which, should a fire break out, a messenger, to convey the intelligence to the nearest engine or alarm station, may have to travel nearly two miles; and before reaching it, saying nothing of the shortest time possible to get the engines and other apparatus to the place of fire, the building where the fire originated, with all its contents, together with other property adjacent thereto, may have been wholly destroyed."[34]

At this time (1867) the Council passed a by-law providing for the reward of distinguished conduct at fires, and for pecuniary assistance to widows and orphans of firemen killed in the discharge of their duty. No change was for some years made in the fire-alarm system, but in 1871 the

[34] A large amount of valuable information concerning Toronto's fires and fire-fighters was collected by John Ross Robertson, and appears in Volume II of his *Landmarks of Toronto*. The official *History of the Toronto Fire Department* (1922) is deficient in that it goes back only to 1820; but it contains many details of the personnel and organization down through the years, and particularly of the modern brigade. There are also numerous illustrations depicting fires, engines, and members of the department.

"electric telegraph" method was successfully demonstrated, an alarm being communicated in twenty seconds. In the next few years the electric alarms were greatly developed. In 1871, also, four new engine houses were opened, and the fire department was considered the acme of perfection and efficiency. Only the engineers and firemen were continuously on duty, all the other members of the brigade pursuing their usual vocations except when fires occurred; in fact they attended fires only when it suited their convenience, though they received $125 a year for their services.

It was soon seen, however, that Montreal's permanent force of firemen was worthy of imitation, and it was decided in 1874 that 36 men should comprise the department, a change that added $12,000 a year to the expenditure for fire protection, making the total annual cost $39,916. All part-time members were dropped, and two electricians were included among the thirty-six employees, while horses with drivers were furnished by contract; but in 1891 twenty-eight horses were purchased by the city. By 1885 the electric fire alarm system had been greatly extended, 154 boxes being located in various parts of the city. In the same year the brigade answered 208 calls, and the new chemical truck was effective in extinguishing seventeen fires without the help of other equipment.

In 1895, during the Osgoodby office building fire, the first use of a life-net saved three persons from certain death. Had such a net been available four days earlier, on January 6th, when a fire originating in the *Globe* office destroyed several buildings, the life of Fire Chief Richard Ardagh would not have been lost as a result of a forty-foot jump that he was compelled to make from a burning warehouse. The series of bad fires during this year led to the strengthening of the force to 132 officers and men, divided into sixteen sections. The equipment included three steam engines and a water tower, a double-cylinder chemical engine, a combination chemical fire-engine, five hook-and-ladder trucks, one aerial turntable hook-and-ladder truck, eleven single-hose carts and wagons, four two-horse hose wagons and thirty-six horses.

Toronto's greatest fire commenced during the night of April 19, 1904, when property valued at $10,000,000 was

destroyed. This fire, which swept through the Front Street business section, continued to burn for two weeks, but was stopped at the Queen's Hotel, though it appeared for a time as [redacted] the entire city might be destroyed. The ruins left in the wake of the fire were prominent on Front Street for many years, particularly on the sites of the present Union Station and Custom House.

The fire department under Chief Sinclair which protects the Toronto of today costs $2,000,000 annually to maintain, and in addition an extra $1,000,000 is necessary to provide for water and the use of hydrants. This seems a great expense when compared with the $71 spent for the purpose in the first year of the city, the $3,100 which maintained the volunteer brigade of 1848, or the $7,520 which it required in 1861; but it must be remembered that there [redacted] a permanent fire-fighting force of 697 men, as well as 34 fire-halls and extensive modern equipment to be kept in a high state of efficiency. Insurance companies rate the Toronto fire department among the best on the continent, and fires of the magnitude of the great conflagrations of other days are now highly improbable.

CHAPTER XII

THE POLICE FORCE

THE two or three hundred inhabitants of the town of York at the commencement of the nineteenth century included a large proportion of soldiers, and, it would appear, a considerable number of evil-disposed persons whose activities necessitated continual vigilance on the part of honest citizens. The various types of officials appointed by the Court of Quarter Sessions or at the annual town-meeting did not include police as such, though poundkeepers, fence-viewers and other officers were in charge of the enforcement of regulations in their particular fields of activity. Among his other duties Sheriff Alexander Macdonell performed the office of policeman, and arrested those suspected of crimes; and all officials were frequently aided in law enforcement by private citizens.

In 1800 Chief Justice Elmsley presided over the Court of King's Bench, and he was assisted by Mr. Justice Powell and Mr. Justice Alcock. Minor cases were dealt with by the magistrates, who were William Jarvis and William Willcocks, and it would appear that they had many crimes and misdemeanours to deal with. Charges of assault and battery were common in a day when fighting was a popular diversion; but we will hope that the case of Jesse Updegraff, who "Damned the King and used other disrespectful Language",[1] was an isolated instance. The *Gazette* contains numerous notices of robberies, even the magistrates and high officials being the victims on some occasions. In the issue of June 5, 1802, Mr. Justice Alcock offers $40 reward for the conviction of the person who stole from his "farm near the Garrison a number of iron teeth from two harrows". He states that the culprit was thought to have been a deserter from the garrison, who had sold the teeth to two blacksmiths in York.[2]

[1] Minutes of the Court of General Quarter Sessions, April 9, 1811, *Report of the Archives of Ontario, 1932*, p. 176.

[2] *Upper Canada Gazette*, June 5, 1802.

In 1803 Peter Russell offered five guineas reward for the apprehension of the thieves who stole from his barn near the town "a turkey hen, with her brood of six half-grown young ones";[3] while Magistrate Jarvis announced that he would pay $50 for information leading to the conviction of the persons who stole from his "improved grounds" a number of fruit trees.[4] John McGill once had a quantity of onions and melons stolen from his garden, while Sarah McBride missed "a fine ruffled shirt" from her house.

The punishments of the time were, as in Europe, very severe. The death penalty was in force for a large number of crimes, including forgery and counterfeiting. In 1800 a man was executed in York for forging a note, and it is recorded that "with unparalleled fortitude he approached the place of execution; and to the last appeared much resigned to his unhappy fate".[5] Two years earlier, in November, 1798, a man was sentenced to be burned in the hand for grand larceny,[6] the law as to branding being part of the English criminal code adopted in Upper Canada on the formation of the province, though in 1802 branding was abolished in Canada except for manslaughter. Whipping was a common punishment for petty larceny, while in August, 1801, a thief was banished from Upper Canada for seven years.[7] Until the construction of the Asylum in 1846 no special provision was made for "lunatic persons". If they were violently insane they were confined in the jail, but all the other types of mental aberration were merely ignored, and the unfortunate persons so afflicted remained at home or wandered about the town as they or their relatives saw fit.

The old English punishment of standing in the pillory was also in vogue in early York. Elizabeth Ellis was sen-

[3]*Ibid.*, August 20, 1803.

[4]*Ibid.*, May 10, 1800.

[5]*Ibid.*, May 17, 1800.

[6]See *Ibid.*, November 17 and December 1, 1798.

[7]*Ibid.*, August 29, 1801. For many details of old-time punishments and the procedure of criminal courts both in England and Upper Canada see J. Edmund Jones: *Pioneer Crimes and Punishments in Toronto and the Home District*, 1924. In the publications of many learned societies may be found essays on particular criminal cases by that versatile and indefatigable writer, the Hon. Mr. Justice William R. Riddell.

tenced in 1804 to six months' imprisonment, and in addition "to stand in the pillory twice during the said imprisonment, on two different market days, opposite the Market-House in the town of York, for the space of two hours each time".[8] Probably the first stocks wore out, for in July, 1811, it is recorded in the minutes of the Court of Quarter Sessions that the magistrates decided to employ a carpenter "to make Moveable Stocks that will confine two Persons at once, and when completed that they be erected where a Majority of the Magistrates of this Town may think most proper".[9] Stocks remained in the market-place until 1834, when, with the whipping-post, they were destroyed during a riot occasioned by the particularly wild elections during the year of the creation of the city of Toronto.

In connection with the last use of the stocks, in 1834, a writer describes that Mayor William Lyon Mackenzie "caused considerable ill-feeling by causing a drunken woman to be placed therein, after they had practically been unused for some time. A woman of notorious character was brought before the Mayor, charged with drunkenness, and he, during the hearing of the case, made some remarks not very complimentary, when she, stooping down in the dock, took off one of her wet and muddy shoes, and flung it at him as he sat upon the bench; for this, and her abusive language to him, he ordered her to be placed in the stocks. These stocks were not after the common English model for confining the feet alone, but confined the feet, head and arms of the offender, and are well remembered by many of the citizens of today (1877). Mr. J. H. Rogers, furrier, King Street East, relates many boyish incidents in connection with the now extinct mode of punishment. One celebrity who was a well-known drunkard, and who, after indulging in his cups, appeared to have a particular animosity against all boys, on one occasion found himself confined in the cumbrous frame. The news soon spread over the place; the boys, jubilant at having the opportunity of paying off old scores, congregated around him, jeered, laughed at, and derided him, and finally painted his face.

[8]Quoted in Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old*, 1873, p. 42.
[9]Minutes of July 13, 1811, *Report of the Archives of Ontario*, 1932, p. 196.

We are informed that being unable to use his arms and feet, he used his tongue all the more freely in reply to the jeers levelled at him by the youngsters, and when the crowning indignity of paint was put upon him he retaliated by gripping with his mouth the painter's hand and giving him painful proof that sharp teeth are worse than strong blows".[10]

From time to time local laws and regulations were adopted by the town-meeting. Those concerning fire prevention and road maintenance will be dealt with elsewhere, but a number of a miscellaneous character may be mentioned here. On March 3, 1800, the annual meeting was held at Abner Miles' Tavern, and after the election of the usual municipal officials matters of general interest to the inhabitants were discussed. The regulations adopted on these occasions show how primitive and how rural were conditions in early York. One deals with that old English custom of allowing hogs to be scavengers and garbage collectors:

"It is agreed by a majority of the inhabitants of the town that no hogs, of any description, shall be allowed to run at large within the limits of the city, from and after the first day of May next ensuing, and it is further agreed by a majority that every person or persons shall be liable to pay the sum of five shillings lawful currency for each time, and for each hog found running at large. It is further agreed that all persons who keep hogs shall cause them to be marked, which mark shall be registered with the town clerk."[11]

In April of the same year a notice signed by T. Ridout, C.P., announces that anyone obstructing the streets by piles of wood and stone, or by digging pits, will be prosecuted.[12] Two years later the law with respect to hogs was amended by the following resolution of the inhabitants at the annual town-meeting, held on March 1st at Myles and Playter's Hotel:

"With respect to hogs (under three months old) running at large in the country it was voted by a majority that

[10] J. Timperlake: *Illustrated Toronto, Past and Present*, 1877, pp. 96-7.
[11] *Upper Canada Gazette*, March 8, 1800.
[12] *Ibid.*, April 12, 1800.

they should be at liberty to run at large without yokes. And in the town it was agreed that all hogs shall have liberty to run at large, provided they be yoked and ringed, but if found without a lawful yoke and ring to the nose, shall be subject to impoundage until the owner pays one dollar for each hog. This restriction to commence on the 1st day of May next."[13]

At a later meeting it was decided "that all lawful fences shall be the height of five feet, and that there shall be no space through the fence of more than four inches".[14] This appears to have been a matter of considerable importance in early York, for thefts were quite common, and men would even break down fences to revenge a grudge, or perhaps merely for the amusement. The following advertisement, signed by Robert Gray, the Solicitor-General, appeared in the *Gazette* under the heading "$20 Reward":

"Twenty dollars reward will be paid by the subscriber to any person who will discover the man who is so depraved and lost to every sense of social duty as to cut with an axe or knife the withes which bound some of the fence round the late Chief Justice's farm on Yonge Street, and to throw down the said fence. Independent of the said inducement it is the duty of every good member of society to endeavour to find out who the character is that can be guilty of such an infamous act, in order that he may be brought to justice."[15]

In 1802 a number of recommendations of a nature similar to those adopted by the town-meeting were presented by the Grand Jury. One was that taverns should not sell intoxicating liquors or allow disorderly behaviour on the Sabbath, particularly during the hours of divine service. The Grand Jury also considered that the butchers of York "should be obliged to bury the garbage and useless offal of their slaughtered cattle, or to remove from the town or otherwise dispose of the same, so that it may cease to be (what it now is) a public nuisance". They suggested in addition that "joiners, cabinet-makers, carpenters and other descriptions of workers in wood, by whose trade shav-

[13] *Ibid.*, March 6, 1802.
[14] *Ibid.*, July 9, 1803.
[15] *Ibid.*, July 23, 1803.

ings are made, should be obliged to burn or otherwise destroy the same on the Wednesdays and Saturdays of every week, at or about the hours of sunset".[16]

In 1817 an important change was made in law enforcement when the Legislature passed a bill entitled "An Act to Establish a Police in the Towns of York, Sandwich and Amherstburg." It provided that the magistrates assembled in Quarter Sessions might make such prudential rules and regulations as deemed expedient concerning paving, lighting, maintaining and improving streets, the regulation of the assize of bread, and, in general, the abating of any nuisances that might arise. Powers were granted to enforce local laws relating to the running at large of cattle and swine, the inspection of weights and measures, and the supervision of fire companies.

With relation to York it was specifically stated in this Act that the beach east of Russell's Creek and the carriageway in front of the town were to be considered as a part of the town, and subject to police regulation. The magistrates were given authority to raise by assessment from all property holders a sum not exceeding £100 in any one year for the purchase of fire engines, buckets, etc., and also to impose fines on any persons breaking police regulations.

Pursuant to this Act the town of York issued in the same year a series of laws, which were printed six years later under the title *Regulations for the Police of the Town of York in the Home District, Made and Ordained in Adjourned Quarter Sessions, May 14th, 1817—Revised and Amended in Adjourned General Sessions, June 21st, 1823.*[17] Constables and Peace Officers are mentioned in the *Regulations*, but most (if not all) of them were undoubtedly on duty only in cases of fire or other emergencies. The old English "Assize of Bread" was enforced by the following terms:

"No person or persons to sell, or bake Bread or Biscuit for sale, without having previously obtained a license, and entered into recognisance before the clerk of the peace, with two sufficient sureties in the sum of twenty pounds, to sell the same in conformity to the Assize, to be published

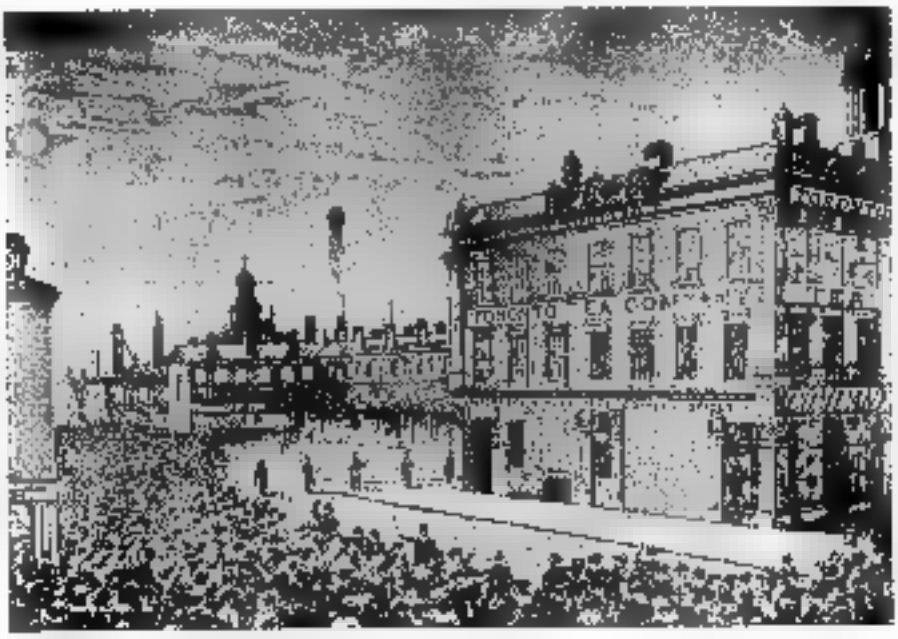
[16] *Ibid.*, July 10, 1802.

[17] A copy of this pamphlet is in the Legislative Library of Ontario.

John Ross Robertson Collection — J. G. Howard.

Colborne Lodge, High Park

The home of J. G. Howard, one of Toronto's greatest benefactors. He was the first City Engineer, and his contribution to art and architecture is second only to his munificent gift of High Park to the people of Toronto.



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The O'Donovan Rossa Riot, March 18, 1878

Rossa, a Fenian lecturer, escaped from St. Lawrence Hall dressed as a woman. The rioters thought he had gone to Cosgrave's Hotel, at the north-west corner of Queen and Dummer (St. Patrick) Streets, and wrecked that building. As the illustration shows, many windows in St. Lawrence Hall were smashed, and the police had great difficulty holding back the mob.

PETER FREELAND
Proprietor of the Soap and Candle Factory at the foot [redacted] Yonge Street.

JESSE KETCHUM
As a philanthropist and public benefactor he occupies an honoured position.

CAPTAIN W. [redacted] PRINCE
While he was Chief of Police, 1858-74, the force was greatly improved.

SHERIFF W. [redacted] JARVIS
Prominent in the development of the village of Yorkville.

monthly by order of the magistrates; and also, during the continuance of such license, to bake and have daily for sale a reasonable supply of bread.

"Every baker to stamp each Loaf or Biscuit with the initials of his name. . . . An entry shall be made from time to time by the Clerk of the Market, in a book to be kept for that purpose, of the Assize of bread, as fixed each month, or oftener if required, which book any inhabitant may inspect at all reasonable hours, without fee. The Clerk of the Market, likewise, to keep an account of the prices of flour, to lay before the Magistrates when called for."

Offenders against these laws were subject to a penalty of from ten to forty shillings for each offence. The old regulations with reference to hogs were continued with some changes. It was stipulated that "every person duly convicted for having wilfully or negligently suffered his or her Hog or Hogs to run at large in the Town of York shall be liable to a penalty of Ten Shillings for every such Hog so suffered to run at large, and a further penalty of Five Shillings for every day the offence is continued". The informer was entitled to one-half the penalty, and all impounded hogs were to be sold at auction by the Poundkeeper three days later, if the owner did not pay the penalty, claim his hogs and remove them. And it is further stipulated that "after deducting from the proceeds of such sale the penalty and charges incident to such distress, the overplus, if any there be, shall be paid to the owner". To give effect to these regulations the Poundkeeper was authorised to employ such assistance as was necessary.

The embryo of a Board of Health may be seen in the rules regarding rubbish and offal. Slaughter-houses were subject to regulation, and no one could make use of one without special permission from the Magistrates. It was further stated that "no chips, shavings, or rubbish of any description" shall be thrown into the streets or along the waterfront. As these regulations were suggested by a Grand Jury in 1802 it may be assumed they were in force soon afterwards.

Among other laws adopted in 1817 were several concerning Weights and Measures, and those kept by the Clerk

of the Market provided the standard to be followed in "Shops, Taverns, Warehouses, or elsewhere". It was also stipulated that all measures used in the town were to be stamped $\left\{\begin{matrix}\text{U.C.}\\\text{York}\\\text{S.M.}\end{matrix}\right\}$ and all weights $\left\{\begin{matrix}\text{U.C.}\\\text{York}\\\text{S.W.}\end{matrix}\right\}$; for the doing of which the Clerk of the Market was entitled to receive three pence, or five cents, per stamp.

Even as late as 1827 York was but a village in size, having at that time a population of only 1,817. But by the early months of 1833 immigration to Upper Canada had so increased that the town contained 6,094 people; and thereafter it developed still more rapidly. In 1835 it was considered that the new city of Toronto needed a professional police force, and on March 11th the Council determined that five persons should be appointed police constables; these men were to be in constant attendance at the Police Office, and their employment was to be under the direction of the High Bailiff and the Magistrates of the city. In addition to the five on the permanent staff fourteen men were appointed supernumerary constables to act as they might be required—presumably whenever riots or "bloody battles" necessitated an increased police force. Uniforms were first provided for the five Toronto constables in 1839.

On August 28, 1843, the Council authorised the renting of a house at the corner of John and Lot (Queen) Streets to serve as a police station for what was then "the west end of the city". By 1852 the Toronto police numbered about twelve and were under Chief Samuel Sherwood, who is described as "a quiet, good-natured man, who did not insist on any strict regulations as to the dress or discipline of the men. They wore a sort of uniform, but without uniformity except in one respect—they were uniformly slovenly. Day & Martin's blacking, and white gloves, were not considered at all necessary; the latter had not come into fashion, and as to the former the men might say as to their boots what was generally said as to waggons and carriages, —that if the mud was taken off they would be just as dirty in a short time again".[18]

[18]C. C. Taylor: *Toronto Called Back*, 1886, p. 74.

In July, 1855, there occurred what was long remembered as "the Circus Riot", and the apparent failure of the police to deal effectively with it resulted in the appointment of a special committee of Council to investigate the matter. They reported that the Chief's authority had been weakened by undue influence, exercised presumably by aldermen in favour of friends on the force. Though not belittling the Chief's difficulties, the committee was of the opinion that a new head, a man "habituated to command", would be necessary to bring the force up to the required standard, and it was consequently suggested that the Mayor communicate with police authorities in England and Ireland to see if they could recommend a suitable chief.

Meanwhile the appointment and dismissal of constables was taken out of the hands of the Council and given to a committee of three men—a Magistrate, the Recorder and the Chief of Police. The removal of the control of the police from the municipal council was not achieved without bitter debate and open quarrel, but the proposals were adopted by a majority of two in eighteen votes. The desire was given effect in 1859 by an Act of Parliament which constituted in every city a Board of Commissioners of Police, consisting of the Mayor, Recorder or County Judge, and the Police Magistrate. The first Board in Toronto consisted of Mayor the Hon. Adam Wilson and George Duggan, Police Magistrate.

In 1858 Captain W. S. Prince, late of Her Majesty's 71st Regiment, was appointed Chief Constable, and the force under him consisted of three sergeants-major, six sergeants and twenty-five constables. During the next ten years there was a gradual increase in the personnel of the force. A writer who lived through these changes in police administration recalled that "there was not much improvement in the Police Force till the appointment of Captain Prince, who, by the introduction of a semi-military system of discipline, brought about a complete revolution in every respect; not only in the dress and discipline of the men, but in the selection of a superior class, both as regards physique and intelligence, forming in a short time a body of police equal to that of any city in the world. The best men selected

were from the Irish Constabulary, who had been drilled at the barracks in Phoenix Park, Dublin".[19]

At the end of the first decade of the Board's control there were three police divisions in Toronto, and the force consisted of nine officers and fifty constables. No. 1 Station was then located in the old City Hall on the Market Square; No. 2 on Yonge Street, opposite Edward Street; and No. 3 on Queen Street West, near the corner of John.

Captain Prince resigned in 1874 and was succeeded as Chief by Major F. C. Draper, formerly of the Queen's Own Rifles. A year later the "Sunday Riots" occurred during the Roman Catholic Pilgrimage Processions, and there resulted considerable property damage and the injury of half the members of the police force. The riots were caused by the attitude of the Orange Order, which, although insisting upon its own right to stage public demonstrations, was strongly opposed to allowing other citizens the same rights. As the events occasioned the worst situation that the police of Toronto ever experienced, it will be of interest to give a description[20] almost contemporary with the riots:

"The city was the scene of considerable rioting during Sunday afternoon, September 26th and October 3rd, arising from a procession of the Roman Catholics in celebration of the Jubilee. It appears that once every twenty-five years the Roman Catholic Church holds a jubilee, but in consequence of the disturbed state of Europe in 1850 no jubilee was held by the Church. Formerly one of the conditions to gain Jubilee indulgences was to visit Rome, but in this year the Pope announced that indulgences would be given to any one visiting four different churches on three consecutive Sundays in procession with three other parishes. In Toronto two of the parishes performed the requisite procession or pilgrimage in July last without molestation. The other three parishes, St. Basil's, St. Patrick's and St. Paul's, postponed the pilgrimage on account of the heat of the weather. They had their processions arranged for the same three Sundays, and the first of these took place on the 19th of September and passed off without any disturbance. The second took place on the 26th, when the Jubilee procession in connection with St. Paul's parish, on returning from St. Patrick's

[19]*Ibid.* [20]Timperlake, *op. cit.*, pp. 152-4.

Chapel on William Street, was met at the intersection of Queen Street and Spadina Avenue with a shower of stones from a large crowd of thoughtless young men and women. The police made a dash [redacted] the assailants and drove them off, but throughout the line of march from here to St. Mary's Church on Bathurst Street stone-throwing was continued. Almost the whole of the police, consisting of detachments from Stations Nos. 1 and 2, were wounded. A very strong feeling was aroused by this proceeding, the Roman Catholics insisting upon their right to walk in public procession, while, on the other side, the Orangemen of the city met in public meeting and called upon the Mayor to prevent the procession taking place the following Sabbath, but the Mayor had no power to do so, though he requested the Archbishop to countermand the procession, as he could not guarantee to keep the peace. On Sunday, the 3rd of October, a section of the Roman Catholic pilgrims assembled at St. Paul's Church, Power Street, and, having formed a procession, marched up to St. Michael's Cathedral by way of Queen Street. The procession included a large number of women. They, however, carried no banners, flags, or regalia of any kind, and marched along in the most quiet and inoffensive manner.

"A vast crowd had collected outside the Cathedral, and the pilgrims were allowed to enter without any hindrance. While the procession was in the Cathedral the entire police force, under the command of Major Draper, the Chief Constable, was drawn up at the entrance to the Cathedral. About half-past three the procession left the Cathedral, and, headed by a squad of police, moved along Shuter Street amid the yells and hootings of the large mob. Just as the foremost ranks reached the corner of Church and Queen Streets a perfect volley of stones came upon them from Queen Street. A halt was made, the police charging upon the rioters, who were soon driven off. This was repeated several times before the procession made any further progress. The procession moved down Church Street to Adelaide Street, where stones were incessantly thrown, and at the corners of Bay, Brock and Bathurst Streets the same scenes occurred, but at the latter place the riot assumed the most serious aspect; revolvers were freely used, the

fight between the police and the crowd being kept up for a considerable time.

"The police, during the whole time the processionists were passing along the streets, sustained the brunt of the fight with the opposing crowd; and though more than half the entire force were severely wounded, yet their coolness, bravery and self-restraint excited the admiration of all spectators. Though the riots were a disgrace to the city it is a matter for congratulation that mob law did not prevail, for, though under difficulty, the pilgrimage was made from and to the points intended."

In 1876 there was a complete change in the boundaries of the police divisions, and a new one, No. 4, was established in the east end. The increased supervision necessary led to the appointment at that time of a Deputy Chief Constable, Major McPherson being the appointee. During the same year Chief Draper thoroughly examined the Metropolitan Police Force of London, England, and his investigations resulted in the publication of *Orders and Regulations of the Toronto Police Force*, which for many years formed a highly satisfactory basis of police discipline. In 1886 Major Draper resigned his command owing to ill-health.

In October, 1884, a large gang of illicit traders were in practical possession of the territory surrounding Michipicoten, on the north shore of Lake Superior. The Canadian Pacific Railway was under construction at the time, and as local authorities were unable to cope with the trouble a detachment of the Toronto Police Force was sent out at the request of the Provincial Government. In less than two weeks they arrested a large number of the malefactors, and the rest left the district. Over thirty years later 152 Toronto police took part in that world-wide catastrophe—the Great War—and 26 made the supreme sacrifice.

The organisation and activities of the present force fall outside the scope of the present work, but the 997 men who compose Brigadier-General Draper's corps form one of the most efficient of modern police forces. An interesting annual event which is of great importance in maintaining the morale and physical condition of the men is the Police Games, of which the tournament of the year 1933 marked the fiftieth anniversary.

CHAPTER XIII

Public Executions

Changes in laws and in the administration of justice occur from time to time, and a description of a few of the more notable crimes connected with early York, and the punishments which resulted from them, will illustrate legal procedure as far as it concerns executions, which, by the way, were long public spectacles. Until 1862 about 120 crimes carried the death penalty in England, and prior to 1859 at least twelve were punishable by death in Canada, but very seldom was the penalty actually imposed for what are now considered lesser crimes. Flogging, branding and the stocks were punishments not infrequently inflicted in York early in the nineteenth century, and they were the penalties for petty larceny and a variety of misdemeanours. The hangman also administered the lash, usually in public, and it was his duty to brand criminals who were sentenced to that punishment, the branding being inflicted on the hands or on the tongue; in 1802, however, this barbarous punishment was abolished in Canada, except for manslaughter.

The first execution in York occurred in 1798, and [redacted] was the result of the forging of an order for three shillings and ninepence. Mike Flannery was responsible for the drawing of the note, to which he signed another's name. He prevailed upon an illiterate tailor, John Sullivan, to cash it; but, upon hearing that the forgery had been discovered, Flannery fled to the United States, leaving Sullivan to face the charge of having uttered a forged note. He was speedily sentenced to death, and confined in the old log jail located near the present King Edward Hotel. The day of execution was October 11th, and in those days (and for some seventy years longer) an execution resembled a public holiday. The jail yard and surrounding common were crowded with men, women and children looking as if they fully expected to enjoy the spectacle, though we do not hear of the rich renting windows near the scaffold, as in England. Two upright pieces of scantling and a cross-

piece composed the gallows of that day, and the rope was in the hands of an executioner named McKnight. Everything did not go smoothly, however, and the first attempt to hang Sullivan was defeated by the breaking of the rope, or some accident of the kind; finally, after his statement, "McKnight, I hope to goodness you've got the rope all right this time", Sullivan, without prayer or consolation, paid the penalty of having passed a forged order for less than one dollar![1]

In 1801 two brothers by the name of Stotenburg were arrested for stealing horses. They were sentenced to death, but on the day previous to the execution a reprieve permitted them to spend the rest of their days in jail. This procedure not infrequently occurred when men were sentenced to death for crimes less than murder.

In 1816 Elijah Dexter shot James Vanderburg after a quarrel on Yonge Street. Many people were of the opinion that Dexter shot in self-defence, but he was found guilty of murder and sentenced to death. A proper scaffold was erected, and the Rev. John Strachan accompanied Dexter to the place of execution, where he was greeted with a cheer by the assembled populace who had left farm and business to see the sight. When the prisoner reached the foot of the scaffold, however, he took one look at it and thenceforth refused all suggestions that he ascend. Even Dr. Strachan's sympathetic "Oh, Mr. Dexter, do please come up" elicited no response. But the jailer was a man of resource, and, procuring a horse and cart, placed Dexter in the vehicle with his back to the scaffold and conveyed him under it. The noose was then adjusted, the horse lashed, and the unfortunate man left hanging in the air. The recital of the lurid details of these early executions enables us to appreciate the crude conditions of other times.

York, as the capital of the Home District, was the scene of all executions, no matter where in the district the crime occurred. What is thought to be the only lynching in

[1]John Ross Robertson is the authority for some of the material in this chapter. In certain instances his account appears to be based upon press descriptions, while in others, particularly where conversation is quoted, the source is probably the reminiscences of citizens who recalled the events. See his *Landmarks of Toronto*, 1894-1914, Vol. III, pp. 267-70.

Ontario's history occurred in 1819 near Whitby, and the circumstances of the crime almost excuse those who took the law into their own hands. A dissipated Frenchman, De Benyon by name, after turning his 13 year old step-son out of the house on a bitter winter night, tied him in front of the fireplace when he returned to the house almost frozen, and there the poor boy was literally roasted to death. De Benyon watched his victim die, and then tried to escape, but neighbours captured him near the bridge over the Don River, and he was summarily hanged to a tree. It is improbable that a more brutal murder ever occurred in the province.

In 1828 two men were hanged simultaneously at the rear of York's second jail, which was located across the street from the first, near the northeast corner of King and Toronto Streets. This was, indeed, a chance not to be missed, and over 10,000 people assembled to witness the "double-header", as it may appropriately be called. When it is remembered that York's population at the time was merely some 2,000 it is quite evident that people came long distances for the occasion. The gallows erected for executions were usually attractively painted and prepared at considerable cost, and no pains were spared to make the event worth while. The greatest excitement prevailed upon this occasion, but the executions went off without a hitch. One of the men was Charles French, a printer employed by William Lyon Mackenzie, a circumstance almost ominous enough to have him executed in those days! There appears to be no reason, however, why he should not have been hanged, though Mackenzie and others did what they could to have his sentence commuted; in fact it is said that to consider the matter there was held just previous to the execution a midnight session of the Executive Council.

On December 14, 1837, Julia Murdock was hanged for having murdered her mistress with arsenic, and she appears to have been the only woman executed in Toronto. About 4,000 people witnessed the event, and the *Christian Guardian*, while noting that the utmost decorum marked the conduct of the proceedings, considered that it was "exceedingly revolting to see among the spectators a large

number of females".[2] The crowd was kept back from the scaffold by a detachment of cavalry.

Probably the most notable execution in the history of Toronto was that of the two convicted leaders of the Rebellion, Samuel Lount and Peter Matthews. An immense concourse of spectators viewed the scene, of which we have a description that was pleasing, no doubt, to Family Compact readers, but in language which shows how much the *Christian Guardian* had diverged from the "Patriot" section of the Reform Party:

"The drop was erected in the open space between the jail and court house. Early in the morning persons began to assemble to witness the awful exit of the unhappy men who had forfeited their lives by the prominent part which they took in the late un-natural rebellion. A highly creditable degree of commiseration for them appeared to prevail almost universally, but not the slightest indication was given of any intention to interrupt the administration of the laws. An armed force composed of the volunteer companies in the city was in readiness under the direction of the civil authorities to preserve order; but we are happy to say their interference was not required. The criminals were attended to the place of execution by the Rev. James Richardson and the Rev. John Beatty, the former of whom offered up an impressive prayer on the scaffold, in which the unhappy men appeared to join, highly suited to their awful circumstances. It affords us unfeigned satisfaction to state that we learn from the reverend gentlemen who attended them subsequently to their condemnation that they were brought to acknowledge the enormity of their offence, and with every indication of true repentance to acquiesce in the justice of their sentence. During the last few days of their earthly existence they appeared to possess a considerable measure of religious comfort and hope."[3]

A more intimate account of this unfortunate event is given by Charles Durand, who was in jail at the same time:

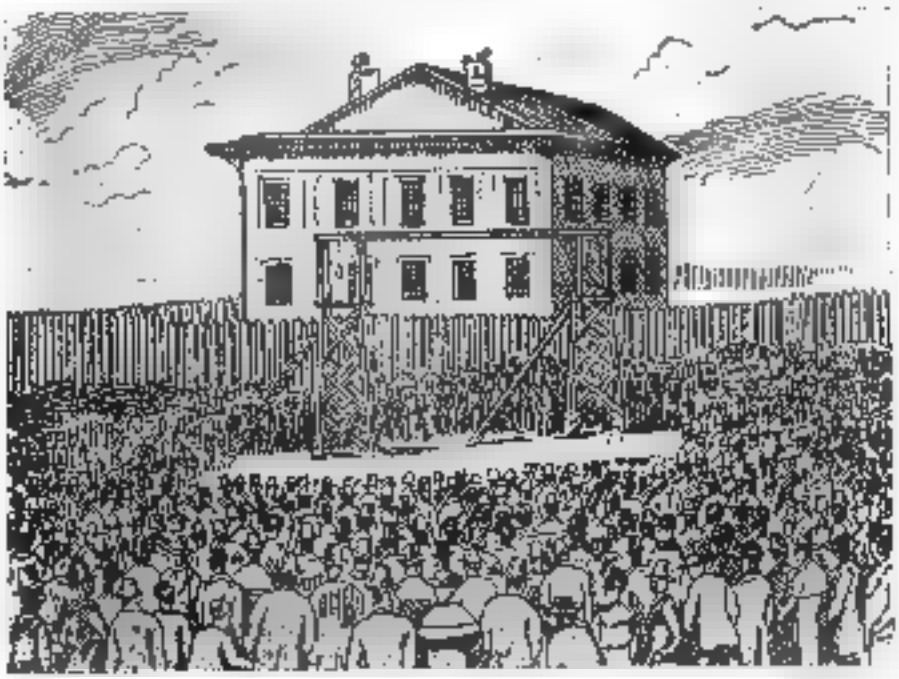
"The hours of April 12, 1838, were the saddest we ever spent. None of us could sleep, and we were all early astir. It was a fine spring morning. Looking through the window of our room we saw the scaffold. It was built by the late

[2]*Christian Guardian*, December 19, 1837. [3]*Ibid.*, April 18, 1838.

Dent's *Upper Canadian Rebellion.* William Bengough.

MRS. LOUNT PETITIONING SIR GEORGE ARTHUR, 1838

When her appeal failed, Samuel Lount went to the gallows.



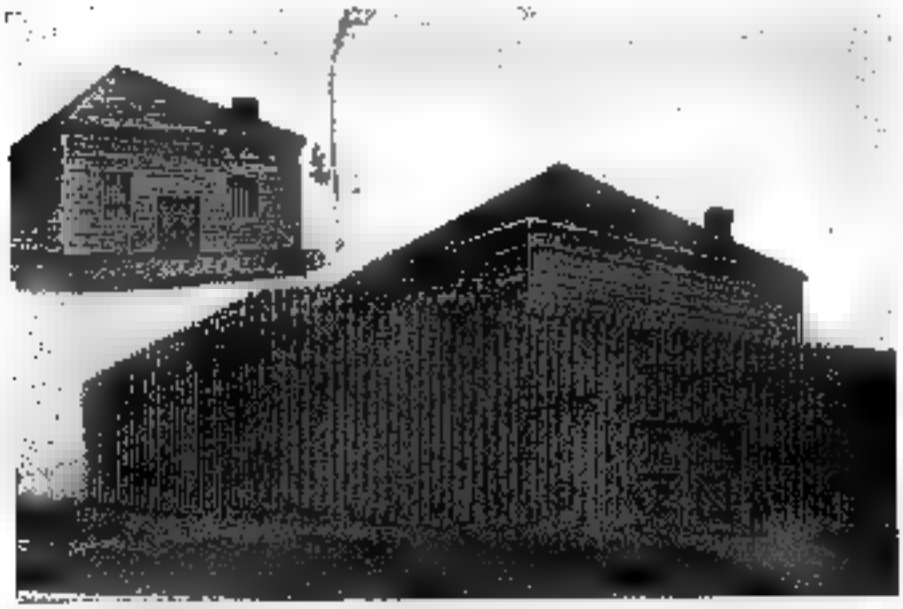
THE EXECUTION OF LOUNT AND MATTHEWS, APRIL 12, 1838

Walls over a yard thick, the front elevation of the original building, two of the old cells adjoining the guard room in the basement, and the gallows' yard in which Lount and Matthews were hanged—these relics of a century ago are still to be seen in modern Toronto, for the city's second jail is incorporated in the old York Chambers, now the Canadian National Railways Building, near King and Toronto Streets.

John Ross Robertson Collection. F. V. Poole.

RICHMOND'S BLACKSMITH SHOP, QUEEN AND SIMCOE STREETS

The locality carried fond memories for Upper Canada College boys; and in the vicinity the Brown-Cameron election riot took place.



John Ross Robertson Collection.

TORONTO'S FIRST JAIL, 1800-1824

The jail was situated on the south side of King Street, at the corner of Leader Lane. When some spike nails were necessary to repair it in 1811 the Clerk of the Peace obtained a few from the King's Stores by making personal application to the Lieutenant-Governor.

Mr. Storm. His foreman was Matthew Sheard, then a fine young Yorkshireman, afterwards Mayor of the city. He was expected to share in the work of building the scaffold. 'I'll not put a hand to it,' said he; 'Lount and Matthews have done nothing that I might not have done myself, and I'll never help to build a gallows to hang them.' So, without the foreman's assistance, the gallows was erected near the spot where the police court building now stands. Around the gallows the Orange militia stood in large numbers with their muskets. The authorities dreaded a rescue. While we were watching and talking we heard steps on the stairs, and then the clank of chains. It was poor Lount coming up, guarded by his jailers, to say good-bye to us. He stopped at the door. We could not see him, but there were sad hearts in that room as we heard Samuel Lount's voice, without a quiver in it, give us his last greeting: 'Be of good courage, boys, I am not ashamed of anything I've done. I trust in God and I'm going to die like a man.' We answered him as well as we could, and sorrowfully listened until the sound of his sturdy tramp and clanking chains died away.

"I don't know why Peter Matthews did not come up with Lount, but I saw him as they were led through the jail yard to the scaffold where two nooses were swinging. They never faltered. I saw them walk up the steps to the floor of the scaffold as firmly as if they were on the pavement. Again Bishop Richardson, who attended Lount, and another clergyman who attended Matthews, prayed. Deputy Sheriff Robert Beard officiated. Lount and Matthews shook hands with the clergymen, and when we looked again their bodies were dangling in the air. Matthews struggled hard but Lount died instantly. When the bodies had been exposed for a short time they were cut down and quietly buried in the Potter's Field near where the Yorkville Avenue fire-hall now stands. Thomas Anderson, who lives on Yonge Street, and Mr. Gibson, a builder, assisted in 1843 to remove the bodies from the Potter's Field to the Necropolis, where they now lie near the western fence, with a plain marble slab over their remains bearing the simple inscription: 'Samuel Lount, Peter Matthews, 1838'."[4]

In 1847 William Turney was executed for the murder

[4]These reminiscences are quoted in Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 85-6.

of a Markham Township clerk, the crime being committed during the robbery of a store. The murderer was apprehended on suspicion, but would probably not have been convicted had he not secretly sent a letter to his wife informing her where the money might be found. The wife, who could not read, took the letter to a neighbour, who promptly informed the authorities. Turney was thereupon convicted, and expiated his crime on the gallows at the third jail, on Berkeley Street, surrounded by a crowd of over 3,000 people, hooting and jeering during his execution. In his last words Turney, who had formerly served in the British campaign in Spain, stated that he and four other troopers had once murdered an entire Spanish family, and if so, it is evident that his punishment was too long delayed. It is quite possible, however, that this confession was to a considerable extent fabricated for the benefit of his wife and family, for pamphlets were sold on the streets with that end in view. In any case his execution was a notable event, rendered still more exciting from the fact that one Hamilton was hanged at the same time. From an excellent account based on a diary we learn that "a double gallows had been built facing the Fair Grounds and high on top of the prison wall". Schools were closed so that the boys and girls might participate in the festivities, and a holiday crowd assembled from all directions.[6]

A notable tragedy occurred in 1859 on the Don Bridge. John Sheridan Hogan, M.P.P., was attacked there on December 1st by a number of ruffians known as the Brooks' Bush Gang, and his battered body was thrown into the river. For sixteen months, however, the cause of his disappearance was not known, and efforts were made to trace his supposed movements in the United States. The discovery of the body changed the course of the investigation, and a woman came forward with the statement that she had seen James Brown and others attack Hogan, rob him, and throw

[6]See the vivid pages of Patrick Slater: *The Yellow Briar*, 1933, pp. 43-50, for a full description of the event—from the gathering of the motley assemblage to the speeches of the condemned and the savage shouts of the mob. A press account in the Memphis *Press-Scimitar* of March 16, 1934, suggests that the days of barbarism in public executions have not yet passed in the southern United States. A revolting description of the hanging of three negroes is quoted in the Toronto *Mail and Empire*, March 17, 1934.

the body in the river. Corroborative evidence was obtained, but Brown only was found guilty. A second trial had the same result, though Brown insisted to the end that he was innocent. The execution took place on March 10, 1862, and a large number of women were among the spectators.[6]

The last public execution in England occurred in 1868, and the change in Canada was practically coincident, all executions being more or less private after 1869; and since 1905 the scaffolds erected in Toronto have always been within the prison itself. Old customs die hard, and there were no doubt many people who held the views so forcefully expressed by that famous dictator, Dr. Samuel Johnson, in an earlier period: "Sir, executions are intended to draw spectators. If they do not draw spectators they don't answer their purpose. . . . The age is running mad after innovation. . . . The old method was most satisfactory to all parties; the public was gratified by a procession; the criminal was supported by it. Why is all this to be swept away?"[7]

In any case the people who have witnessed executions in Toronto in the last sixty years have been those only who, for one reason or another, have been admitted by passes. On November 30, 1877, for example, John Williams of Weston was executed for the murder of his wife, and about 150 persons were given passes by the Sheriff in order that they might witness the event. It is of interest in this connection that the executioner, a man named England, scorned to wear a mask while performing his work, but walked out before the spectators and coolly pulled the lever which sent the doomed man to eternity, and then turned his face to the spectators, as if for approval. A few days afterwards, however, a mob attacked him with bricks and stones, near the Don, and he escaped with his life only with considerable difficulty. Consequently he was more discreet when he officiated at the execution of the murderer

[6]Brown was so certain he would be acquitted that he brought his civilian clothes to the Court House. For a full account of this case by a well-known historian see W. S. Wallace: *Murders and Mysteries*. 1931, pp. 255-71.

[7]James Boswell: *Life of Dr. Samuel Johnson*. 1791. Everyman's Library, Vol. II, p. 447.

of the Hon. George Brown, wearing on this occasion a mask of black glazed linen with small apertures for his eyes.

It will be appropriate to close this account of murders and executions with some details concerning one which aroused widespread interest as well as public indignation. George Bennett, at one time an employee of the *Globe* Printing Company, was involved in a domestic dispute, and his arrest, together with carelessness in the performance of his duties, led to his dismissal. It is noteworthy that habitual drunkenness was also a cause of Bennett's downfall, as, indeed, of almost all of the other murders in Toronto's history. While on bail Bennett was frequently seen prowling around in the vicinity of the *Globe* building, and on March 25, 1880, he entered the office of the Hon. George Brown and shot him with a revolver. After a painful illness Brown died, and Bennett was sentenced to death for the crime. The execution took place on July 23rd, and we are informed* that "for fully an hour before the doomed one left his cell members of the press, officials and spectators had been arriving, and even up to the last five minutes the door bell continued to twinkle, announcing fresh visitors. Hardly a word was spoken above a whisper, and all the spectators appeared to be deeply impressed with the sombre surroundings". Bennett expressed in a last-minute speech his sorrow at having killed George Brown, who, he said, "was a most popular man throughout the world." He blamed liquor for his act, and left a long epistle addressed to the governor of the jail. In this document he outlined in considerable detail the way of life which had led him to the gallows, and expressed contrition for the various sins of which he had been guilty.

*See Robertson, *ibid.*

CHAPTER XIV

Among the Merchants

Business conditions in a country in process of settlement are as primitive as all other fields of activity. Many an early storekeeper in Upper Canada was first a peddler, travelling from settlement to settlement with his pack on his back. Others were primarily engaged in the fur trade, but as conditions changed and the demand for settlers' commodities increased it was good business to develop into the general store. Abner Miles, probably York's first innkeeper, was among the more important early citizens of the town, for he was also one of the first merchants. In his inn he conducted a general store where such miscellaneous articles as butter, leather, buttons, cloth and lumber might be obtained at the prevailing high prices. His day-book for 1795-99 has fortunately survived to give us many interesting details of both business and tavern life in early York.[1]

As no newspaper was published in York until October 4, 1798, we have but little record of the development of business and the trades prior to that date. The announcements in the *Gazette*, (the word "advertisement" would be considered too vulgar in those days!), are invaluable in that they enable the compilation of at least a partial list of the merchants of the town in 1798 and succeeding years. In 1799 O. Pierce & Co. conducted a store in which spirits, brandy, port wine and gin were sold by the gallon, puncheon or barrel at prices ranging from 18s. to 22s. per gallon. They carried also teas, "Hyson, 19s. per lb.; Souchong, 14s.; Bohea, 8s.; sugar, best loaf, 3s. 9d. per lb.; lump, 3s. 6d.; raisins, 3s.; figs, 3s.; salt, six dollars per barrel, or 12s. per bushel. Also a few dry goods, shoes, leather, hats, tobacco, snuff, etc., etc."[2] P. Mealey also kept a general store in 1800; while in 1802 Quetton St. George & Co., at the north-

[1]This interesting record is in the Toronto Public Library. See pp. 295-7 for further references to Miles' day-book. It is printed in John Ross Robertson's *Landmarks of Toronto*. 1894-1914. Vol. I, pp. 445-53.

[2]*Upper Canada Gazette*, July 13, 1799.

east corner of Frederick and King Streets, advertises a line of groceries and goods of a general nature.[3] In 1807 St. George obtained bricks from Rochester and Oswego and erected the second brick building in York. In comparison with most others this large structure with its tinned roof, graceful porch, and neat finish stood out prominently, and in later years it became the office of the Canada Company. Dr. Scadding gives an interesting account of St. George's emigration to America, and his early activities in Upper Canada. The description is illuminating as to early business conditions:

"Mr. Quetton St. George was a French royalist officer, and a chevalier of the order of St. Louis. With many other French gentlemen he emigrated to Canada at the era of the Revolution. He was of the class of the *noblesse*, as all officers were required to be; which class, just before the Revolution, included, it is said, 90,000 persons, all exempt from the ordinary taxes of the country. The surname of St. George was assumed by M. Quetton to commemorate the fact that he had first set foot on English ground on St. George's day. On proceeding to Canada he, in conjunction with Jean Louis, Vicomte de Chalûs, and other distinguished *émigrés*, acquired a large estate in wild lands in the rough region north of York, known as 'the Oak Ridges'. Finding it difficult, however, to turn such property speedily to account, he had recourse to trade with the Indians and remote inhabitants. Numerous stations, with this object in view, were established by him in different parts of the country before his final settlement in York. One of these posts was at Orillia, on Lake Couchiching."[4]

The announcement of another of St. George's stores appeared in the *Niagara Herald* in 1802:

"New store at the House of the French General, between Niagara and Queenston. Messrs. Quetton St. George and Co. acquaint the public that they have lately arrived from New York with a general assortment of Dry Goods and Groceries, which will be sold at the lowest price for ready money, for from the uncertainty of their residing any time in these parts they cannot open accounts with any person.

[3]*Ibid.*, December 11, 1802.
[4]Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old*. 1873. p. 188.

Will also be found at same store a general assortment of tools for all mechanics. They have likewise well-made Trunks; also empty Barrels. Niagara, July 23."[a]

Contemporary also with the York store was one in Kingston in charge of Mr. Boiton, and another in Amherstburg under Mr. Boucherville, and both were controlled by St. George. In various issues of the *Upper Canada Gazette* prior to September 20, 1806, St. George advertises his stores extensively; but on that date he announces that he is discontinuing advertising in the press, and refers his customers to his previous announcements. The contents of his general store in York are pretty fully particularised, and the goods are usually described as "just arrived from New York". The following list includes many an old-time piece of dry goods:

"Ribbons, cotton goods, silk tassels, gown-trimmings, cotton binding, wire trimmings, silk belting, fans, beaded buttons, block tin, glove ties, cotton bed-line, bed-lace, rollo-bands, ostrich feathers, silk lace, black veil lace, thread do., laces and edging, fine black veils, white do., fine silk mitts, love-handkerchiefs, Barcelona do., silk do., black crape, black mode, black Belong, blue, white and yellow do., striped silk for gowns, Chambray muslins, printed dimity, split-straw bonnets, Leghorn do., imperial chip do., best London Ladies' beaver bonnets, cotton wire, Rutland gauze, band boxes, cambrics, calicoes, Irish linens, callimancoes, plain muslins, laced muslins, blue, black and yellow nankeens, jeans, fustians, long silk gloves, velvet ribbons, Russia sheetings, India satins, silk and cotton umbrellas, parasols, white cotton, bombazetts, black and white silk stockings, damask table cloths, napkins, cotton striped nankeens, bandana handkerchiefs, catgut, Tickenburg, brown holland, Creas á la Morlaix, Indian lutestring, beaver caps for children."

In those days spices predominated among the groceries. We find listed: "Hyson tea, Hyson Chaulon in small chests, young Hyson, green, Souchong and Bohea; loaf, East India and Muscovado sugars, mustard, essence of mustard, pills of mustard, capers, lemon-juice, soap, Windsor do., indigo, mace, nutmegs, cinnamon, cassia, cloves, pimento, pepper,

[a]*Niagara Herald*, August 7, 1802.

best box raisins, prunes, coffee, Spanish and American Segars, Cayenne pepper in bottles, pearl barley, castor oil, British oil, pickled oysters." Jewellery and hardware are included in the following remarkable list:

"Chinaware in small boxes and in sets, Suwarrow boots, bootees, and an assortment of men's, women's and children's shoes, japanned quart mugs, do. tumblers, tipped flutes, violin bows, brass wire, sickles, iron candlesticks, shoe-makers' hammers, knives, pincers, pegging awls and tacks, awl-blades, shoe-brushes, copper tea-kettles, snaffle-bits, leather shot belts, horn powder flasks, ivory, horn and crooked combs, mathematical instruments, knives and forks, suspenders, fish-hooks, sleeve-links, sportsmen's knives, lockets, earrings, gold topaz do., gold watch-chains, gold seals, gold brooches, cut gold rings, plain do., pearl do., silver thimbles, do. teaspoons, shell sleeve buttons, silver watches, beads, paste-board, foolscap paper, second do., letter paper, black and red ink powder and waters."

The literature of other times and tastes is pretty well covered in the supply offered by M. St. George:

"*Telemachus*, Volney's *Views*, *Public Characters*, Dr. Whiteman's *Egypt*, *Evelina*, *Cecilia*, *Lady's Library*, *Ready Reckoner*, *Looking Glass*, Franklin's *Fair Sex*, *Camilla*, *Don Raphael*, *Night Thoughts*, *Winter Evenings*, *Voltaire's Life*, *Joseph Andrews*, Walker's *Geography*, *Bonaparte and the French People*, Voltaire's *Tales*, Fisher's *Companion*, *Modern Literature*, *Eccentric Biography*, *Naval* do., *Martial* do., *Fun*, *Criminal Records*, Entick's *Dictionary*, Gordon's *America*, Thompson's *Family Physician*, Sheridan's *Dictionary*, Johnson's do., Wilson's *Egypt*, Denon's *Travels*, *Travels of Cyrus*, *Stephani de Bourbon*, *Alexis*, *Pocket Library*, *Every Man's Physician*, *Citizen of the World*, Taplin's *Farriery*, *Farmer's Boy*, *Romance of the Forest*, *Grandison*, Campbell's *Narrative*, *Paul and Virginia*, *Adelaide de Sincere*, *Emelini*, *Monk*, *Abbess*, *Evening Amusements*, *Children of the Abbey*, *Tom Jones*, *Vicar of Wakefield*, Sterne's *Journey*, *Abelard and Eloisa*, *Ormond*, *Caroline*, *Mercutio*, *Julia and Baron*, *Minstrel*, *H. Villars*, *De Valcourt*, *J. Smith*, *Charlotte Temple*, *Theodore Chypon*, *What has Been*, *Elegant Extracts in Prose and Verse*, *J. and J. Jessamy*, *Chinese Tales*, *New Gazetteer*, Smollett's *Works*,

Cabinet of Knowledge, Devil on Sticks, Arabian Tales, Goldsmith's *Essays,* Bragg's *Cookery,* Tooke's *Pantheon,* Boyle's *Voyage, Roderick Random, Jonathan Wild, Louisa Solomon's Guide to Health,* Spelling-books, Bibles and Primers."[6]

In another advertisement we learn that customers have run off with some of M. St. George's goods, the return of which he attempts to effect in a very naïve manner; and also that he carried on the real estate business among his other activities:

"Mr. St. George has just received wine, Jamaica spirits, Rapee snuff, mails, best Spanish segars.

"Mr. St. George having missed two pair of Suwarrow boots, requests those persons who have purchased same from him to let him know, as he is afraid he has forgot to charge them; or should they have been taken on trial, it is requested that they may be returned.

"It is also requested that the gentleman or lady who has borrowed a volume of the *Revolutionairs Plutarch* will return it immediately.

"He has for sale the following lots of land, viz.—Nos. 12, 13 and 14, in the third concession of Whitchurch; 29 and 30 in the fifth concession of Beverley; 19 in the second concession of Whitby; 19 and 20 in the third concession of Whitby; also No. 17 in the Township of Thorold, in the District of Niagara, with the improvements and buildings thereon."[7]

William Cooper's "Toronto Coffee House" was a combined inn and general store where "genteel lodging", "the best liquors and viands", "segars, pipes and tobacco", and "a general assortment of groceries and dry goods" could all be obtained for cash or in exchange for country produce.[8] It was a time when frequently a man found it necessary to be a jack-of-all-trades if he was to support his family. In addition to his other activities William Cooper, who was the town's first schoolmaster, became one of the earliest auctioneers in York, and announces his new profession in the following notice:

[6]Lists similar to these appear in various issues of the *Gazette.*
[7]*Ibid.,* June 14, 1806.
[8]*Ibid.,* November 27, 1802.

"William Cooper begs leave to inform his friends and the public in general that he has lately received License as Auctioneer for this Town. That he has appropriated a part of his house in Duke Street for the purpose of an auction room, which will be made as commodious as possible; where every attention will be paid to such articles as his friends may be pleased to honor him with the disposal of. He flatters himself that the tenor of his conduct heretofore will entitle him to the confidence and patronage of the public; secrecy will be strictly observed on his part.

"He will sell by auction at the house of Mr. John M'Dougall, between the hours of 11 and 12 o'clock on Monday, the 22nd instant, 4 barrels of prime tobacco, 1 do. of pork, a well assorted library of books in different languages, some of the most fashionable coloured fine and refine cloths, together with sundry other articles too tedious to mention."[9]

It was never easy to collect debts in a period when money was very scarce and barter was the usual means of carrying on business. John Horton, in an announcement in the *Gazette* in 1801, "requests all those who are indebted to him, and whose accounts ought to have been paid long ago, to make payment in the course of one month from this date, or unpleasant measures will be recurred to; evasive answers from those whose accounts have been given in will not satisfy *his* creditors; he therefore hopes that this notice will be productive of something more than promises from those whose accounts remain unpaid."[10]

In early times it was believed that the inhabitants of Canada would derive great wealth from the ginseng that grew in the swamps, for in China it was worth its weight in silver, since it was considered a kind of "all-heal". In 1801 Jacob Herchmer was among those who were buying ginseng, which was then worth 2s. per pound dried, or 1s. if green. Hemp was another product which was early expected to add greatly to the profits of Canadian farmers, and at the same time, in this instance, to supply the British navy with sail-cloth and rope. The Hon. John McGill, the Hon. D. W. Smith and Thomas Scott were commissioners in York to distribute hemp seed gratis to farmers—the

[9] *Ibid.*, September 18, 1800.
[10] *Ibid.*, November 4, 1801.

first, and for many years the only government encouragement of agriculture.[11]

Horticulture, both for business and pleasure, was a popular pursuit in early York. For some years after 1800 William Bond operated a nursery garden at the corner of Duke and Ontario Streets. He had 41 apple trees, 30 peach trees, 9 cherry trees, and several plum trees, and produced as well such small fruits as gooseberries and red and white currants.

In early times, as not infrequently at the present day, merchants lived over or in the rear of their stores. On the south side of King, between Berkeley and Ontario Streets, was located the original home of the Cawthra family. In the *Gazette* of June 14, 1806, J. Cawthra advertises what appears to have been the first apothecary establishment. But this forerunner of the drug store was (like many a modern one) in reality a general store:

"J. Cawthra wishes to inform the inhabitants of York and the adjacent country, that he has opened an Apothecary Store in the house of A. Cameron, opposite Stoyell's Tavern in York, where the Public can be supplied with most articles in that line. He has on hand also a quantity of Men's, Women's and Children's shoes and Men's hats. Also for a few days will be sold the following articles, Table Knives and Forks, Scissors, Silver Watches, Maps and Prints, Profiles, some Linen, and a few Bed-Ticks, Teas, Tobacco, a few casks of fourth proof Cognac Brandy, and a small quantity of Lime Juice, and about twenty thousand Whitechapel Needles."[11]

On November 27, 1806, he announced that he had just arrived from New York with a general assortment of "apothecary articles" and patent medicines, and that anything genuine in that line could be supplied; while dry goods, hardware and groceries are included in the following list:

"Broad cloths, duffils, flannels, swansdown, corduroys, printed calicoes, gingham, cambrick muslins, shirting, muslin, men and women's stockings, silk handkerchiefs, bandana shawls, pulicat and pocket handkerchiefs, calimancoes, dimity and check; also a large assortment of

[11] *Ibid.*, June 14, 1806.

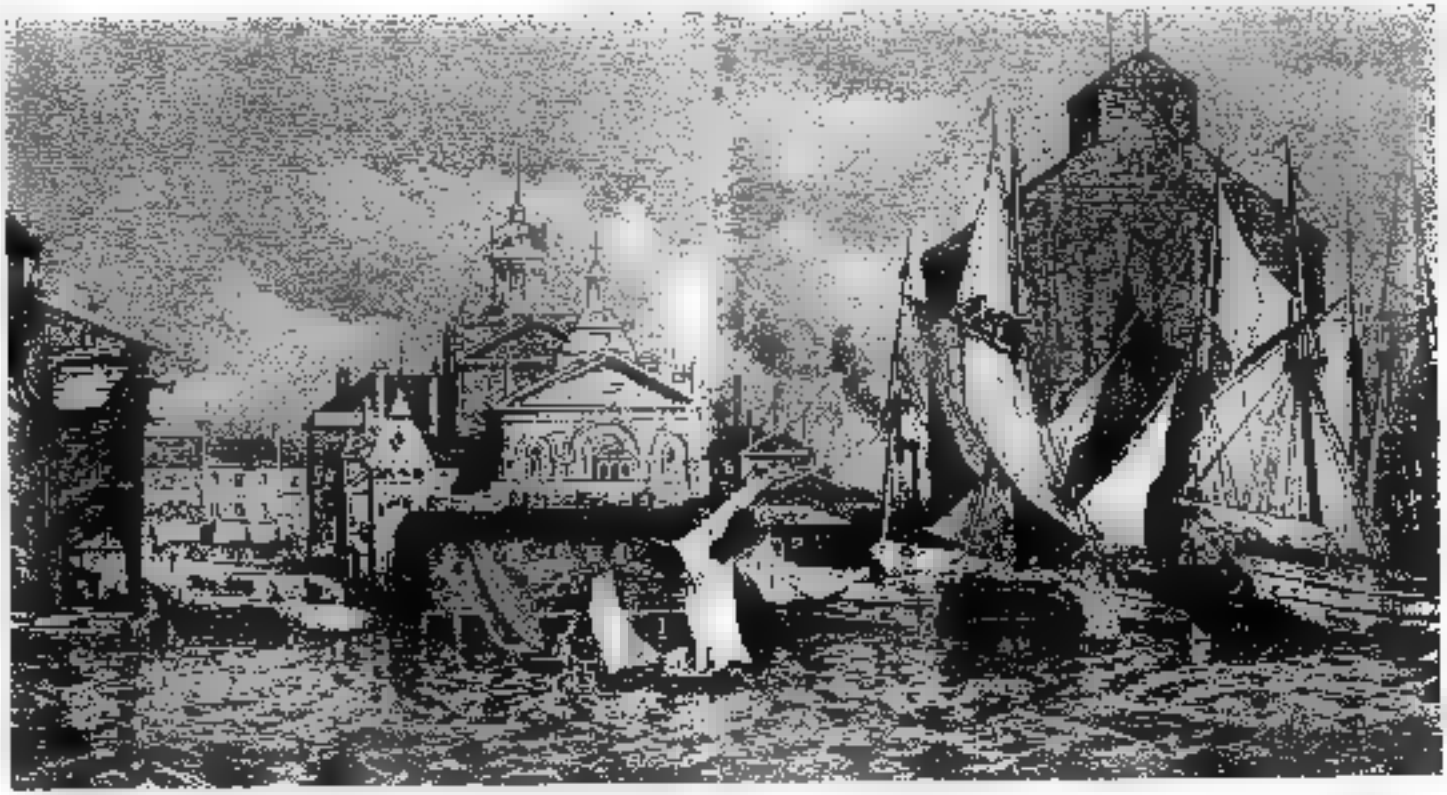
men's, women's and children's shoes, hardware, coffee, tea and chocolate, lump and loaf sugar, tobacco, &c., with many other articles; which he is determined to sell on very low terms at his store opposite Stoyell's Tavern."[12]

In the autumn of 1803 Lieutenant-Governor Peter Hunter issued a proclamation establishing a market in York. The document sets forth that "great prejudice hath arisen to the inhabitants of the Town and Township of York, and of other adjoining townships, from no place or day having been set apart or appointed for exposing publicly for sale cattle, sheep, poultry and other provisions, goods and merchandise brought by merchants, farmers and others for the necessary supply of the said Town of York". Realising the advantages which would arise from a weekly market, the Governor and his Executive Council "ordained, erected, established and appointed a public open market to be held on Saturday in each week and every week during the year within the said town of York, the first market to be held on Saturday, the 5th of November, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and three."[13] The first market-house was only 36 feet by 24, and was within the square formed by Front, New (now Jarvis), King and Church Streets, an area of five and a half acres having been set aside for the market-place. In later days the vicinity came to be not only a centre of trade but also of public meetings, entertainment, and social life generally, for in 1850 was erected the St. Lawrence Hall, for twenty years the most popular assembly room in the city.

Laws similar to those in mediaeval England with respect to forestallers and regraters were enforced against anyone who attempted to intercept produce on the roads leading to the market. Under the heading "Forestalling, Regrating, etc., Home District", occurs the following warning in the *Gazette*:

"Whereas at a Special Session of the Peace, holden at the town of York on Saturday of the present month of December, 1814, it was represented to the magistrates that sundry persons residing in the said town make it a practice of intercepting and buying up the provisions and other

[12] *Ibid.*, November 27, 1806.
[13] *Ibid.*, October 29, 1803.



Canadian Illustrated News. Henry Sandham.

TORONTO MARKETS, 1870

This Venetian scene shows the waterfront south of St. Lawrence Market. The old City Hall on Front Street may be seen in the rear of the sheds in the centre foreground.

Reproduced by Courtesy of the T. Eaton Co.

THE FIRST EATON STORE, 1869

Plank sidewalks and cedar-block paving are evident in the illustration. Knox Presbyterian Church may be seen in the background.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

TORONTO'S FIRST POST OFFICE

This log structure was situated on the east side of Frederick Street, south of King, and remained in use under the Hon. William Allan, postmaster, until 1827.

necessaries coming to the said town for sale, and that the said persons sell the same at very advanced prices to the inhabitants who are compelled to purchase from them:

"Notice is hereby given that any person or persons who shall after the date hereof intercept any provisions on its way to the said town, or purchase the same on its way in or after it shall be brought into the town, with a view to sell the same again, will be prosecuted to the utmost rigour of the law for each and every time he, she or they shall offend."[14]

In his account of the historical significance of the market district Dr. Scadding devotes considerable space to some of the lesser-known characters whose activities centred in the locality:

"Here business and bustle were every day, more or less, created by the usual wants of the inhabitants, and by the wants of the country farmers whose waggons in summer and sleighs in winter thronged in from the north, east and west; and hereabout at one moment or another, every lawful day, would be surely seen, coming and going, the oddities and street-characters of the town and neighbourhood. Having devoted some space to the leading and prominent personages of our drama, it will be only proper to bestow a few words on the subordinates, the Calibans and Gobbos, the Nyms and Touchstones of the piece.

"From the various nationalities and races of which the community was a mixture, these were drawn. There was James O'Hara, for example, a poor humorous Irishman, a perfect representative of his class in costume, style and manner, employed as bellman at auctions, and so on. When the town was visited by the Papyrotomia—travelling cutters-out of likenesses in black paper (some years ago such things created a sensation),—a full-length of O'Hara was suspended at the entrance to the rooms, recognised at once by every eye, even without the aid of the 'Shoot easy' inscribed on a label issuing from the mouth. (In the *Loyalist* of November 24, 1827, we have O'Hara's death noted: 'Died on Friday the 16th instant, James O'Hara, long an inhabitant of this Town, and formerly a soldier in

[14] *Ibid.*, January 21, 1815.

His Majesty's service.')—There was Jock Murray, the Scotch carter; and after him, William Pettit, the English one; and the carter who drove the horse with the 'spring-halt' (every school-lad in the place was familiar with the peculiar twitch upwards of the rear hind leg in the gait of this nag).

"The negro population was small. Every individual of colour was recognizable at sight. Black Joe and Whistling Jack were two notabilities, both of them negroes of African birth. In military bands a negro drummer or cymbal-player was formerly often to be seen. The two men just named, after obtaining discharge from a regiment here, gained an honest livelihood by chance employment about the town. Joe, a well-formed, well-trained figure, was to be seen, still arrayed in some old cast-off shell-jacket, acting as porter, or engaged about horses; once already we have had a glimpse of him in the capacity of sheriff's assistant, administering the lash to wretched culprits in the Market Place. The other, besides playing other parts, officiated occasionally as a sweep; but his most memorable accomplishment was a melodious and powerful style of whistling musical airs, and a faculty for imitating the bag-pipes to perfection. For the romantic sound of the name, the tall, comely negress, Amy Pompadour, should also be mentioned in the record. But she was of servile descent: at the time about which we write slavery was only just dying out in Upper Canada, as we shall have occasion to note hereafter more at large."[16]

Before the town of York became the city of Toronto most of the stores were of a more or less general nature, but as the time passed subdivision into various types of merchandising became more pronounced. In the late eighteen-forties business activities centred just east of the King and Yonge intersection. Some conception of the Toronto of that day will be made easier by a description of the buildings which at that time occupied parts of the down-town area. Front Street was then quite close to the Bay. The Custom House was the only building on the south side of the street, and there were comparatively few on the north, the section west of Yonge being then the fashionable

[16]Scadding, *op. cit.*, pp. 175-6.

residential district. The homes of Judge Macaulay, Judge Jones, Joseph Rogers, and the Baldwins occupied the north side of Front Street between Yonge and Bay. Further westward, on the site of the old Queen's Hotel, were four dwellings owned by Captain Thomas Dick; these were soon to house Knox College, and a little later were altered to form Sword's Hotel. To the rear, on Wellington Street, was Holland House, erected in 1832 and occupied by the Hon. Henry John Boulton. At the corner of York and Front Captain Strachan, son of the Bishop of Toronto, lived in a picturesque cottage, and the Bishop's Palace—at one time one of three brick buildings in the town—adjoined the Front Street entrance. At the corner of Wellington and Simcoe was the Hagerman mansion, and eastward at the corner of Bay was a small white house entirely by itself. There were other outlying residences, but apart from a few on Yonge and Church Streets there were practically no buildings north of Lot (Queen) Street.

Many Toronto business men still followed the old custom of residing over their stores, though others lived in small dwellings in the immediate vicinity, especially to the east of Church Street. Among prominent retail stores in the late forties was that of Betley & Kay, located at the corner of King and Yonge; while the chief other retailers were Walker and Hutchinson's, P. Paterson's, and Walter McFarlane's. These firms gradually became "one-price" establishments, though business was in general characterised by argument or bantering over the price. The good old sport of shopping, not unknown at present, was then in its heyday, and the amusement of going from Yonge Street to the Market before deciding what to buy or where to buy it was almost universal. One who was employed in a store at that time recalled that the expression "We will look around, and return if not better suited elsewhere" was commonly used by prospective customers. The anxiety of clerks to press sales was consequently painfully apparent, and the chief inducement was to offer a reduction in the price; while the lack of system in displaying goods, and the scarcity of customers, made business life "tiresome beyond description."[18]

[18]C. C. Taylor: *Toronto Called Back*. 1886, p. 49.

The practice of cutting prices was, of course, demoralising to both buyer and seller, and usually led to exaggeration and misrepresentation. Among other characteristics of business life in the early years of the city was the confusion caused by the various types of money in common use. In one of the establishments mentioned above the daily cash sales averaged £1,000 sterling; this was taken in at five cashiers' desks, usually by boys under sixteen years of age, whose rapid work in making change from the cheques handed in by some 400 salesmen was rather remarkable when one considers the difficulties:

"The coins were farthings, half-pence, pence, sixpences, shillings, half-crowns, crowns, half-sovereigns and sovereigns. Farthings were strictly charged on all amounts to 2s. 6d., and no salesman could omit them at 2s. 5½d. The desks have frequently been swept out to find a missing half-penny, as everything must balance. There being no Canadian Silver Currency at this time, the process of making change out of what was technically called 'specie' was a perfect study. There were Mexican and United States dollars and half-dollars; United States 6¼, 12½, and 25-cent pieces; English sixpences, shillings, half-crowns, with a miscellaneous assortment from every other country.

"Coin and bank note detectors were used in every place to ascertain the value of the coin and the genuineness of bank notes, especially those from the United States. As each had to make his own change in the absence of a cashier, this was found to be a work of great difficulty,—to know when a York shilling ceased to possess that value by reason of abrasion or defacement and became a 10-cent piece involved many a dispute; and the same with all the other coins. In payment of a debt the Mexican dollar would go for 5s. 1d., or $1.02, but in independent trading it was just one dollar.

"Anyone visiting New York at this time and buying a newspaper, if he gave a good 25-cent piece would generally lose in change through the manipulation of the boys from one to four cents, just as the boy happened to have more or less of the small coins. Toronto had no newsboys at this time. As for coppers I have no doubt a great many brass buttons found circulation just by flattening the shanks.

This state of things continued more or less for years, till the Decimal System was introduced by Act of Parliament, and the present silver coinage issued. Previous to this all wholesale or importing accounts were kept in sterling for French and English accounts, Halifax currency or $4 to the pound for Canadian, and in dollars and cents for the United States."[17]

Banking did not commence in Upper Canada until the early twenties, and for some years thereafter only the Bank of Upper Canada was available to the merchants of York. In the matter of loans there is no doubt that opponents of the Family Compact were at first discriminated against, but matters improved when the government connection was severed. The Bank of Upper Canada remained in business nearly half a century. John Ross Robertson gives the following account of the first building:

"At the legislative session of 1821 was announced the royal assent to the Act passed in 1819 for the institution of a bank which was to be situated at York, the seat of government of the province, and was to be known as the Bank of Upper Canada. The stock was not to exceed £200,000. It was to be opened when the deposit amounted to £20,000. The Government was allowed to subscribe for 2,000 shares, and it was declared that the institution might expire by limitation in 1848. The bank began business somewhere about 1822, taking the corner part of the building which is still standing at the south-east corner of King and Frederick Streets, the entrance to the bank being on Frederick Street. The vault of the bank—not much like vaults nowadays—may still be seen at the western end of the cellar. The wall is of brick, about a foot thick at the front, but much thicker at the sides and rear. The interior dimensions are about three feet square. The door is of iron, half an inch in thickness. Two locks, like ordinary door locks only stronger, were relied on to defend the treasure. At the point where the vault is located the outside foundation wall of the building is over three feet through and of stone. The bank occupied these premises quite a number of years."[18]

It was the middle of the century, however, before a

[17] *Ibid.*, pp. 70-1. See also page 261 of the present work.
[18] Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 268-70.

Stock Exchange came into being. On July 26, 1852, a small group of citizens met and resolved that "the gentlemen now present do constitute themselves an association to be denominated the Toronto Stock Exchange". The aims of the organization were "to expedite the transfer of stocks and extend the circulation of Canadian credit". It is a far cry from the stock market operations of that day to the heavy trading and the "bucket-shop" activities of modern times when "the markets" have become the great public gambling resort. In the early years of the Exchange speculative interest was but small, and a half hour spent each morning in one or other of the offices of the six members sufficed to carry out the transfer of bonds and stocks; while seats on the first Exchange were valued at five dollars each.

As cash was scarce it was usual for many years to pay wages in what was known as "store pay". The ramifications of this procedure are outlined by C. C. Taylor:

"Every builder or contractor made an arrangement with the various trades and stores for a line of credit, by which they could pay their workmen as much of their wages as possible with the smallest amount of cash. Orders were given on the stores, and mechanics' wives went to make their purchases, carefully concealing their written 'orders' as long as the knowing salesman failed to draw out the fact of their existence, the object of the caution on the part of the frugal housewives being to ascertain the 'cash' price of the goods. [redacted] the 'cat was let out of the bag' the salesman at once 'stood at ease', knowing well that the customer had no alternative but to take out the value of the order. A few immigrants, in perfect innocence, would present these orders at once, much to the satisfaction of the salesman. The block of buildings known as Ritchey's Terrace, and other large buildings, including churches, St. Lawrence buildings, etc., were largely paid for in this way."[19]

Ritchey's Terrace, it is of interest to remark, may still be seen on the north side of Adelaide Street, between York and Bay, and it has not been greatly altered since its construction in 1854.

Wages were, of course, much lower than the scales in force now, and there were no strikes for higher pay. The

[19]Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

first strike in Toronto is said to have occurred in 1847 when Messrs. Walker and Hutchinson introduced the first sewing-machine. The details are interesting:

"The tailors in their employment, regarding this innovation as contrary to all their time-honoured ideas of the manufacture of clothing, at once rebelled. Had not the old needle been used by hand since the fig leaves were made into garments in the Garden of Eden? Then why should a new-fangled machine be invented to supersede the ancient system? The machine was only in use a few days when Messrs. Walker & Hutchinson, finding it so objectionable, agreed to discontinue its use, and handed it over to their men to use it as they thought proper. A day was appointed for the display of their triumph over machinery, and the discarded machine was exhibited on King Street, in the centre of a procession of the workmen, after which it was returned to the manufacturers in New York. The firm, in order to remove every trace of dissatisfaction, treated the men to a banquet the same evening."[40]

The same writer gives an account of the characteristics of wholesale firms, of which Taylor & Stevenson was a prominent example, and of the difficulties attendant upon the introduction of commercial travelling in Canada in 1851:

"In 1850 the firm of Taylor & Stevenson was established, and their business was carried on at the corner of Yonge and Colborne Streets, in the building now occupied by Messrs. Buntin, Reid & Co. It was then newly built, and was one of the finest warehouses in the city. Mr. Stevenson having had extensive connections with all the straw goods manufacturers in London and Bedfordshire, that trade was made a leading branch. The first importations of these goods, in the spring of 1851, were the largest that had ever been made into Canada, and having sent out circulars, we had buyers from Windsor in the west to Brockville in the east. The whole importations were closed out in a few weeks, and such was the quantity to be entered and packed that all hands were obliged to work for several weeks every night except Saturday till 2 or 3 o'clock, so as to get the goods forwarded within a reasonable time. To

[40] *Ibid.*, p. 75.

obviate this in future the idea of taking the orders beforehand and shipping the goods direct soon took shape, and in the fall of that year samples were got out from the leading manufacturers, and the writer undertook to travel for orders.

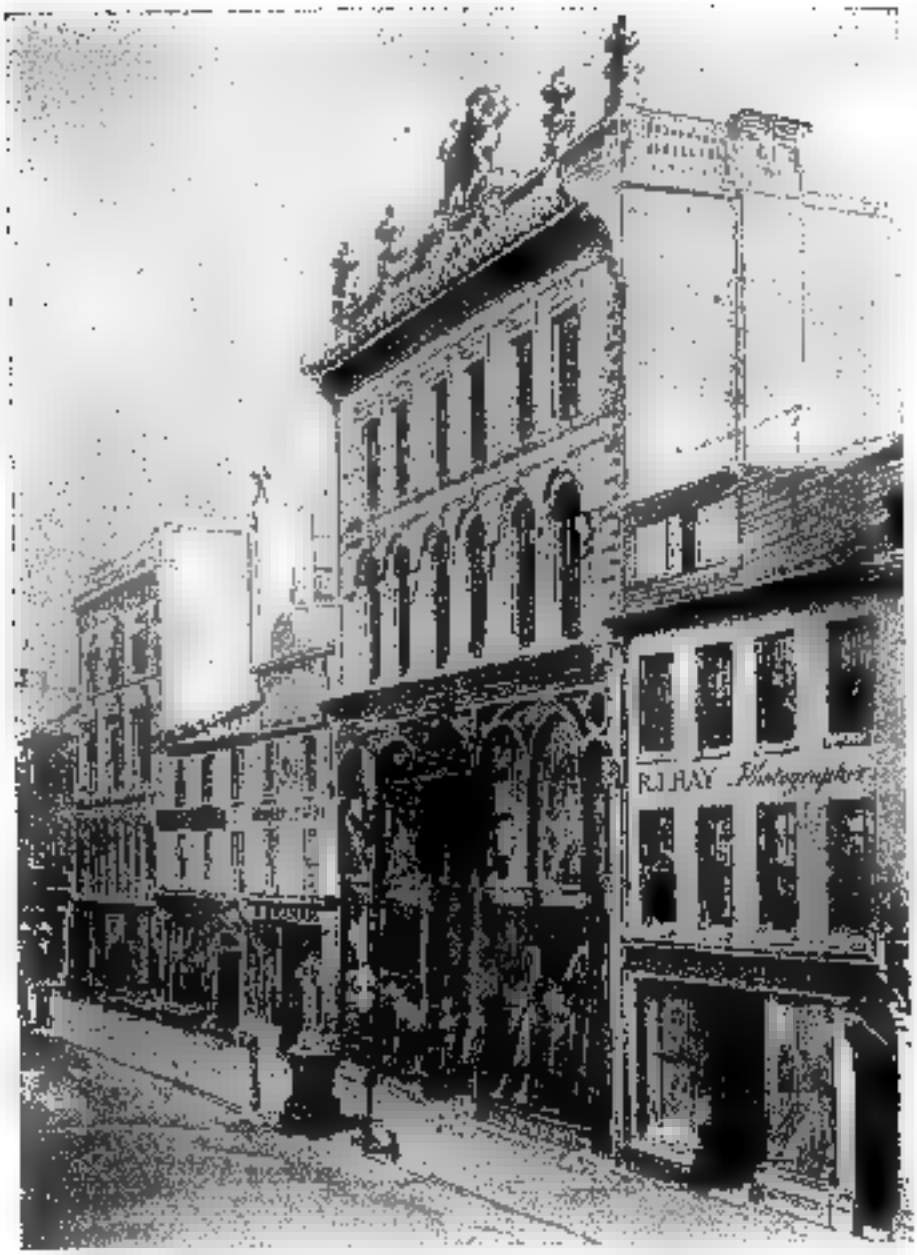
"After the close of navigation there was only one regular mode of travelling. Weller's Line of Mail Stages left daily for Montreal and Quebec, and in this way the writer, who was the first commercial traveller in Canada, started from Toronto. In these days of Pullman cars and commercial hotels to hear travellers complain of the discomforts and annoyances is rather amusing to those who have ploughed through mud and slush, sometimes carrying rails off the fences to pry the wheels of the stages out of the ruts, and again, in snow, carrying shovels to dig out the horses when large drifts were encountered; all which is known to the writer by actual experience.

"The accommodation for baggage for nine or ten passengers consisted of a 'rack' at the back of the stage, so that baggage trunks and 300 lbs. weight of samples were never even thought of up to the time of the opening of the railroads. To meet this difficulty the writer had his samples sent out in miniature models, so small that samples representing thousands of dozens, for which he actually took orders, could all be carried in a small valise. The experiment was a great success; the goods were all packed in England to the various marks, and in the spring of 1852 were shipped in bulk to the various merchants from Quebec to Windsor, or sent to Toronto for distribution. During that fall not a single traveller was met on the whole road, but the following season a gentleman appeared as a competitor from a New York house, and one or two others, amongst them Mr. Darling, of Montreal, in the hardware trade, and Mr. D. [illegible]. Macdonald in fancy dry goods.

"The summer trips by steamers were very pleasant, but in the winter there was nothing but hardships, and in crossing the ice at different points very great danger. My rule was that wherever the mail driver would venture I would go. On one occasion, in crossing from Belleville to Picton, the ice had melted, and [illegible] the whole distance across the Bay of Quinté no ice could be seen—the horses being

Adam's Toronto, Old and New.

QUEEN STREET FRONT OF THE ROBERT SIMPSON STORE, 1891



John Ross Robertson Collection.

THE GOLDEN LION DRY GOODS STORE

This famous establishment was situated on the site of the King Edward Hotel. Robert Walker & Sons were the proprietors, and the firm long held a high place among Toronto stores.

almost knee deep in water. Again, in crossing from Kingston to Cape Vincent in the Mail Stage with four horses and a heavy mail with a large number of passengers, where the ice was cracking, the horses had to 'jump the cracks'. Many rivers and canals were crossed in this way.

"One adventure on the road will give an idea of snow drifts. The town of Brockville was always to me, whether in summer or winter, a delightful resting-place, a sort of oasis in my travels from east to west or *vice versa*. Young men away from home in a new country will appreciate my feelings when I say that to find a sort of Canadian home, when a young traveller, was indeed a delightful feeling. Here I always rested for a few days amongst my friends—the Hon. George and Messrs. John and James Crawford and their connections, and especially Mr. Sheriff Sherwood and the late Hon. John Ross, whom I had the pleasure of meeting there frequently.

"In the winter of 1853 I arrived there from the east in a heavy snow storm; it was the 23rd of December, and I wished to get to Toronto by Christmas Day. On the 24th the Mail Stage came along, and having supplied ourselves with wooden shovels we started for Kingston. Having got on a few miles we found the drifts getting worse, and after repeated efforts in literally digging the horses out we were compelled to put up at a small tavern on the road side, and here, with bitter regrets at my folly in not remaining at Brockville where I might have spent a pleasant Christmas, we were compelled to remain all Christmas Day. In the meantime the pathmasters had been notified by passengers that the track must be opened at their peril to allow Her Majesty's Mails to proceed. On the 26th we again started, having much the same shovelling as before, when, having got a few miles, we heard the sound of the down stage's horn and knew the track had been broken, and arrived in Kingston in a reasonable time.

"The formation of the Commercial Travellers' Association followed soon after the opening of the railroads, and has grown to immense proportions, as the annual reports of the various associations now existing abundantly show."[21]

Until after the middle of the century there were no

[21] *Ibid.*, pp. 91-3.

elevators or hoists in use in Toronto. All goods, including the heaviest furniture, had to be laboriously carried to the upper floors of stores, and passengers walked up the stairways. In 1853, however, hoists of the old wheel-and-rope type were introduced in two buildings—a warehouse and the Bank of Commerce,—and others were installed later.

It was a time, too, when orders sent by mail were long being filled, two weeks usually being the time required to obtain a reply to a letter sent to Montreal. The arrival of the English mail once a fortnight was an outstanding event for many citizens. The following interesting details of the Toronto postal service of that period have been preserved:

"In 1847, and up till 1852, the whole business of the Toronto Post Office was transacted in a small building on Wellington Street, where the present Exchange now stands. The delivery office was a room about 20 x 40 feet, and the distributing room was an old cellar-kitchen some 20 feet square. The staff up to 1850 consisted of a postmaster, three clerks, and a letter carrier. The postmaster was Mr. Charles Berczy, and the clerks John Armstrong, Christopher Walsh, and W. H. Pearson. John McCloskey was letter-carrier, and a charge of one 'copper' was made on each letter delivered by him.

"At this time, and up till 1850, the English mails were only delivered fortnightly—by stage from Halifax in winter, and partly by steamboats in summer. The rate of postage on English letters was 1s. 2½d. sterling, or 1s. 4 d. Halifax currency (about 27 cents); the postage to Halifax was 2s. 9d.; Quebec, 1s. 6d.; Montreal, 1s. 2d.; Kingston, 9d.; Windsor, 10½d.; the lowest rate being 4½d.

"In 1850 there were only about 400 boxes in the Post Office. Postage stamps were at this time unknown, and the postage on paid letters was written in red ink, and on unpaid in black. The only visible representative of Her Majesty on ordinary occasions was either Mr. Walsh or Mr. Armstrong, who for the time being combined in themselves the office of receiving, delivery and inquiry clerks; and, as every letter must be taken to the Post Office, these gentlemen were known to every man, woman and child in Toronto and Yorkville who ever posted a letter."[22]

[22] *Ibid.*, pp. 66-7.

Returning to the retail merchants, some account of the chief establishments of the late fifties will further illustrate the business conditions of other days. The credit system was still in vogue, and many customers ran up bills of thousands of dollars before any attempt at payment. Some firms suggest, like the Pantechnetheca, "'Tis the ready money does it!", but they must have had a difficult time competing with the great majority of credit merchants. The Pantechnetheca, it may be explained, was a dry goods store at 55-59 King Street East, operated by T. Hutchinson, Nephew & Co. Soon after its opening in 1853 an advertising "dodge" was perpetrated upon the public—much to the disgust of rival dry goods firms, who were more honest:

"They secured the services of a gentleman of colour who, arrayed in gorgeous raiment, marched up and down in front of the Pantechnetheca premises and was announced by a obsequious page boy to be no less a personage than His Majesty the King of Delhi, who had revolted against the British during the great Indian Mutiny, and had, after fearful conflict, been captured by Her Britannic Majesty's victorious troops."[23]

Late in 1858 the Pantechnetheca passed out of Toronto's mercantile picture, but the mention of Hutchinson's "Pantec", as the young bloods of the day delighted to call it, recalls a more famous store—the Golden Lion, a few doors nearer Yonge Street. The business was founded in 1836 by Robert Walker and Thomas Hutchinson. In the late forties the name "Golden Lion" was adopted by this dry goods establishment, and a massive gilt figure of a lion was placed over the front door to provide the symbol. The business did not pass out of existence until the closing years of the century, and during its heyday in the fifties and sixties it was "the one store in Toronto where the country people outside of Toronto habitually went. . . . They had confidence in the place, and the firm never did anything to show that this confidence was misplaced."[24] The partnership of Walker and Hutchinson was dissolved in 1853, and the ill-feeling between the two led to the establishment of the Pantechnetheca, which became a bitter rival.

[23]Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. V, p. 13.
[24]*Ibid.*, p. 14.

The business centre long continued to be King Street, but while in earlier years it had been as far east as New (Jarvis) Street, it now extended to shops west of Yonge as well, and the street as a whole was the fashionable promenade of the city for several decades. On King Street West, opposite the old *Globe* office, was S. P. Coleman, "London Practical Hatter and Furrier", who advertised "Hats that [illegible] Hats". Michie & Co.'s grocery store was in its present location. Founded by Alexander Ogilvie on May 1, 1835, as a first class grocery and liquor store, the establishment was located on land formerly owned by Jordan Post, pioneer watchmaker, whose wife Melinda is commemorated by the street near by. George Michie, senior clerk, became a partner in 1840, and for nearly a century the family has operated the business through the many vicissitudes of changing conditions. For many years, until the nineties, the parade ground of Toronto's rank and fashion led past the door, and, though the shopping district has to a very considerable extent moved up Yonge, Michie's has survived nearly a century of competition and depressions, department stores and chain stores—the only old grocery store still in operation. Dack's, Ltd., Shoemakers since 1835, and [illegible]. Score & Son, Tailors, founded in England in 1787 and in Canada in 1837, have also been a century on King Street.

Another old firm—Rice Lewis & Son—commenced its long career in 1847 "at the sign of the padlock" on the north-east corner of King and Toronto Streets, H. S. Scott & Co. having established the business under the name "Wellington House" a few years earlier. As was customary in those days, Rice Lewis' family resided in the rooms above the store. In 1858 the firm, "across from the post office" of that day, advertises among other hardware "Joseph Rodgers & Sons' cutlery, James Dixon & Sons' Electro Plate, and the newest designs of Papier Maché trays".[26] The sign over the main door on King Street was a padlock, and a large padlock stood on the sidewalk near the entrance. In 1888 the firm removed to a new building a short distance westward, at the north-east corner of King and Victoria Streets, and there, until the autumn of 1933, Rice Lewis & Son, Ltd., remained in business.

[26]See *Descriptive Catalogue of the Provincial Exhibition, 1858.*

Continuing the enumeration of some of the main mercantile establishments of 1858 we note that Rutherford and Saunders were Tailors and Hosiers at 52-54 King Street West, and advertised 15% discount for cash. Just west of Bay Street on King was J. H. Swann's "Ladies' Outfitting, Juvenile Clothing, and Baby-Linen Establishment", and the owner announces himself "Importer of French and English Infant and Juvenile Clothing. Ladies' and Childrens' Under-clothing of every description". In the St. Lawrence Buildings was John Ritchey's Dry Goods Store, where customers were assured quality goods "at such prices as will defy competition". At 14 King Street West, "at the Sign of the Three-dialled Illuminated Clock", D. G. Carnegie sold watches, clocks and jewellery "at about cost prices!"

Confectioners and caterers who were famous long before Coles', and previous even to Nasmith's and Webb's, are recalled by the advertisements of George Coleman, 69 King Street West, and A. Clark, 171 King Street East. Coleman specialised upon pastry cooking, and gave particular attention to "weddings, private parties, public soirées, etc." Clarke announced himself as "manufacturer of all kinds of plain & fancy bread, crackers, biscuits, tarts, sugar sticks, comfits, lozenges, almonds, mottoes, and all kinds of candies", as well as confectionery, pastry and bread. "Temperance drinks of all kinds" were also dispensed at this store.

Of special interest to females was the Beauty Parlour of that day—the "Antitinpacpliec, Misses Bates (from London, England), proprietors". Announcing themselves as "Ladies' Ornamental Hair Manufacturers", at 31 King Street West, the sisters advertise their capabilities as follows:

"Ladies' hair cut, shampooed, dyed and dressed. Families and schools attended. Children's hair fashionably cut. Fronts, bangs, bunches, caps and wigs made at the shortest notice. Hair dye and depilatory kept. Sole agents for Professor Liebeg's Hair Wash."

A fireside amusement long of outstanding popularity and still persisting in less sophisticated homes is called to mind by the advertisement of the Toronto Stereoscope Depot. In addition to views of Niagara Falls and vicinity,

and of British and continental scenery, there was a series of "magnificent views of Egyptian ruins". The establishment, operated by Thomas Maclear in "the Masonic Buildings, [illegible] doors north of the Post Office, Toronto Street", also carried a line of "Ladies' reticules, bags, portmonais, and other fancy goods, British manufactured writing and other papers, and a general stock of stationery wholesale".

In the eighteen-fifties Yonge Street was beginning to develop as a merchandising district, though for many years it did not rival King Street. At the corner of Yonge and Temperance was Dodgson, Shields & Morton, "whose stock of teas, coffees, sugars, tobaccos, and general groceries is large and choice, and imported expressly for their extensive retail trade". Their advertisement is suggestive of the abuses which frequently characterised business dealings in the fifties, for they state as one of their main aims, "to make no misrepresentations in effecting sales".

On Yonge Street also was J. & W. Cowan's Dry Goods Store. This firm was located on the west side, three doors north of Adelaide, then numbered 126 Yonge Street; and the unique part of their advertisement lies in its being in verse—in fact in the rhyming couplet. The allusions to competitors were no doubt appreciated by the readers of the day—and especially those to the "Pantec" and Golden Lion:

FACTS, NOT FABLES

"'Mongst American cities, in numbers a host,
Toronto, in puffing, of late rules the roast;
Such dodges as travelling circuses try
Are employed to entice the unwary to buy:
Coarse daubings of monsters, called Kings and Sepoys,
Adorn our shop fronts and amuse little boys,
While rival establishments rush to the fray,
With jolly old Lions and young cubs at play,
Fill our papers each morning with empty tirade,
Until lies are considered the staple of trade.
Must all Dry Goods Houses descend to pretence,
Nor dare advertise in the language of sense?
Not believing that clap-trap can carry much weight,
That our Fall Goods are here we beg plainly to state;
In Blankets and Flannels large stocks we now show,

Which will prove on inspection decidedly low.
White Shirtings at prices exceedingly rare;
Cloths, Ties, Shirts and Vestings for Gentlemen's wear;
New styles in Rich Dress Goods, too long to define,
From two to three dollars, and some eight and nine;
New Delaines and New Cashmeres, the cheapest in town,
The white spots on blue and the red spots on brown;
New Prints, in fast colours, of patterns quite killing,
Beginning at sixpence, up to a York shilling;
New Gloves and New Gauntlets and New Scotch Wool Hose,
The wearers we warrant will never be froze;
Shirt bosoms stitched neater than if made by hand,
From one and three upwards, attention command;
New Capes in Black Cloth which you've only to see
To acknowledge them cheap at eleven and three;
Felt Hats, Plumes and Flowers, the fair ones to grace,
Ribbons, Blondes, Veils, Sewed Collars, and Black and White Lace:
In short, every article known in the trade,
So low, no abatement in price can be made.
Then let all who are anxious good value to find
Bear Yonge Street and Cowan's Cheap Store in their mind."

Another Yonge Street establishment was that of J. T. Shapter, chemist and druggist, who announces himself as an "Importer of English and Foreign Drugs, Chemicals, Patent Medicines, Surgical Instruments, Elastic Bandages and Stockings, Trusses, Enemas, Perfumery, and Druggists' Sundries". The patent medicines of the eighteen-fifties included the Castillian Hair Invigorator, Urquhart's Botanic Toothache Drops, and Dr. Buchan's Aperient & Digestive Bitters; of the last-named the ingredients "are exclusively from the vegetable kingdom", and the diseases cured included almost every complaint known to medicine (as well as many unknown)—from Lowness of Spirits, Heartburn and Flatulency, to "unpleasant sensation of fulness after eating", St. Vitus' Dance, and Marasmus, or "wasting of flesh in childhood and early youth".

For many years King Street remained the fashionable shopping district, and "doing King" appears to have been a major sport in the seventies and eighties. A contemporary

description outlines in an interesting ■ somewhat pompous and exaggerated style the social predominance of King Street:

"Between the two principal streets of the Western Capital is a great gulf, made by the inflexible laws of society and fashion—a gulf as great as separates the Bowery from Broadway, the Rue de Rivoli from Rue Montparnasse, or Regent Street and Rotten Row from the humble thoroughfares of Pentonville and the City Road.

"The buildings on King Street are greater and grander than their neighbors on Yonge; the shops are larger and dearer; and last but not least King Street ■ honoured by the daily presence of the aristocracy, while Yonge is given over to the business man, the middle-class and the beggar. Amid the upper classes there is a performance that goes on daily that is known among *habitués* as 'doing King'. It consists principally of marching up and down a certain part of that street at ■ certain hour, performing, as it were, *ko-tou* to the goddess of Fashion, and sacrificing to her sister divinity of Society.

"At three o'clock in the afternoon the first stragglers appear on the scene, which extends perhaps a quarter of a mile. These consists principally of young ladies, whose proper place should be at school, and young men attired in the height of fashion. By the time these ardent devotees have paraded a few times, the regular *habitués* make their appearance, and till six o'clock in the evening one side—for one side only is patronised—is crowded to excess.

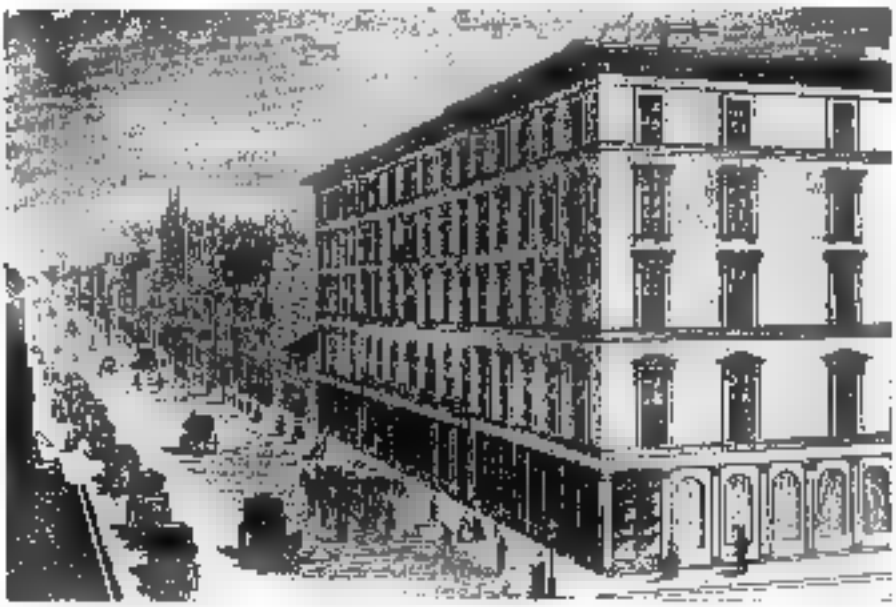
"It is rather considered 'the thing' to patrol King Street in this manner; and of a fine evening every one who belongs to the *élite*, as well as many who do not, may be seen perseveringly trudging up and down, no doubt to their great comfort and to the intense discomfiture and dismay of others less smiled upon by nature or less favoured by their tailors or their dressmakers. King Street is in a way a great social 'Change, where everybody meets everybody and his wife; where the latest fashions are exhibited, and the last quotations of the matrimonial market are exchanged.

"Would you see the newest style in hats or panniers? They are to be seen on King Street. And would you know

Canadian Illustrated News. G. Stanbrook.

"Doing King" in the Seventies

Promenading the south side of King Street was long a major sport. "Where everybody meets everybody and his wife; where the latest fashions are exhibited, and the last quotations of the matrimonial market are exchanged."



Canadian Illustrated News.

King Street in 1870

In the foreground is the Rossin House, now the Prince George Hotel. The taxicabs of the day are lined up across the street. Horse-cars did not then operate on King West, but an omnibus may be seen.

JOURNAL

of the

COMMON COUNCIL

OF THE

City of Toronto,

Commencing on Thursday, the 3rd Day of April 1834,

in the 4th Year of the Reign of King William IV.

William Lyon Mackenzie, *Esquire,*

Mayor;

SIR JOHN COLBORNE, K.C.B.
Lieutenant Governor.

FIRST MINUTE BOOK OF THE CITY COUNCIL, 1834

how many young swells are doing nothing for a living? You are sure to find them on King Street. Would you wish to hear the last imprudence of young Harum Scarum, or the progress of Miss Slowcome's engagement? You may be sure before you take half-a-dozen turns some conversant, intelligent busy-body of your acquaintance will have whispered the facts of the case in your ear, all of which he has 'On the best authority, sir'. It is on King Street that Clelius makes his appointment with Clelia for their afternoon walk; that Thersites, jealousy-stricken, scowls at Adonis; and that Pomponia depreciates the value of her dear friend Amaltheus' new silk and trimmings. There Cornelia, the careful mother, brings out her treasures and exhibits to the public gaze those desirable lots of which she is so anxious to dispose on advantageous terms. While far above all, Diogenes, in his garret, little more roomy or commodious than the ancient 'tub', looks down upon the motley throng, notices their petty follies and foibles, and thanks his lucky stars that he is not as other men."[36]

There are still many people living who have vivid memories of the Toronto of half a century ago, and who recall the King Street shopping district which has just been described. Fred Williams lists some of the business symbols which were in evidence at the time—and in some instances, notably in the case of barber shops, still persist:

"The Golden Lion of Robert Walker and Sons, the clothiers.

The padlock and key of Rice Lewis & Company.

The acorn of Oak Hall.

The mammoth of Thomas Thompson, the clothier.

The griffin of Petley & Hughes, the clothiers.

The Queen Victoria of Lawson's Victoria Tea House.

The book of Brown Brothers, the booksellers and stationers—all on King East.

And then on Yonge Street:

The golden boot of William West.

The bear of William Lugsden.

The Indian and the Highlander at two tobacconists.

The big hat at Perry's."[37]

[36] *Canadian Illustrated News*, September 3, 1870.

[37] Fred Williams: *In Toronto Fifty Years Ago.* (Toronto *Mail and Empire*, January 17, 1934.)

And there was, too, John Wanless' aluminum clock, and Ambrose Kent's "Indian clock" with two figures in the rear alternating in striking out the time on circular drums; both of these were on the site of the present Robert Simpson Company. James Scott's Golden Fleece store advertised woollens by a gilded lamb over the entrance, and Holt, Renfrew's establishment on King Street East spórted its sign "Purveyor to the Queen"—which has more recently become "By Special Appointment of His Majesty King George the Fifth."

In spite, however, of the undoubted predominance of the south side of King Street, it appeared to Timothy Eaton in 1869 that Yonge Street was the place to establish business. With the previous experience of a general store in St. Mary's, he announced a striking departure from generally accepted rules of business—"One price to all, and spot cash". On December 8, 1869, he personally unlocked the door of his dry goods store at 178 Yonge Street, then the south-west corner of Yonge and Queen. Seven years later the small store was extended forty feet in the rear, and the stock increased by the addition of floor coverings and bedding. In 1877 a second floor was devoted to a show room for cloaks, millinery and similar apparel, and the sales staff had increased from two men, a woman, and a boy to 20 clerks and a pony delivery wagon! In 1883 the business was removed to its present site, and in 1884 the first catalogue—of 32 pages—was distributed at the Industrial Exhibition. The original mail-order staff comprised a woman to select the goods and a boy to tie up the parcels. Eaton's great success undoubtedly resulted in part from the policy of purchasing for cash in world markets, but there are many other factors in the great development signified by the 40,000 employees under the Eaton name, and the hundreds of millions of dollars of annual turnover. An interesting survival of other times when people adhered very strongly to their convictions is found in connection with the Eaton name. The founder of the business decided that he would sell neither playing cards nor tobacco, and this remained the policy of the firm long after his death; even today, though cards are sold and one may obtain cigarette-lighters and other smokers' accessories, tobacco

does not form part of Eaton's stock. Until 1933, in fact, smoking was prohibited in that delightful restaurant—the Georgian Room—, but in that year the demands of women smokers led to the removal of the restriction.

Following close upon Timothy Eaton, a 38-year old Scotchman, Robert Simpson, established a small dry goods store near Queen and Yonge Streets in 1872. Toronto had then a population of 56,000 and the streets were just beginning to be improved by cedar block paving. Like Eaton, Robert Simpson had previous experience, having become a clerk in a dry goods store in Newmarket eighteen years before. His appearance was rather impressive, and he possessed a thorough knowledge of dry goods and the requirements of the public and their taste and fancy. By 1881 the business had so grown that he moved to a larger store to the southward, where he required thirteen clerks, and inaugurated a horse-and-wagon delivery service. In the new store he introduced ready-to-wear goods, millinery and groceries, as well as corsets and other intimate feminine apparel the display and sale of which embarrassed many a lady and shocked the general public.[28] These developments laid the foundation of the department system. In 1895 a severe fire destroyed a large new store erected just three months earlier, as well as all other Simpson buildings from Richmond Street to Queen, the fire having started in the motor room which provided power for the up-to-the-minute "cash railway". The store was immediately rebuilt, and in 1897, when Simpson died and his business passed into the hands of the Robert Simpson Company, there were 500 employees and a seven-storey building. From that time the growth of Simpson's was similar to the development of Eaton's, the

[28]Those who are interested in the steps by which *lingerie* has progressed from the unknown to the commonplace—from something unheard-of to a pre-eminent position in advertising placard and billboard,— and who would follow the vagaries of fashion in women's apparel down through the centuries, are advised to read *Unmentionables: From Fig Leaves to Scanties*, published late in 1933 from the pen of Robert Cortes Holliday, an American essayist of established reputation. While the book is written in a light and humorous vein, its pages are characterised by scholarly research worthy of any historian, and the result of the author's enthusiasm is a classic study of manners and customs as well as costume.

two great department stores having long since changed the Toronto shopping centre from King Street to Queen and Yonge.

Recent developments in merchandising are outside the scope of this chapter, but the facilities, conveniences and services provided by the modern department store show progress as great as ■ any other field of activity. In recent years chain stores have provided effective competition in many lines of business, and, with the department stores and their extensive mail order service, have made it increasingly difficult for the small independent shop—so characteristic of an earlier period—to operate successfully. We live in a day of big business—amalgamations, trusts and combines—but the small merchant with the personal touch has not yet followed the small tradesman into oblivion. Will the future see mass buying restricted and the "little fellow" protected by legislative enactment, or will the gradual disappearance of the smaller establishments be considered merely another evidence of economic evolution and progress?

CHAPTER XV

Tradesmen and Manufacturers of Other Days

Manufacturing in its early phases was in reality "making by hand"—as the word implies—and many of our Canadian pioneers were skilled mechanics as well as farmers. In the towns a citizen not infrequently engaged in several occupations—in fact he sometimes had to be a jack-of-all-trades if he was to support his family. In early days, too, relations between employer and employee more closely approximated the conditions which obtained under the mediaeval guild system than those of modern times. Apprentices were indentured for a period of seven years, and were to a considerable extent the property of the master. Several notices concerning escaped apprentices are to be found in the *Gazette*, and rewards of from 6d. to $10 are offered for their return.

There were a number of slaves in early York, largely personal servants of officials, for the Act of the first parliament, while providing for the gradual extinction of slavery, did not liberate those then in the province. Among notices concerning slaves is the following, offering a negro woman for sale in York in 1800:

"To Be Sold—A healthy, strong Negro Woman, about 30 years of age; understands cookery, laundry and the taking care of poultry. N.B.—She can dress ladies' hair. Enquire of the printers."[1]

The Hon. Peter Russell once advertised two slaves for sale, one of whom "perfectly understands making soap and candles":

"A Black Woman named Peggy, aged about forty years, and a black boy, her son, named Jupiter, aged about fifteen years, both of them the property of the subscriber. The woman is a tolerable cook and washer-woman and perfectly understands making soap and candles.

[1] *Upper Canada Gazette*, December 20, 1800.

"The boy is tall and strong of his age and has been employed in country business, but brought up principally as a house servant; they are each of them servants for life. The price for the woman is one hundred and fifty dollars, for the boy two hundred dollars, payable in three years with interest from the day of sale, and to be properly secured by bond, etc. But one-fourth less will be taken in ready money."[2]

In the days when many people were illiterate, trade symbols were commonly affixed to the entrance of shops, and in York customers were led inside not by a signboard indicating the name of the owner but by such old English emblems as the Pestle and Mortar, the Crowned Boot, the Tea-chest, the Axe, the Saw, the Fowling-piece, the Plough, the Golden Fleece, the Anvil and Sledge-hammer, and the Horse-shoe. There was one, too, which was not an English survival,—that of the Indian Trapper, which indicated the dealer in furs.

The first carpenters and builders in Upper Canada were the soldiers, and upon the arrival of settlers every man was his own builder. The construction of log houses did not call for much specialised skill, and there was in the earliest pioneer period but little variation in the architecture or appearance of home, workshop, store, church or mill. One of the first skilled tradesmen in York was Eliphalet Hale, who announces in the *Gazette* of March 30, 1799, that he will come from Newark (Niagara) to York "to receive proposals for, and commence bricklaying, lathing and plastering".[3] Hale was a very important and useful citizen of the early town, erecting many houses of improved construction, as well as receiving a number of contracts for the building of roads and bridges, the removing of stumps from the streets, and similar work. A few years later he advertises that he has become a shoemaker:

"Take notice: the subscriber takes this method to inform the public that he carries on the boot and shoe making business, the next door north of Alexander Wood's, Esq., where Suwarrow, common and half boots, fine and coarse shoes, slippers, etc., are made by Eliphalet Hale.

[2]*Ibid.*, February 15, 1806. [3]*Ibid.*, March 30, 1799.

"N.B.—Written or verbal orders from any gentlemen will be thankfully received and punctually attended to."[4]

Perhaps Daniel Tiers was the first chairmaker in York. Most manufactured articles were brought from Montreal by bateau, but Tiers announces that he is enlarging his business and can supply customers with "armed chairs, settees, and dining ditto; fan-back and brace-back chairs". The interesting fact is also mentioned that "he very shortly expects a quantity of different paints; it will then be in his power to finish his chairs in the best manner".[5] Paint, it may be explained, was not easily obtainable in early times.

Another famous early trade was that of the saddler and harness-maker. Calvin Banister, located on the north side of King Street, near George, was perhaps the first practical saddler in York. His announcement follows:

"The subscriber informs the inhabitants of York and its vicinity that he has taken the shop next door east of Mr. Mosley's dwelling house, and on the 1st of September next will commence the saddling business in all its different branches, and will be happy to supply all who favour him with their commands.

"Harness and all kinds of repairing will be done on the shortest notice, by the public's humble servant,

"Calvin Banister."[6]

Even a watchmaker was established in the diminutive capital of the province:

"Elisha Purdey—Watchmaker—begs leave to inform his friends and the public that he has taken a room in the house of Mr. Marther, where he repairs and cleans watches of all kinds in the best manner and on the most reasonable terms. All orders left for him at said house will be duly attended to. He has a small but elegant assortment of jewellery for sale."[7]

At least as early as 1799 York had a fashionable tailor, for one glorying in the unique name of Evean Eveans, with the added lustre of hailing from London, announces his business in a very neat note:

[4] *Ibid.*, March 15, 1806.
[5] *Ibid.*, January 30, 1802.
[6] *Ibid.*, August 22, 1807.
[7] *Ibid.*, April 19, 1800.

"Evean Eveans, taylor and habit maker, (From London), having taken a room in a small building belonging to Mr. Willcocks for the purpose of prosecuting the duties of his trade, begs leave to inform the ladies and gentlemen of York that he has commenced the above business, and to those who may honour him with their commands he flatters himself, from his experience, to afford satisfaction."[8]

A few years later we find a competitor, this time from New York:

"Samuel Bell, fashioner, lately arrived from New York, informs the public that he has commenced business at his shop, kept at the Widow Osborne's, facing Capt. Kendrick's, where he will carry on the fashionable tailoring business with the greatest despatch and on the most reasonable terms.—Ladies and gentlemen wishing to favour him with their custom may depend on the strictest punctuality.

"York, July 12th, 1805."[9]

Samuel Jackson commenced business as a hatter about the same time. He hopes to receive cash for his hats, will accept furs or produce, but will have none of credit:

"Samuel Jackson informs his friends and the public in general that he is commencing the hatting business opposite to Thos. Ridout, Esq., in the town of York, where he will take all kinds of furs, lamb's wool and country produce, or cash itself will be received for hats, but no credit need be asked."[10]

One Rock calls to our attention that there was at least one hair-dresser in York in 1800. In a day of wigs and beards, puffs and curls, the hairdresser had little of the barber about him, but his establishment was the beauty parlour of the day:

"Rock, Hair Dresser, from London, begs leave to inform the ladies and gentlemen of York and its vicinity that he will open shop on the 25th instant, in Mr. Cooper's house, next the Printing office. All orders left for him at said place will be punctually attended to. N.B.—Shop customers and others will be dressed on the most reasonable terms."[11]

York had bakers almost from its commencement, and

[8] *Ibid.*, June 8, 1799.
[9] *Ibid.*, July 20, 1805.
[10] *Ibid.*, February 9, 1805.
[11] *Ibid.*, April 5, 1800.

the early industry appears to have centred around Jordan's York Hotel, at one time the town's most important hostelry. In the rear of Jordan's, detached from the other buildings, there long stood a solid structure of brick, circular and dome-shaped without and vaulted within, and of considerable height and diameter. This was Paul Marian's public oven. Marian, or Morin, a Frenchman, was not the first baker in York, for he refers to a predecessor in his announcement of November, 1801:

"Paul Morin begs leave to inform his friends and the public that he has declined carrying on the baking business for Mr. Beaman and now carries it on in all its branches on his own account at the house formerly occupied by Mr. Beaman, where they may be supplied with bread at the rate of four lbs. for a shilling; biscuits, buns, cakes, etc. He hopes by assiduity and attention to his business to merit encouragement.

"N.B.—Any person sending flour to be baked by him will receive seven lbs. of bread for every six lbs. of flour."[12]

Morin was contemporary with another baker, François Belcour, who, though slightly outbid by Morin in the amount of bread given to those who brought flour to be baked (for he advertised only "pound for pound"), was yet, perhaps, a little ahead of him in service, for he delivered bread, cakes and buns, and also baked meat in his bake-oven for any who wished. For the convenience of small families Belcour made bread in loaves of two, three and four pounds' weight. In 1804 Morin advertised "nine loaves for a dollar, on paying ready money", but he does not state the size.[13] Many years after Jordan's ceased to function as a hotel, Morin's bake-oven, repaired and somewhat extended, rendered valuable service, for in it was baked by Messrs. Jackes and Reynolds a large supply of bread furnished in 1838-9 to the Regulars and militia in Toronto.

Imported wines were greatly favoured by the gentry of York, and breweries might consequently be expected to appear somewhat later than in other towns, particularly since there was a considerable manufacture of birch beer, a popular drink hardly to be classed with the regular prod-

[12] *Ibid.*, November 14, 1801. [13] *Ibid.*, May 19, 1804.

uct. The first advertisement relative to brewing is that of Robert Henderson in 1805, and it is probable that he had been in business for several years previous to that date:

"The subscriber informs his customers and the public in general that he has commenced brewing for the season; and is now ready to deliver strong and table beer in barrels and half barrels, of good quality, and intends to begin brewing his keeping ale for the ensuing summer, in the course of next month—and pledges himself that more attention than ever shall be paid the quality of his keeping beer. Robert Henderson. N.B.—Cash paid for barley, wheat and other country produce. An active boy wanted."[14]

In the *York Gazette* of November 13, 1811, appears an announcement by the Henderson estate, offering for rent for one year "a malt house, Brew House, etc. with all the implements and utensils for carrying on the brewing."[15] The site of this (probably the first) brewery is not given, but it was no doubt located on the south-east corner of Sherbourne and Duchess Streets. An authority describes the manufactory as consisting in 1820 of "a stone malt house and granary, a range of small frame buildings along Duchess Street, where the malt was ground in a handmill, and a row of arches dug in the bank, finished with masonry and covered with earth. These arches, which extended fifty feet along the south side of the lot, were used for storing the beer and fermenting tubs".[16] The malt house and granary was being used a century later as an automobile supply shop, but all the other buildings have long since disappeared. Thomas Stoyell and John Doel were among the later proprietors of the establishment, Doel removing to a brewery at the north-west corner of Bay and Adelaide Streets, adjoining his home.

Among the most typical manufactures of the pioneer period were the making of candles by the chandler, and of soap and potash in a potashery, the two types of work being frequently carried on in one plant. Many people, even in towns, made their own candles and soap, while some

[14] *Ibid.*, September 28, 1805.

[15] *York Gazette*, November 13, 1811.

[16] John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Canada: What Art Has Done for Canadian History*. 1917. p. 141.

farmers engaged also in the more complicated potash manufacture. Other householders were content to accumulate grease and exchange it for soap and candles when the chandler called at their door. Among the earliest tallow chandlers in York was William Smith, who followed that occupation at least as early as 1810. There was a great trade with England in wood ashes and potash, which is recalled by the following advertisement:

"Ashes wanted. Seven pence, Halifax currency, per bushel for house ashes will be given delivered at the Potash Works (opposite the jail), and five pence, same currency, taken from the houses; also eight pence, New York currency, for field ashes delivered at the works. It is recommended to those persons who have ashes to be careful in keeping them dry, otherwise they will not be taken. Any quantity will be received at a time by W. Allan, York."[17]

W. Allan held in the following year (1801) the offices of Collector of Duties and Inspector of Pot and Pearl Ashes and Flour, and in later years he was Postmaster; but he was not the only dealer in ashes, for Duke Kendrick erected a potashery on lot No. 7, west side of Yonge Street, in December, 1799. Under the heading "Ashes! Ashes! Ashes!" he advertises the price he is prepared to pay, with the explanation (which had often to be made in pioneer days) that "he conceives it his duty to inform those who may have ashes to dispose of, that it will not be in his power to pay cash, but merchandise at cash price".[18]

In later years, just before York became the city of Toronto, Peter Freeland's soap and candle factory was erected on the wharf at the foot of Yonge Street. Freeland was born in Glasgow, Scotland, and in 1819 emigrated to America. Soon afterwards he removed to Montreal and, with his brother William, carried on the soap and candle business until 1830, whereupon Peter removed to York.

[17] *Upper Canada Gazette*, November 22, 1800. "N. Y. C." (New York currency) was [illegible].50 to the £, or 12½ cents to the "York Shilling"; while in "Quebec", "Halifax" or "Provincial" currency the shilling was 20 cents and the £=$4.00. The £ Sterling had its traditional value of $4.86⅔, and there was in circulation a variety of miscellaneous coins which increased as the years passed. (See also pp. 238-9.)

[18] *Ibid.*, December 21, 1799.

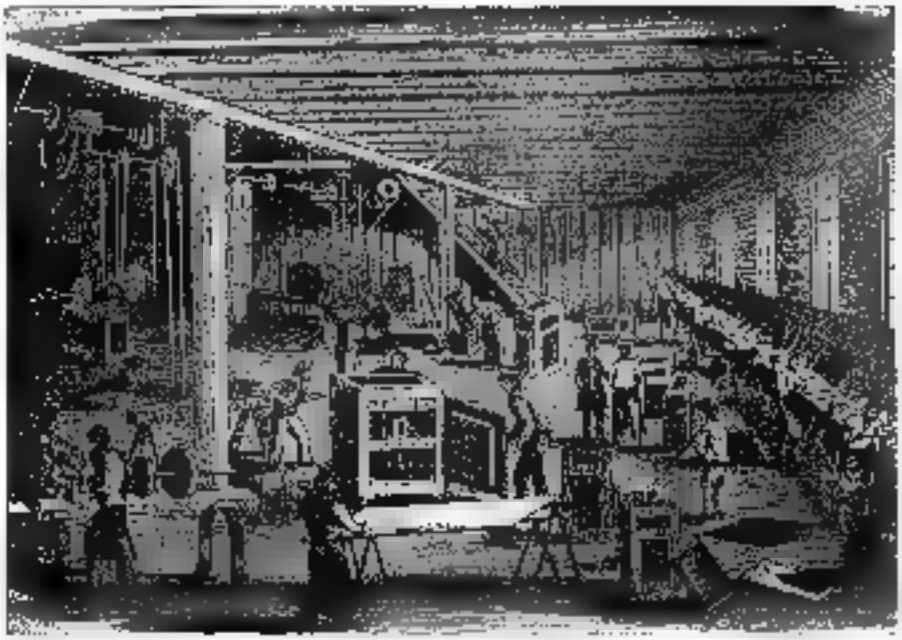
Concerning the factory which he opened here John Ross Robertson says:

"The land, and land covered by water, upon which the building was erected, was purchased, the west half from Judge Sherwood in 1832, and the east half in 1836 from Peter McDougall. The factory was frame and stood on the wharf at the foot of Yonge Street on the east side. The water lot extended from Scott to Yonge Street, and from the top of the bank to the Windmill Line, and, owing to the fact that almost the whole property was land covered with water, the soap works had to be built on cribs sunk with stone. The dimensions of the building were ninety feet by forty, and three storeys high, having large double doors in each end. Some of the iron soap-kettles and sections of kettles were imported from Scotland, as at that early date there were no facilities for making them in Canada. The balance of the machinery or plant was made in Canada, excepting the candle moulds, which had to be imported from the United States.

"The two large sheds shown in the foreground of the sketch, that is the long one to the right and that in the centre, were used for storing wood ashes; and alkali for converting the tallow, grease, rosin, etc., into soap was extracted. The lime was used for causticising the above-named alkali by mixing it in certain proportions with the ashes previous to leaching with water. The ice was used in warm weather for the purpose of hardening the candles in the moulds, so that they might be more easily extracted. The large shed to the left was a storehouse, where rendered tallow in barrels was stored, the supply being drawn from Canada, the United States and Russia. Other raw materials were used in large quantities, such as palm oil from the west coast of Africa, and rosin, principally from the Carolinas."[10]

The old factory recalls the merry days when Toronto Bay was full of wild ducks. It is said that they were "so plentiful around the wharf that Mr. Freeland used to shoot them from the factory door or windows. Mr. Richard Tinning was one day walking along the shore when some ducks

[10]John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*, 1894-1914, Vol. I, p. 182.



Canadian Illustrated News.

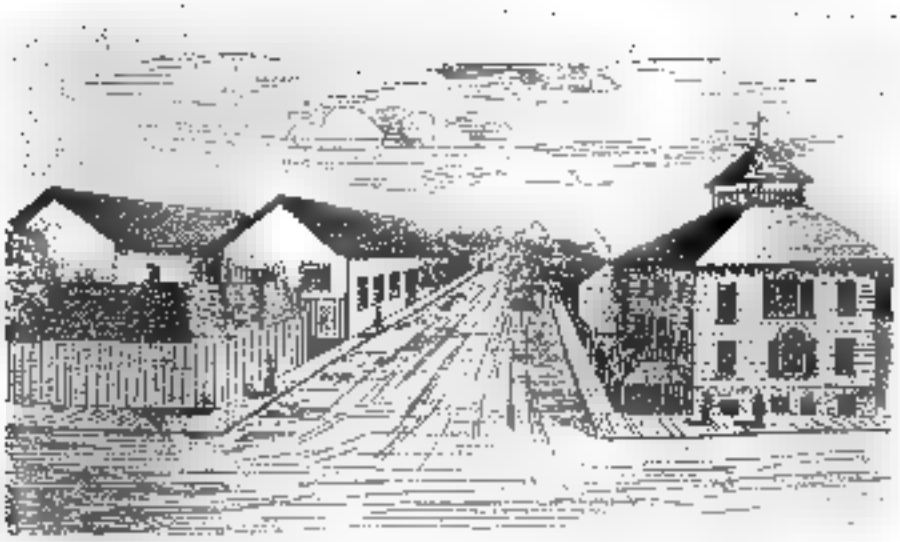
INTERIOR OF THE TAYLOR SAFE WORKS, 1862

The days of hand labour and primitive machines are well exemplified in this illustration.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

PETER FREELAND'S SOAP AND CANDLE FACTORY, 1832-65

This well-known establishment was located on a wharf at the foot of Yonge Street.



Reproduced by Courtesy of James Acton, Esq.

Carrying Shed
Piles of Tanbark
Bark Mill
Office
John Ketchum's Home

Looking West at Yonge and Newgate (Adelaide) Streets in 1834.

This interesting sketch of the Ketchum establishment, which at one time furnished most of the Home District with leather, is based upon a description provided in 1880 by the 90-year old foreman.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

John Doel's Home and Brewery, Adelaide and Bay Streets

As the district was in the outskirts of early Toronto it was considered a secluded place for the meetings of William Lyon Mackenzie's "Patriots".

flew up from the water. He fired at them without looking where the shot was going, and it crashed into the windows of the factory. Mr. Freeland ran out with a number of men to repel the invaders. In the factory was a tame muskrat that used to dine on fish caught by the men. The fishermen dried their nets alongside of the factory, and one day the muskrat got into the net and was being hauled in. He swam around inside of the wooden floats trying to make his escape; finding that he could not dive under them, he suddenly sprang over and thus made his escape."[20]

Old inhabitants of Toronto remembered the days when the tallow for Freeland's factory used to be transported from Rochester in schooners. On one occasion "a schooner thus loaded was caught in a terrible storm off the Island, and the sailors threw the cargo of tallow into the lake. At the same time there was a considerable amount of salt on board, which might much better have been thrown overboard, instead of the more valuable tallow, the salt being in the hold and the tallow on deck. For weeks they were fishing up this tallow along the shore of the lake. Many tricks were practised by these 'Yankee' tallow merchants, as, for instance, on opening one of the barrels a large stone was found imbedded in it, weighing about one hundred pounds, which Mr. Freeland had paid for as tallow."[21]

During the Rebellion of 1837 there was a scarcity of labour, and Freeland was compelled to run the soap into boxes instead of cutting it into bars; it was then sold in large masses, just as the boxes had moulded it. After factory hours some of the men spent their time around the kitchen fire moulding bullets. But those who made soap at Freeland's would hardly recognise today's process of manufacture.

A number of York's early manufactories were located on the River Don, some of them outside the limits of the town. An editorial note, probably written by William Lyon Mackenzie, outlines the scope of enterprises in operation in 1827, and makes some suggestions for the expansion of industry in the Don Valley:

"About three miles out of town, in the bottom of a deep ravine, watered by the River Don and bounded also by

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 183. [21] *Ibid.*

beautiful and verdant flats, are situated the York paper mill, distillery, and Mr. Shepard's axe-grinding machinery, and Messrs. Helliwell's large and extensive brewery. I went out to view these improvements a few days ago and returned much gratified with witnessing the paper manufacture in active operation; as also the bold and pleasing scenery on the banks of the Don. The river might be made navigable, with small expense, up to the brewery; and, if the surrounding lands were laid out in five-acre lots all the way to town, they would sell to great advantage."[32]

Among old-time breweries Doel's—famous as the meeting-place of the organisers of the Rebellion of 1837—and Bloor's, from which the great east-west thoroughfare takes its name, stand out prominently in Toronto's history. Previous to 1830 Joseph Bloor, an Englishman, was proprietor of the Farmers' Arms Inn, conveniently situated near the market-place. In his time that section of the city was usually called The Devil's Half Acre. About 1830 he removed to the village of Yorkville, and soon afterward established a brewery in the ravine north of the first concession road, now Bloor Street. The building and its surroundings are well described by John Ross Robertson:

"It was a low red-brick building one hundred feet long and fifty or sixty feet wide. It stood at the bottom of the ravine, on the south side of the creek, a little to the east of the present iron bridge at the head of Huntley Street. It was in operation in 1835, and probably for four or five years previous to that date. The stream which was larger then than now was dammed up at this point to give water-power for grinding. A big pond several acres in extent was thus made, and in the spring the water would back up nearly to Yonge Street. The brewery was reached by a roadway running down the ravine from Bloor Street at the head of Huntley Street. Picturesque as the spot is even now, it was still more so at that time when the woods were thicker and nature in her primeval beauty. At the top of the hill on the northern side stood the cottage of Charles Jarvis, from which steps led down the steep declivity. There was an entrance to the brewery at the south side and also on the east side."[33]

[32]The *Colonial Advocate*, August 9, 1827.
[33]Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 211.

The highway near which Bloor built his brewery was early known as the Sydenham Road, and for a time as St. Paul's Road. He and Sheriff Jarvis were prominent in laying out the village of Yorkville, which narrowly escaped the name Bloorville—as well as Rosedale and Cumberland, which were suggested. Bloor operated his brewery only a few years. On one occasion, when he was drawing sand from the Island, his team of horses broke through the ice and were drowned. At that time, it may be explained, all sand used for industrial purposes in Toronto was hauled from the Island—or, more accurately, the Peninsula.

In the same locality, but somewhat northward—beyond the Blue Hill Ravine—was once to be found "Rowland Burr's Folly". This large unfinished frame building, gable towards the street, long stood on the west side of Yonge, with all its windows boarded up. It was to have been a carding or fulling mill, worked by machinery driven by the stream in the valley below; but either the poor wool supply or deficiencies in the building and its location rendered Burr's scheme abortive.

Rowland Burr was one of those men who are ahead of their time. A born engineer and mechanic, his ideas and schemes were frequently too advanced for the circumstances in which he was placed. He was from Pennsylvania, and was full of the energy and enterprise characteristic of Americans; but he lacked the training which might frequently have saved him from errors of judgment. He was foremost among projectors of a canal between Lake Ontario and Georgian Bay *viâ* the valley of the Humber and Lake Simcoe, and personally surveyed the route and published a report upon it. He suggested a plank tramway on Yonge Street north of Lot (Queen), and a short plank road was at one time constructed over the worst part of the highway between that intersection and Yorkville. He was responsible also for the cutting down of the Blue Hill, long a terrible ordeal to travellers. Concerning his factory enterprises it may be said that he built, either for himself or others, a considerable number, and obtained and installed the complicated plant of each of them at a time when such undertakings were not easy to accomplish, owing to the backwardness of the country and the few facilities for importing and transporting heavy machinery inland.

A small manufactory of special interest because of its situation was Samuel Carr's Glue Factory, which stood until 1851 on the eastern side of Church Street between Gerrard and Carlton. Just beyond this establishment was a large patch of bush land, a popular rendezvous of the idle youths of Toronto. Church Street then terminated at Carlton Street, but a narrow sand road led to the edge of Molly Wood's Bush, as the district was long locally known.

Mention of an establishment for the manufacture of glue recalls that in June, 1846, the erection of factories was regulated by Council to prevent noisy or malodorous establishments from being built near any street line; to insist that all manufactories, blacksmith shops, etc., should be constructed of brick or stone with metal-covered roofs; and stipulating that factories "emitting any disagreeable effluvia" should have chimneys of sufficient height to carry them off. The occasion for these regulations appears to have been the application of Edwin Bell for permission to erect a soap and candle factory.

An industry early among the most important was that of the waggon-maker. As civilisation advanced, the making of various types of carriages and buggies developed; while in modern times most of such manufactories have passed out of existence, or—as in the case of the McLaughlin Carriage Factory, Oshawa,—entered the new field of motor-car construction. Between 1837 and 1849 John Bell operated a carriage and farm implement factory on Victoria Street north of Adelaide, where the Confederation Life building was later erected. His products were famous throughout the Home District and beyond as being constructed in the newest designs and furnished with the latest improvements. John Ross Robertson gives a good description of the life and times of John Bell:

"He made not only reaping machines but ploughs, harrows, cultivators, horse rakes, and seed drills. Besides this decidedly miscellaneous assortment of goods he built heavy waggons, and he also was able to make far more carriages, buggies and gigs than he could find purchasers for, those who were able in those days to indulge in the luxury of a carriage being very few and far between. That was the time when in early spring the old title of 'muddy', as ap-

plied to York, would do equally well for Toronto. At that season of the year waggons drawn by oxen might frequently be seen stuck fast in the mud on both Adelaide and Victoria Streets, requiring all the assistance that could be rendered them to extricate both the oxen and the vehicle they were attempting to draw from their very uncomfortable position.

"It is said by old residents in Toronto that Bell built the first reaping machines ever made in Canada. He was an exhibitor of these implements at the Provincial Exhibition held in Hamilton in 1847, and obtained a diploma for the same. This honorary distinction is still extant and in possession of one of the members of Mr. Bell's family. Bell only lived to complete about twenty reaping machines; he fell a victim to the cholera epidemic prevailing in Toronto in 1849.

"The late Mr. George Crookshank was one of Mr. Bell's earliest customers. He purchased one of the first, if not the very first machine built at the Victoria Street factory, and placed it on his Yonge Street farm ten miles north of Toronto. There was a great prejudice against these machines in the minds of the working classes of the day, as they were fearful that their introduction would affect the rate of wages. Threats to burn the barns and other farm buildings belonging to Mr. Crookshank were freely indulged in, but were, happily for all parties, never carried into effect. Bell claimed for his reaper that it would cut ten acres of wheat, oats or barley daily. Whether it was quite as great a success as this is not known, but at any rate Mr. Crookshank was fully satisfied with his bargain."[24]

Bell constructed also some of the first cabs used on Toronto streets. Like all ships, as well as the earliest locomotives, these pioneer vehicles of city transportation were named. The first that Bell made was called *General Wolfe*, while subsequent creations were dignified by the appellations *Wellington* and *General Brock*. Cabs soon became too numerous to bother naming, but in modern times the motor-car has displaced the horse-drawn vehicle to such an extent that cabs and carriages have become curiosities.

William Dixon's "Longacre Carriage Works", 53-55 Adelaide Street West, next door to Grand's Sale Stables, was

[24] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 773.

among the best known in Canada in the seventies and eighties. A contemporary description states that the building "is one of the most imposing and best-arranged carriage factories in the Province of Ontario. The style of architecture is Venetian, and the materials are red brick and cut stone with white brick dressings. The building contains four storeys and a basement.

"The basement is used as the blacksmith's shop and iron-working department. The ground and first floors are used as show rooms, and the stock on hand embraces some fine specimens of the carriage-builder's art in buggies, phaetons, landaus and family carriages, some of them being marvels of beautiful finish and perfect workmanship. The upper floors of the building are devoted to the various departments of the trade, and the repairing of all kinds of vehicles, sleighs, cutters, etc.

"Mr. Dixon first began business in this city in 1857, at that time doing all the work himself, and since then the business has developed until now (1877) he is the head of the largest carriage-building establishment in the Dominion. . . . . A large number of carriages are built by Mr. Dixon, his average build at present being from 300 to 400 *per annum*, and these are shipped to all parts of the Dominion, and occasionally to the States and Europe."[28]

Among the most important early foundries was Good's, located on the east side of Yonge Street, a short distance north of Queen. Ploughs, stoves, and other heavy hardware were turned out by this factory for many years, but it is chiefly remembered now as the place where Ontario's first locomotive, the *Toronto*, was constructed. There may be a few people still living who can recall the notable sight as the *Toronto* was slowly and laboriously urged through the streets from Good's Toronto Locomotive Works southward to its destination on the line of the old Northern Railway. In an issue of the *Canadian Journal* [illegible] [illegible] lithograph of the locomotive, and the following account:

"We have much pleasure in presenting our readers with [illegible] drawing of the first locomotive engine constructed in Canada, and indeed, we believe, in any British colony. The *Toronto* [illegible] certainly no beauty, nor is she distinguished for

[28] J. Timperlake: *Illustrated Toronto, Past and Present*. 1877. p. 305.

any peculiarity in construction, but she affords a very striking illustration of our progress in the mechanical arts, and of the growing wants of the country. The *Toronto* was built at the Toronto Locomotive Works, which were established by Mr. Good in October, 1852. The order for the *Toronto* was received in February, 1853, for the Ontario, Simcoe and Huron Union Railroad. The engine was completed on the 16th of April and put on the track the 26th of the same month. Her dimensions are as follows: cylinder 16 inches diameter, stroke 22 inches, driving wheel 5 feet 6 inches in diameter, length of internal fire box 4 feet 6 inches, weight of engine 25 tons, number of tubes 150, diameter of tubes [illegible] inches."[24]

In 1832 Charles Perry was the proprietor of a foundry in York, and, in addition to the regular products usually associated with such manufactories, he entered into the work of supplying the latest type of printing presses to the printers of York and elsewhere. In the same year Messrs. W. B. Sheldon, F. R. Dutcher, W. A. Dutcher, Samuel Andrus, J. and B. Vannorman advertised their foundry, which was long among the most prominent factories in Toronto. Their announcement is interesting not only because of its description of the plant but also owing to its products, many of which are now old-fashioned—if not in the realm of curiosities:

"They respectfully inform their friends and the public that they have lately made large additions to their establishments. They have enlarged their Furnace so as to enable them to make Castings of any size or weight used in this province, and erected Lathes for turning and finishing the same. They have also erected a Steam Engine of ten horse-power, of their own manufacture, for propelling their machinery, which is now in complete operation, and they are prepared to build Steam Engines of any size, either high or low pressure. Having a number of experienced engineers employed, whose capabilities cannot be doubted, they hope to share the patronage of a generous public. They always keep constantly on hand and for sale, either by wholesale or retail, Bark Mills, Cooking, Franklin, Plate and Box Stoves, also, a generous assortment of Hollow Ware, con-

[24]*Canadian Journal*, Vol. II, p. 76.

sisting of Kettles, from one to one hundred and twenty gallons; Bake-ovens, Bake-Basins, Belly-Pots, High Pans, Tea Kettles, Wash-Kettles, Portable Furnaces, &c. Also are constantly manufacturing Mill-Gearing of all kinds; Sleigh Shoes, 60, 56, 30, 28, 15, 14 and 7 pound Weights, Clock and Sash Weights, Cranes, Andirons, Cart and Waggon Boxes, Clothiers' Plates, Plough Castings, and Ploughs of all kinds."[27]

Concerning the stoves here mentioned it may be explained to the present generation that the square, unsightly box-stove was long the only type in use, and they varied from very small to very large. Coal, at first employed only by blacksmiths, was gradually introduced, and there was a coincident improvement in the shape and design of stoves. Those with open grates added greatly to the cheerfulness of living-rooms; while in general the heating of buildings gradually became a combination of scientific skill and ornamental art, developing health and comfort with adaptability and beauty in house furnishing. A writer in the eighteen-eighties outlines the progress of heating as follows:

"To witness the display at one of the annual exhibitions, or in one of the large manufacturing establishments, is to see in a most remarkable manner, as much as in any other branch of manufacture, the progress of taste and refinement, as well as in arrangements for comfort. The rarity and beauty of the designs, as well as the arrangements for promoting health, and the convenience of 'self-feeders', in which the fire need never go out the whole winter, are truly marvellous.

"The stoves of the present day are not only useful but highly ornamental, and other heating arrangements, whether from furnaces supplying hot air, or by steam, or hot water, all are made to appear as part of the furnishing of hall or drawing-room."[28]

Hot-air furnaces were being advertised in the eighteen-fifties, and by the eighties steam and hot water boilers were the specialties of many a stove and furnace manufacturer. Some of them used Bundy radiators, which could be "adapted to every building and to every part of any build-

[27]Quoted in Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old*. 1873. pp. 378-9.
[28]C. C. Taylor: *Toronto Called Back*. 1886. pp. 256-8.

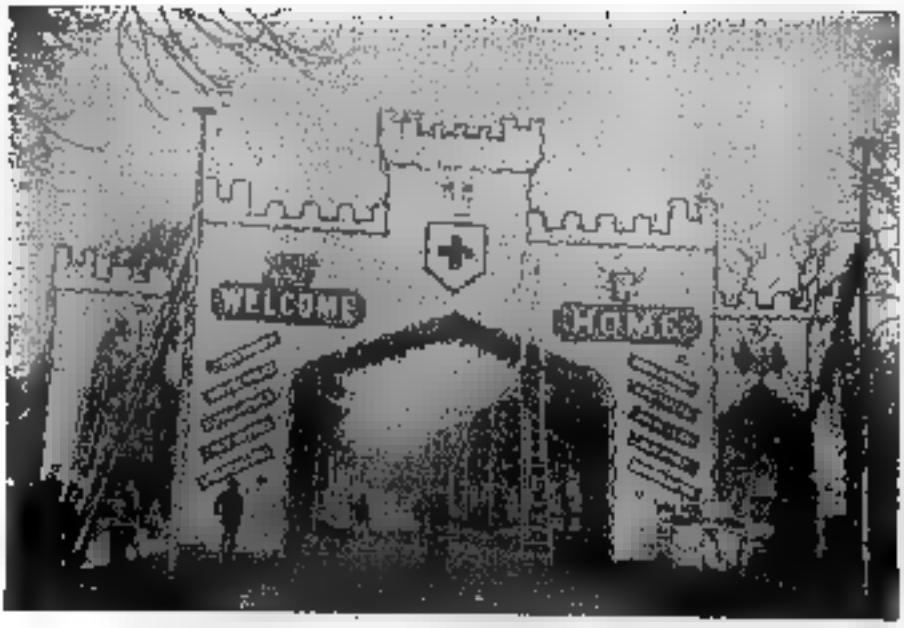
John Ross Robertson Collection. R. Baigent.

BLOOR'S BREWERY IN 1865

John Ross Robertson Collection.

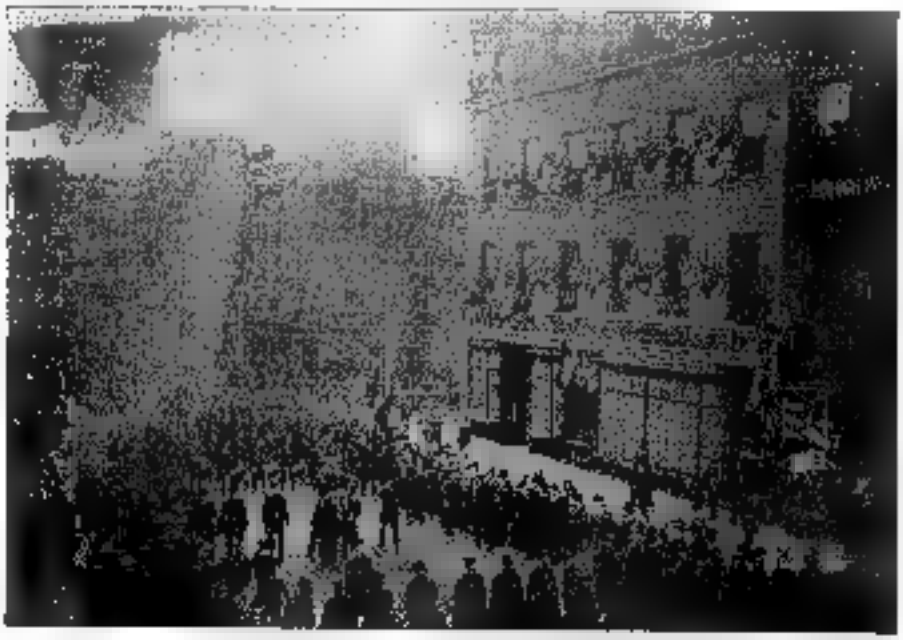
FIRST TORONTO MORGUE (DEAD-HOUSE)

At a meeting of the City Council on January 27, 1873, Mayor Alexander Manning recommended "that a new dead-house and fish market be erected without delay".



ARCH OF WELCOME TO SOUTH AFRICAN VETERANS

The return of the troops in 1901 was greeted in characteristic fashion. Here are evident some of the preparations on University Avenue.



THE RETURN OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTINGENT, 1901

The procession is shown near the corner of Yonge and Adelaide Streets. The Queen's Own Rifles may be seen carrying one of their heroes shoulder high.

ing; and these, when ornamented with the new coil screens, whether in hall or drawing-room, may be made to correspond with the most luxurious furniture, and become an attractive feature in the general effect."[29]

In the late fifties lower Yonge Street was the location of a number of factories, several of which have already been mentioned. An old trade is recalled by the advertisement of H. G. Booth, Coppersmith, at 181 Yonge. He was also a worker in tin plate, sheet iron, brass, lead and zinc, and advertises for sale brewing coppers, refrigerators, worms, stills, pipes for steam engines, metal roofing, cornice, guttering and conductor pipes, as well as a large assortment of "planished, japanned, stamped and common tinware".[30]

At 132 Yonge Street W. P. Marston manufactured guns, pistols, revolvers, target and hunting rifles, ammunition, etc. Among other products of interest he advertises hunting knives, walking stick guns, Colt's revolvers, powder flasks, shot belts, game bags, dram flasks, and dog calls.[31] Another Yonge Street manufactory of 1858, and one that calls to mind a well-known family and business, was the Leather Works of Beardmore & Co., which advertises "a varied assortment of Spanish and Slaughter Sole, French Calf, Upper, etc.", at the establishment then located at the corner of Queen and Yonge Streets.[32]

Perhaps the first dealer in pianos in York was T. Browning, whose announcement in 1832 advertises imported pianofortes for sale to "the nobility of York", a phrase which possibly portended an indication of their cost:

"T. Browning, pianoforte manager, begs to inform the nobility of York and its vicinity that he has brought from London a few superior instruments, grands, cabinets and squares, which will be sold at a very low price. N.B. Instruments repaired and tuned. Applications, if by letters postpaid, at Mr. Mills', No. 187 King Street, York, U.C., November 27th, 1832."[33]

Among the early piano manufacturers in Toronto was

[29] *Ibid.*, p. 267.
[30] *Descriptive Catalogue of the Provincial Exhibition, 1858*, p. 76.
[31] *Ibid.*, p. 70.
[32] *Ibid.*, p. 22.
[33] *Upper Canada Gazette*, December 6, 1832.

William Matthews, from London, England, who was the inventor and sole manufacturer of "the new patent cottage pianoforte". His establishment in 1858 was at 58 Elm Street, and he advertises that, after "many years in business both in Hamilton and Toronto, wherein his time and attention are devoted to the improvement and manufacture of Cottage Piano Fortes to suit the extremes of this climate, he has much satisfaction in announcing to his friends and the public generally that he has at length succeeded in making several most important improvements which he is confident will insure to this most useful and elegant of all musical Instruments a strength and durability heretofore unattainable, while for sweetness and brilliancy of tone and elasticty of touch, W. M. will challenge its being equalled by any Cottage Piano Forte of either foreign or home manufacture". Among other attractions his pianos had "Patent Metallic equal tension and string plates and iron bracing, elegant feet, octagon legs, carved trusses and elegant fret work",[14] and the price varied from £45 to £85.

The occupation of blacksmith has almost passed away, but so recently that most people can remember when every village had several, and all rural highways a representative of the trade every few miles. William Richmond, wheelwright, and Robert Richmond, blacksmith, were long located in a shop at the north-east corner of Queen and William (now Simcoe) Streets. The locality was long remembered because the notorious Brown-Cameron election riot of 1857 took place near by. The Richmonds were as good workmen as could be found in the city, and were fondly recalled by Upper Canada College old boys of 1845-60, for the little plot of ground in front of the shop was a favourite resort for marble-playing and other sporting activities. "Old man Richmond" was popular with the boys, and with good reason, for "when they wanted their sleighs fixed they always brought them to Richmond, and if the boys had been out cutting shinnies near the White bridge, or in the neighbourhood of Rosedale, or Ridout's Bush, now Sherbourne Street, they always had the shinnies trimmed by one of the Richmond boys, who were not very heavy in their charges; in fact they were so good-natured that unfortunately their

[14] *Descriptive Catalogue of the Provincial Exhibition, 1858*, p. 80.

good nature was frequently imposed upon. The old shop disappeared when Jones' Hotel was put up some years ago."[38]

Mention of a blacksmith recalls a trade which flourished in the days when every farmer was a shoemaker, and frequently a harness-maker as well. Among Toronto tanners Jesse Ketchum stands out prominently—not only because he once supplied most of the Home District with leather, but also for his strength of character. Where his evil-smelling tannery stood in the outskirts of the early city, at Yonge and Newgate (Adelaide) Streets, a Honey Dew now dispenses delicious food; and facing Yonge Street were then high piles of hides and tanbark in front of the tanning sheds. In 1889 James Acton obtained interesting reminiscences[39] from the 90-year old foreman of the tannery, who recalled an occasion when Mr. Ketchum, finding the men in his employ with a keg of beer (Doel's Brewery was near by, and it was election week), poured the liquor into a tanning-vat, and forthwith delivered an exhortation on Total Abstinence!

Before factories began to supplant the small tradesman there were large numbers of tanners, cabinet-makers, saddlers, shoemakers, wheel-wrights, coopers and similar manufacturers in Toronto. The city directories from the eighteen-thirties onward enumerate hundreds of men engaged in these trades. There were, too, numerous blacksmiths in the city; while among women's trades may be found a considerable number of milliners, dressmakers and "stay-makers" (referring to corsets). From an analysis of William Brown's *City Directory for 1856-7* we learn the numbers engaged in the chief trades and professions: Accountants, 18; architects, 11; artists, 13; bakers, 37; bankers, 11; barristers and solicitors, 108; blacksmiths, 96; boot and shoe makers, 240; builders, 66; brewers, 15; bricklayers, 91; brickmakers, 55; cabinetmakers, 82; cabmen and proprietors, 33; carpenters, 496; carters, 137; clerks, 119; clergymen of all denominations, 57; dressmakers and milliners, 62; dry goods merchants and importers, 103; grocers and provision dealers, 255; labourers, 892; painters, 84; printers, 73; tailors, 203; tinsmiths, 37. This list does not include all the avocations followed in the city, but it

[38]Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 46.

[39]See the *Canadian Shoe and Leather Journal*, June, 1889.

is sufficiently explicit for our present purpose. When classified it shows of professional persons, 427; of mechanical, 1,681; and of industrial other than mechanical, 2,001. Among tradesmen of more highly specialised occupations listed a few years earlier are many which have long since disappeared: portrait, landscape, historical, animal, house, and coach painters; wood, seal, and bank-note engravers; farriers, curriers, and wood-turners; wheel-wrights, carpet and fringe weavers, brush and broom makers, sail-makers, gilders and map-mounters; maltsters, well-sinkers, and sausage-makers; as well as one each of the trades of making bellows, nails, scales, whips, fanning-mills, blacking, mathematical instruments and lucifer matches.[37]

Workmen were gradually concentrated in larger plants. Among the prominent manufacturers of sixty years ago may be mentioned J. & J. Taylor, Safe Manufacturers; Gooderham & Worts' Distillery; Robert Hay & Co., Furniture Manufacturers; Christie, Brown & Co.'s Biscuit Factory; Lyman Brothers & Co., Manufacturing Chemists; Booth & Sons, Brassfounders; J. D. Nasmith, Biscuit Manufacturer, (the firm was established by his father in 1844); the Phoenix Coffee and Spice Mills; the Don Paper Mills; G. D. Morse & Co.'s Soap and Candle Works; Messrs. Davis & Co.'s Toronto Packing House; H. E. Clarke & Co.'s Trunk and Bag Factory; Lamb's Blacking and Glue Factory (established in 1837); Todhunter, Black & Co., Manufacturers of Chocolate and Cocoa; Wilson's Brush Factory; Heintzman & Co.'s Piano Manufactory; Copp, Clark & Co., Printers, Stationers and Booksellers (established in 1842 by Hugh Scobie); Charles Boeckh's Brush Factory; Messrs. Northrop & Lyman's Patent Medicine Warehouse; and Wilson's Vinegar Manufactory. A considerable number of these are names which still have a very familiar ring.[38]

A few of the more enterprising and successful tradesmen, many of whom were in those days "real Old-country men", gradually accumulated a little capital and rose above their fellows, becoming the proprietors of small factories; while the many met changing conditions by seeking em-

[37]See *Henry Rowsell's City of Toronto and County of York Directory, 1850-1*. 1850. p. xx.

[38]See Timperlake, *op. cit.*, pp. 267-310, for valuable material concerning these factories, and, in many cases, flattering illustrations.

ployment therein, either at their own trade or as skilled or unskilled labourers in any occupation that offered. To close this account of trades and industries in Toronto it is appropriate to illustrate the development by showing how Harvey Shepard's skill as an axe-maker gradually led, in characteristic fashion, to the establishment of an axe factory which was in successful operation long after his death. Sheppard Street, connecting Adelaide and Richmond, commemorates this famous worker in iron, whose imprint on axe, broad-axe or adze was a guarantee of its temper and quality. Dr. Scadding[111] outlines the progress of this interesting industry:

"Harvey Shepard's axe factory was on the west side of this short street. Before his establishment here he worked in a smithy of the customary village type on King Street, on the property of Jordan Post. Like Jordan Post himself, Harvey Shepard was of the old-fashioned New England mould, elongated and wiry. After a brief suspension of business, a placard hung up in the country inns characteristically announced to his friends and the public that he had resumed his former occupation and that he would, 'by the aid of Divine Providence', undertake to turn out as good axes as any that he had ever made; which acknowledgement of the source of his skill is commendable surely, if unusual. So, also, there is no one who will refuse to applaud an epigrammatic observation of his, when responding to an appeal of charity. 'Though dealing usually in iron only, I keep', he said, 'a little stock of silver and gold for such a call as this.' The factory on Shepard Street was afterwards worked by Mr. J. Armstrong, and subsequently by Mr. Thomas Champion, formerly of Sheffield, who in 1838 advertised that he had 'a large stock of Champion's warranted cast-steel axes, made at the factory originally built by the late Harvey Shepard, and afterwards occupied by John Armstrong. As Shepard's and Armstrong's axes have been decidedly preferred before any others in the Province', the advertisement continues, 'it is only necessary to state that Champion's are made by the the same workmen, and from the very best material, to ensure for them the same continued preference'."

[111]Scadding, *op. cit.*, p. 311.

CHAPTER XVI

Fairs and Exhibitions

Though Governor Simcoe supported the establishment of an Agricultural Society at Niagara in 1793, early government encouragement of agriculture in Upper Canada was largely restricted to the growth of hemp, which it was hoped this province would supply in quantities sufficient for the use of the British navy. Legislation in 1830 and later years aided the establishment of Agricultural Societies, and this broader recognition of the importance of the industry was the chief impetus leading to the development of fairs.

Some exhibitions had been held in the Niagara district previous to 1800, but if any occurred in York before 1820 they received no mention in the *Upper Canada Gazette*. There was, however, an Upper Canada Agricultural and Commercial Society holding meetings in York previous to 1808 when it was dissolved from lack of support, and some small fairs may have been held under its auspices; but the American occupation of the town in 1813 had a very depressing effect for several years, and it is unlikely that any initiative was exerted in that direction prior to 1818, when the Agricultural Society was formed. In any case the first agricultural exhibitions in the capital passed almost unrecorded, and we have no details concerning them. From references in early publications we learn, however, that a Cattle Show was held in the town on May 7, 1820, and in following years semi-annual fairs. Fothergill's *York Almanack* states that they were held "the third Monday in May, and the first Monday in October, for six days each period." Prizes and premiums were usually awarded the first day, and, during the balance of the fair, days were assigned to live stock, vegetables and fruits, the sale of horses and other stock, and similar departments of agricultural enterprise. The old Fair Green was located near the shore of the Bay immediately west of Berkeley Street. According to Fothergill the only other regular fairs in

Upper Canada in the early twenties were four-day exhibitions in Cobourg and Port Hope.[1]

Among the many associations formed as a result of legislative encouragement in 1830 was the Home District Agricultural Society, with headquarters at York, and it was this organisation that in May, 1846, passed a resolution favouring a province-wide association. Three years of discussion had preceded this move, and public opinion had been aroused in its favour; and, as other local and district societies were equally enthusiastic, a meeting of delegates convened at the Toronto Court House on July 15th, to be followed by an organisation meeting in Hamilton on August 16th, when "The Provincial Agricultural Association and Board of Agriculture for Canada West" came into being. Its membership was to be composed of persons subscribing annually 5s. or more, and the first yearly show was arranged to take place in Toronto on the 21st and 22nd of October of the same year.

The first fair may be considered the real progenitor of the Canadian National Exhibition, though, since it was for thirty-three years an itinerant show held in the more important towns of the province in turn, it is not generally considered to be the origin of Toronto's modern exposition; and, of course, the fact remains that the 1879 show was the first of the series of annual exhibitions under Toronto management exclusively. The Exhibition of 1846 was originally advertised to be held at the Caer Howell Grounds, just west of College (now University) Avenue, but handbills distributed a day or two prior to the fair announced a change of location to the Government House Grounds, at the Corner of King and Graves (now Simcoe) Streets. The cattle show was held in a meadow in the rear of Upper Canada College, then located near the north-west corner of King and Simcoe, across from Government House.

The first prizes were in cash and totalled £278, while agricultural books were offered for second place in the various classes, and the Association's diploma for third. The best aged bull was awarded £7 10s., the best ram £6, and the best stallion £10. Entries to the number of 1,150

[1]Charles Fothergill: *The York Almanack and Royal Calendar of Upper Canada for 1828*, p. 158.

were received, and all but £50 of the prize money expended. £69 13s. 1½d. (about $280) was received from tickets sold at the gates, and £200 was contributed by district societies, so that there remained a balance of £102 1s. after providing for prizes and general expenses.

Many hundreds of Toronto's citizens patronised the first fair, and the numbers were swelled by a good representation from other parts of the province, who made their way thither by steamship, stage coach or in their own conveyances. They were regaled by exhibits of wagons, carriages, "light and chaste" one-horse vehicles, stump-raisers, chaff-cutters and self-opening gates; "beautiful, ornamental and fantastic productions of the needle", including representations of King David playing upon his harp, and "Joseph's dream surrounded by sheaves of wheat nodding obeisance". Concerning the latter a reporter considered that "the face of Joseph was too feminine"; but he found fruit and flowers of wax "almost the very perfection of imitation". There were, of course, plenty of horses, cattle and sheep; "specimens of Stilton Cheese such as to make one fancy, had there been a little Burton Ale, that we were 'at Home' again"; tweeds, fulled cloths, cadet and gold mixed cloths, and blankets equalling the finest importations; and among the manufactures were cooking stoves and furnaces described as having attained "a greater degree of perfection than is to be found in any branch of manufactures in Canada".[2]

In suggesting that perhaps the fair could hardly be compared to those long established in the United States and Europe, the *Globe* noted that "the exhibition of stock, of the farm and of the dairy, was highly creditable to the yeomanry of the Province". The account in this newspaper mentioned that the exhibits of manufactures included woollen goods, stoves, tinware and carriages. Portraits executed by local artists were among the items of a small Fine Arts display; there was also "a map of Peterborough, by Mr. Fleming, a young and promising artist from Scotland. . . . It is a beautiful piece of workmanship, giving a very interesting view of that rising town and neighbourhood. It was lithographed by Messrs. Scobie and Balfour".

[2]V. M. Roberts: *The Trail of the C.N.E.* 1925. p. 15.

(Mr. Fleming later became Sir Sandford Fleming, one of Canada's greatest civil engineers). Embroidery, collars and veils, and numerous other articles were found in the exhibit of Ladies' Work; and "the wax flowers of Miss Elliott, Yonge Street, Toronto, gained much admiration". The rooms in which the exhibits were placed are described as "in general too small; and the crowds so great as to make it uncomfortable". But the efforts made by the Committee had made [redacted] possible to stage an exhibition "which must have gladdened the heart of every true friend of Canada".[3]

Altogether the first Provincial Exhibition was a great success, and the 200 notables who sat down to a public dinner in Government House at the close of the first day of the fair were enthusiastic in their praise of Canada and its prospective development. Chief Justice John Beverley Robinson enumerated Upper Canada's advantages, and noted that "even with London and other towns far removed, the inhabitants had the advantage of good plank roads by which the produce reached the great waters, on whose surface it was borne to Europe."

Some of the references in the addresses were by no means complimentary to many Reformers present, for those were the days of bitter political opinions; and the Liberal press was vehement in expressing that when it came to the dinner "the arrangements were too Tory. Sixteen speeches were delivered before the Hon. Robert Baldwin was called on to say a word, and the meeting seemed electrified when his name was mentioned, for he was the only speaker who received cheers at the commencement of his address". The *Globe*, too,—nobly democratic—would like to have heard some of those worthy pioneers speak—"the grey heads in that assembly, with the furrows of many winters and of much hard toil marked in their countenances. It would have been interesting to all to have heard of the difficulties which they encountered in their settlement, and how they had by patient and persevering industry been enabled to overcome them all".[4]

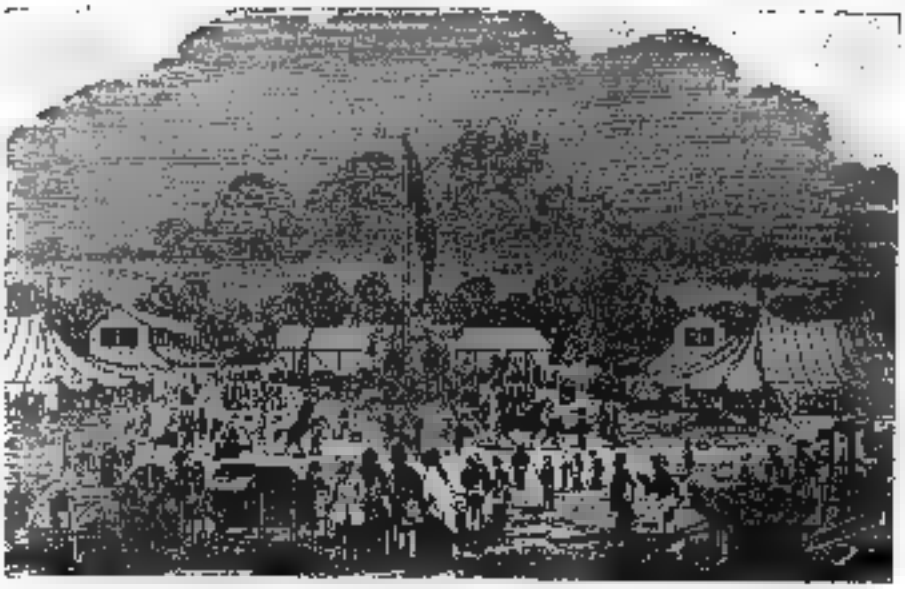
The next five exhibitions were held at Hamilton, Co-

[3]The *Globe*, October 27, 1846, quoted in the *Banner* of October 30th.
[4]*Ibid.*

bourg, Kingston, Niagara and Brockville, respectively, but in 1852 it was again Toronto's turn. Upon this occasion the show lasted four days, September 21-24, and was held in the Exhibition Grounds on the west side of College (University) Avenue. Mrs. D'Arcy Boulton, of The Grange, loaned some of her estate touching upon the west side of the grounds in order to provide the Horse Park. The grounds are described as "oblong in shape, comprising, exclusive of the horse parade, about seventeen acres. They were divided almost equally into two parts by a winding, shallow ravine, through a portion of which a stream ran. The southern half was clear of trees, and the northern prettily wooded. . . . The entrance was at the 'office', about the site of the old Erskine Presbyterian Church. The grounds were bounded on the east by College (now University) Avenue; the western boundary was a short distance west of Dummer (now William) Street. The northern boundary was the Toronto Cricket Grounds, College Street, and the Caer Howell Pleasure Grounds, just north of the present Hydro building in the avenue".[5] During the four days thousands of people, including many from a considerable distance, visited the fair; though "but few of them," says the *Canadian Journal*, "permitted their thoughts to wander back to the time when the spot so densely occupied by the 'palefaces', and crowded with their works of patient industry and skilful art, was a wild and marshy forest, tenanted only by a few wandering Mississaugas; or, at a later date, and in the memory of numbers present, the forest suburbs of a village which numbered but a few hundred enterprising settlers".[6]

The number of entries in the various exhibits was 3,048, or more than double those of the previous year. It was estimated that 30,000 people were in attendance on Thursday, the principal day of the fair. The prizes offered had increased to £1,479 9s. 9d., and the exhibition was considered much more successful than any of those which had preceded it. A contemporary description of the fair names the buildings which had been erected to house the exhibits, and informs us of the "grave fears" that the

[5]J. Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Canada*. 1917, pp. 533 and 536.
[6]*Canadian Journal*, October, 1852.



Reproduced by Courtesy of V. M. Roberts, Esq. *Canadian Journal.*

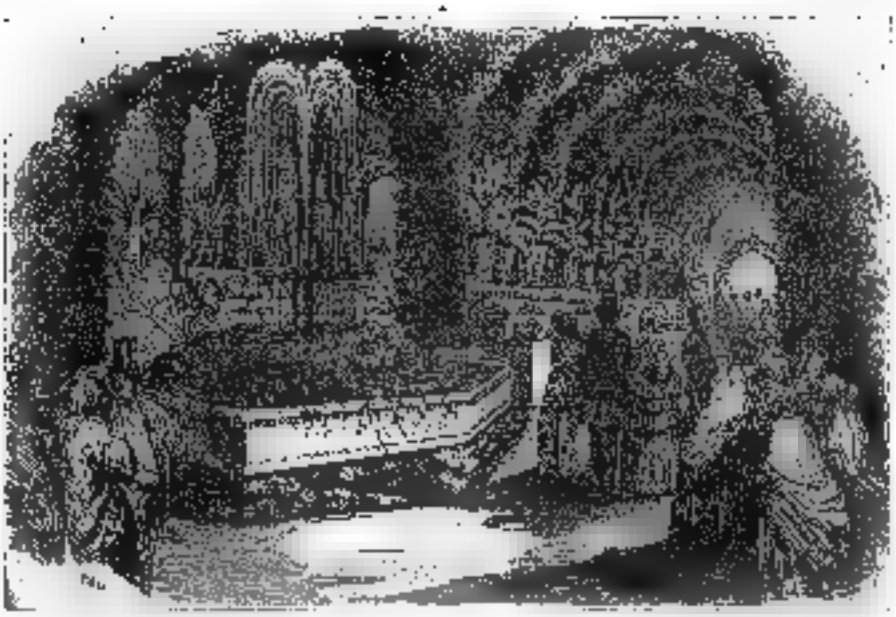
THE PROVINCIAL EXHIBITION OF 1852

The exhibition grounds were on the west side of College (University) Avenue. Nearly 30,000 people were in attendance on the principal day of the Fair, and "grave fears" were entertained that the crowd would break down the fence as they were entering the grounds.

Reproduced by Courtesy of V. M. Roberts, Esq. *Canadian Journal.*

THE AGRICULTURAL HALL, EXHIBITION OF 1852

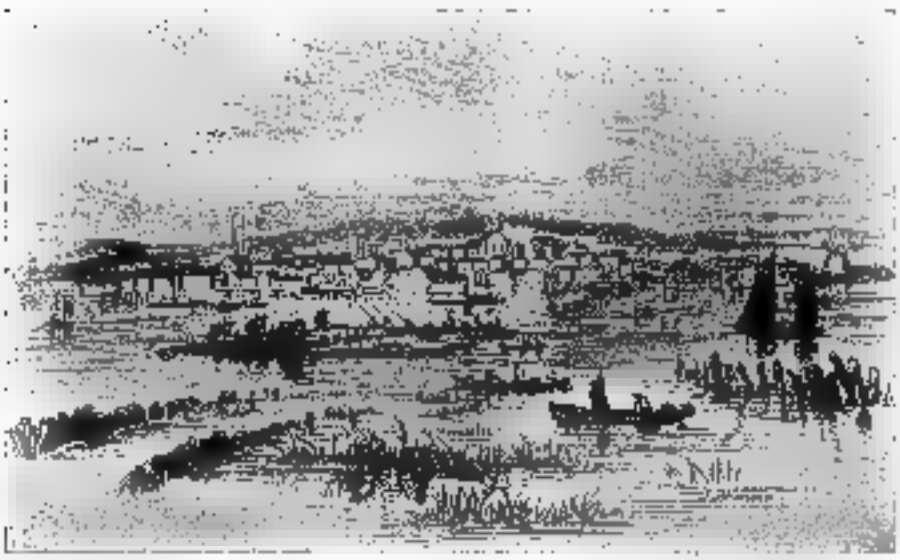
It is evident from these illustrations that the seventh Provincial Exhibition was but little different from the rural fairs of half a century later.



Reproduced by Courtesy of V. M. Roberts, Esq. *Canadian Journal.*

FLORAL HALL AT THE EXHIBITION OF 1852

The florists of the city and the private greenhouses of wealthy inhabitants provided flowers and plants in profusion, and the fountain greatly enhanced the effectiveness of the display.



Reproduced from an old Woodcut by Courtesy of V. M. Roberts, Esq.

A TIMBER RAFT LEAVING THE HARBOUR, 1848

Large quantities of timber hauled to the harbour on sleighs or transported on the Northern Railway were rafted at the foot of Bathurst Street.

fence would give way under the pressure of the crowds attempting to enter;

"The buildings erected by the local committee for the display of those articles which would have been injured by exposure were five in number: the Fine Arts hall, the Floral hall, the Agricultural hall, the Mechanics' hall, and a small building attached to the Fine Arts hall for the display of school apparatus. Grave fears were entertained that the fence would not have been able to sustain the pressure of the vast body of people anxious to obtain admission, and delayed by the necessity of giving up their tickets to the constables in charge of the narrow entrance doorways, of which there were but two. Eighteen thousand single tickets were sold on Thursday, besides upwards of 2,000 member's badges which admitted the member and his family."[7]

From the *Globe* we obtain many other interesting details. Most of the stock and other exhibits arrived by boat in very stormy weather Monday night; but conditions improved on Tuesday, and every boat that entered the harbour had its complement of visitors to the Fair. At 8 a.m. on Wednesday, with late exhibits still streaming into the grounds, "the proceedings of the day were commenced by the judges, members of the Committee, and others sitting down to a substantial breakfast prepared by Mr. Beard, in a great tent erected on the Bowling Green at Caer Howell." This forerunner of the Canadian National Exhibition Directors' Luncheon inaugurated the buildings, and the general public flocked into the grounds, when soon afterwards the prize list was read to the assemblage.

Each side of the Agricultural Hall was divided into compartments, in which were the exhibits of wheat, flour and vegetables. In the centre of the building dairy products were tastefully arranged on a large table, fifty feet by six. Simple and effective decorations characterised the interior of the Floral Hall, and a fountain added greatly to the pleasing appearance of the exhibits. The florists of the city, and many private greenhouses and gardens, provided plants and flowers in considerable profusion. Many exhibits of interest were described in the *Globe*:

"Mr. Palmer's Daguerrotypes excited much attention,

[7] *Ibid.*

from their perfect style of execution and the well-known faces which they exhibited. . . . Mr. Paul Kane had some of his best paintings exhibited, but in a miserable light, the common fate in such cases. . . . Mr. Hugh Miller of King Street showed some of Kelly's first-rate cod-liver oil, all the way from Gaspé. . . . Mr. Morrison, Silversmith and Jeweller, had some very pretty silver work, including the spade belonging to Mr. Capreol, with which the first sod of the Northern Railway was *not* turned."[6]

The itinerant system of holding Exhibitions was beginning to meet with considerable criticism. In describing the fair of 1852 "a member of the Press" pointed out the numerous disadvantages. He noted that the temporary buildings erected annually at considerable expense "have always been exceedingly inconvenient. At the last exhibits in Toronto the halls were altogether too small to accommodate a crowd. . . . The exhibitors, too, were often grievously disappointed, some of them at having their productions disposed beyond the line of vision, others with having their more delicate handiwork destroyed by the rain pouring through the leaking structure".[7] There were no steam railways in Canada West at that time, however, and difficulties of transportation almost excluded some sections of the province from participation in any remote exhibitions; so that, in spite of the fact that Toronto attracted most exhibitors and visitors, the rotary system long continued to appeal to many who thought it preferable to have some of the fairs near home rather than all of them at a central point.

In 1847 and subsequent years the City Council of Toronto carried on negotiations with the Imperial Government in an effort to obtain part of the old Garrison Reserve for park purposes. After a long-term lease at a nominal rental had been obtained in 1848 there arose a dispute with the Ordnance Department, but a compromise was finally effected by which the city obtained a grant of 55 acres in two properties. The first of these became Stanley Park, the second, to consist largely of a park for the holding of the

[6]A full account of the Fair may be found in the *Globe*, September 23rd and 25th, 1852.

[7]Roberts, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

Provincial Exhibition, was located immediately south of the Provincial Lunatic Asylum. In the original lease the condition attached to the agreement stipulated that the land was "for the purposes of pleasure, recreation and amusement to the inhabitants of the City of Toronto, and with a view to the ornament and salubrity of the City", and the same condition was applied to the grant in more definite wording.

Hamilton, London, Cobourg, Kingston and Brantford were the respective locations of the fairs of 1853-57, but in 1858 Toronto had an opportunity to use her new grounds. The first permanent exhibition building, the Palace of Industry—more commonly called the Crystal Palace—was erected for the occasion, and was quite an imposing structure of cast iron and glass, with a circular tin roof. Built in the form of a cross, it was 256 feet long by [illegible] feet wide and enclosed an area of some 44,000 square feet. A contemporary description of the building states that it "looks very low, and as if crushed down by the superincumbent mass of roof. It would have been greatly improved in effect had the glass walls been carried up by the line of the gallery floor some three or four feet, or had the roof been broken by perpendicular lights to relieve it from that heavy dome appearance".[10]

The interior of the Crystal Palace was divided by columns reaching to the roof and forming a nave with northern and southern transepts and two extended aisles. A central parallelogram 80 feet by 32 was flanked by two side ones 80 feet by 16, and the nave was 64 feet square within the columns. One can readily imagine the pride of Torontonians in a new building which contained the following up-to-the-minute features:

"In the eastern corner of the northern transept there is a saloon 16 feet square fitted up for the accommodation of the ladies in attendance at the exhibition; in the western corner there is an office of similar dimensions for the Secretary; and in the centre of this same transept an

[10]A good description of the Crystal Palace and its construction may be found in [G. P. Ure]: *The Handbook of Toronto*, 1858, pp. 199-204. A considerable portion of it is quoted in the *Descriptive Catalogue of the Provincial Exhibition, 1858*, pp. 1-3.

orchestra 32 feet by 20 is erected, having a semi-circular front of plain truss railing, supported by a row of wooden columns. It contains four rows of seats, also semi-circular, for the accommodation of the performers, and immediately behind these there is a platform seven feet square for the reception of an organ. In the centre of the nave and immediately in front of the orchestra a fountain is erected to play during the exhibition."

The same writer notes further that Smith, Burke & Co. completed the building in slightly over three months, and "it is, in fact, one of the few public works constructed in Toronto to the spirit and letter of the contract, without the slightest scope for even the suspicion of a *job*".[11]

The Exhibition of 1858 was inaugurated with elaborate ceremony.[12] An address was presented to the Governor-General, Sir Edumund Head, a prayer was offered by the Bishop of Toronto, and the Metropolitan Choral Society, composed of 250 vocalists and instrumentalists, performed with great success. A descriptive catalogue of the exhibits and exhibitors reached two editions, and it gives in great detail all information of interest concerning the show. Among the exhibits which attracted attention was Parson Brothers' Coal Oil Lamps, claimed to be "superior to those of English or American manufacture in the diffusion of light"; W. H. Rice's "ingenious rat-trap, well-calculated to deceive the most wary of those very troublesome customers"; Joseph Archer's "anti-friction grease, which neither freezes on the machinery in winter nor drops off it during the hottest days of summer—a rare combination of qualities"; and the new sewing machine of Messrs. Butler & Co., of Newmarket, "an improvement on the many improvements made on stitching machinery since the 'song of the shirt' saw the light".

There was, too, Thomson, Keith & Co.'s "gasometer", which manufactured gas at $2 per 1,000 feet, and "might be used with advantage and profit in some of the imperfectly lighted hotels with which the province abounds". Reflecting religious conditions of other times was "an in-

[11]*Ibid.*

[12]The description which follows is based upon the *Descriptive Catalogue*.

genious portable stool, exhibited by G. C. Campbell of Niagara, who specially recommended it to Methodist Camp Meeting devotees". The prisoners of Kingston Penitentiary sent examples of their handicraft in both wood and steel. Several gentlemen exhibited "self-acting car-couplers, by the employment of which it would seem to be a matter of the utmost difficulty for railway carriages to play truant to the engine". The electric telegraph, introduced into the province in 1846 and still something of a wonder, was exhibited by Messrs. Wiman & Co., King Street news agents, who had instruments in operation "communicating with their store in the city, and then with 45,000 miles of wire in America and 55,000 in Europe—that is, presuming that the Atlantic Cable is in working order".

It would hardly be appreciated at the present day that it was remarkable for a confectioner to show "no less than ten kinds of biscuit and thirty-five kinds of sweetmeats". Ale and porter were exhibited by S. Grey, Toronto, while Messrs. Hall & Clark displayed "the teetotal drinks, or 'double-aerated summer beverages', as it is more respectful to call them". There were, of course, plenty of exhibits of maple sugar, as well as almost every other farm product and domestic manufacture. Ladies' fancy sewing, wax flowers, paintings and other artistic creations occupied a prominent position; while the horticultural department provided an extensive collection of the best flowers, fruits and vegetables. In the prize list appears the name of Mrs. Catharine Parr Traill of Rice Lake, well-known author and naturalist and a pioneer settler in the "backwoods" of the old Newcastle District. Upon this occasion she was awarded the prize for "the best collection of native plants dried and named".

Cabinet-makers exhibited large numbers of choice pieces of work which would now be highly-prized antiques. In fact the great number of exhibits unrelated to farming exemplify the connection early made between the arts, manufacturers and commerce on the one hand and agriculture on the other. The showing of farm implements at the 1858 exhibition is described as "not unusually large, but exceedingly creditable". Iron ploughs, as well as many

of wood, horse rakes and hoes, fanning mills and cultivators, many of them from the establishment of H. A. Massey, Newcastle, forerunner of the Massey-Harris Co., divided the interest of farmers with root-cutting and stumping machines, and new types of churns, threshers and separators.

It would appear from all accounts that more pickpockets were at work at this exhibition than ever before. Many serious robberies were reported, one farmer being relieved of over $500. Such activities were no doubt encouraged by the large attendance, some 20,000 being present on the second day. A newspaper, commenting on the success of the fair, said:

"Not only was the Crystal Palace itself crammed to overflowing, but the entire city presented a scene of animation which in all probability has never before been equalled. King Street especially, from the number of pedestrians who paraded it all day, wore an appearance which reminded one strongly of Cheapside or Broadway at the busiest hour of the day".[13]

Horse-races at Gates' course, yacht races on the Bay, a bazaar in the Romain Building, a torchlight parade at night, and a notable firemen's procession in which visiting brigades from London, Hamilton and Cobourg participated, combined to increase the attractions of Exhibition week. As for the bazaar we are told that "young ladies in the daintiest of costumes acted as amateur saleswomen, dispensing coffee at 25 cents a cup and cakes at 10 cents each, with the most praiseworthy perseverance. There was no charge to go in, or, if so, it was a very small one, but there was a great deal to pay before one could get out. But the public liked the fun, the young ladies enjoyed the work, and the funds of the church were benefited".[14] An interesting account of the city as it would appear to exhibition visitors is given by a contemporary writer:

"Toronto presents a somewhat straggling aspect, only a few of the principal streets being as yet fully built. The earlier erections were of wood, and present a striking

[13]Quoted in John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*. 1894-1914. Vol. II, p. 1094.

[14]*Ibid.*

contrast to the tall and stately rows of houses or the beautiful villas of more recent date. During last year not many short of 1,000 new houses, stores, hotels, and churches have been erected, a large proportion of which are of white brick and present a very elegant appearance. The public buildings are very fine, and upon a scale which shows that their projectors anticipated for the city a greater expansion than it has yet obtained. It boasts the largest Church of England cathedral in the province, a handsome Romish cathedral, and some forty other churches, chiefly Protestant. It has also the finest pile of school buildings in Canada, two magnificent and richly endowed colleges, a university, a lunatic asylum, two splendid courthouses, and various other institutions and charities, betokening a population appreciating the benefits of moral and intellectual culture."[15]

At that time the population of Toronto was nearly 50,000. The Parliament Buildings on Front Street west of Simcoe, erected in 1830, were still in use, though greatly renovated in 1855. The old Hospital on King Street, the Mechanics' Institute at the corner of Adelaide and Church Streets, and a building on York Street opposite the Rossin House, housed various government offices in the absence of better accommodation. The new University buildings (now University College) were in process of construction, and old Trinity College, old Knox College, St. Michael's College, "recently erected on Clover Hill, between the city and Yorkville", Upper Canada College on King Street west of Simcoe, and the Normal School on Gould Street, were the other principal educational institutions, as well as among the chief "sights" of the city. The old City Hall on Front Street south of the Market was no particular credit to the city, but St. Lawrence Hall was considered a handsome edifice and was the social centre of Toronto. The Lunatic Asylum, the old Post Office on Toronto Street, Osgoode Hall, the new Hospital on the Don and Danforth Road, the Toronto Exchange on Wellington Street, and the four banks (Upper Canada, Montreal, Commercial and British North America), made up the chief other buildings which would be pointed out to visitors in 1858.[16]

[15]Rollo Campbell: *Two Lectures on Canada*, 1857, pp. 27-8.
[16]See *Descriptive Catalogue*, p. 49.

In enumerating the chief Toronto hotels and saloons the *Descriptive Catalogue* of the Exhibition observes that "we believe there is no city of its size on the continent which is pestered with so many saloons and taverns". The best hotels at the time were the Rossin House and the American House, while the Wellington Hotel and the Robinson House were "comfortable, quiet houses" of a less ambitious nature.

The regular amusements available in Toronto at that period were neither numerous nor of very high order. Visitors to the Exhibition are advised that two of the more pretentious saloons are the Terrapin and the Apollo, both on King Street. In addition to the eating, drinking and smoking usually associated with such resorts, the Apollo put on a cheap show each evening. For 12½ cents patrons were entitled to "a smoke or a drink", as well as to witness some negro minstrelsy, etc., as performed by two "inimitable" actors; and altogether the place is recommended as "well worthy of a visit". There was, too, the Royal Lyceum Theatre, which "although small, is an exceedingly pleasant resort". There, under Manager Nickinson, a half dozen "first-rate actors" presented the "general run of pieces" in a manner "always characterised by morality and good breeding".[17] Otherwise, unless some entertainment of a higher type chanced to be sojourning at St. Lawrence Hall, visitors to town would have to depend upon the private parties arranged by their friends.

Again in 1862 the Provincial Exhibition was held in Toronto, the course of its perambulations having been restricted to Toronto, Kingston, Hamilton and London. The area of twenty acres had proved too small for the show, so the entire 32½ acres of the government grant was now devoted to the exposition. Visits to the other three centres of population followed in succeeding years, but the cramped accommodations available at London in 1865 caused great dissatisfaction and led to suggestions of permanent quarters for the Provincial Fair.

In 1866 it was Toronto's turn for the fifth time since the inauguration of the Association in 1846. Those who could recall the very limited scope of the first show were able to make remarkable comparisons. Numerous smaller build-

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 79.

ings now supplemented the Crystal Palace, and over thirty acres of ground was devoted to the housing of exhibits and the accommodation of visitors. The evil characteristics of modern fairs were becoming more prominent, too, for a contemporary account describes the fakirs and hangers-on to be found in every Midway:

"In the immediate vicinity of the main gates, booths and tents are being put up with amazing rapidity in order that no opportunity may be lost in turning an honest penny—and, it is to be feared, many dishonest pennies also. In this booth will be sold intoxicating liquors, and in that jugglers and thimbleriggers will doubtless ply their nefarious trades. In fact 'wide-awakes' who infest every city during exhibition times may be expected in large numbers on the present occasion also. Thieves, pickpockets, gamblers, swindlers, and vagabonds generally, may be expected to hold forth in the neighbourhood of the main gate, and consequently it is to be hoped a large number of detectives will be kept in that quarter to look after them and protect the unwary citizen or credulous countryman from being fleeced by those who live by picking and stealing."[18]

On October 3, 1870, the 25th Provincial Exhibition was held in Toronto, and $14,000 in prizes was offered for the best among the seven or eight thousand entries which the fair attracted. English and Canadian turnstiles were for the first time used to register attendance, and of these the English proved the more accurate. Four years later the fair was once more in Toronto, but before the perambulation was again completed a discussion arose in the city over the comparative suitability of the grounds. In 1877 Toronto did not extend into regions now thickly populated, and among the alternative sites suggested was a large sandy tract of land north of Bloor near St. George Street, High Park, Woodbine Park, and several locations on Carlton Street and the Kingston Road. All of these were rejected, however, and instead the City Council memorialised the Dominion Government to set apart as an Exhibition Park at least fifty acres "of the vacant land not at present required by, or under lease to the Ontario Rifle Association, and known as the Ordnance Reserve, immediately west of

[18]Quoted in Roberts, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

the New Garrison, and south of the Great Western Railway track."

A deputation to Ottawa finally secured a lease of the desired land, the frontage on Lake Ontario being 450 feet, and the Great Western Railway and Dufferin Street being the other boundaries of the triangular-shaped grounds. Guelph and Ottawa attempted to obtain the 1878 exhibition of the Agricultural and Arts Association, but Toronto had been successful in securing it with the understanding that the old grounds and buildings would not be used. The elaborate plans for the development of the new location called for an expenditure of $150,000, and, in spite of the continued opposition of the electors, the City Council proceeded with the work. After three months' activity the finest fair ground in Canada was created. There were only four actual days of the fair, but the attendance was from 30,000 to 45,000 a day. It is interesting to know that the chief means of reaching the grounds was in the special trains run every hour by the Great Western Railway, or by the excursion steamers which left Yonge Street wharf from time to time. The exhibition was in many respects the most successful of the thirty-three held since 1846, but the Association chose Ottawa for the next fair, and disappointed the hopes entertained in Toronto that at least two or three consecutive shows would be held in the new grounds.

Meanwhile, however, the Toronto Electoral District Society and other groups were advocating a permanent annual exhibition in the city, and the Industrial Exhibition Association of Toronto was formed by representatives of the Mechanics' Institute, the Horticultural Society, the Manufacturers' Association, the Poultry Association, the Ontario Society of Artists, and the Toronto Electoral District Society. The first annual fair was to take place during the first three weeks of September, 1879. Grants and subscriptions were made by the city and county councils and numerous other corporations and persons who benefited by the influx of large numbers of visitors, and the enterprise was immediately placed on a strong financial basis.

The first Exhibition comprised twenty-three buildings, of which the Main Building, opened the previous year, was

of a style of architecture similar to that of the old Crystal Palace, and had, in fact, the upper part of the old building. Manufactures, arts, implements and machinery were on exhibit for the entire three weeks; agricultural and dairy products, flowers, fruits and vegetables were to be seen during the second and third weeks; and the show of live stock, poultry, dogs, etc., took place in the third week. Twenty-five cents admission was charged, and the following notice appeared in the newspapers: "Visitors will provide themselves with twenty-five cent pieces, as no change is given at the gates." The exhibition was a great success. Over $19,600 was awarded for the best of the 8,234 exhibits, and about 80,000 people paid admission.

During the course of the Exhibition of 1879 the Princess Louise, wife of the Governor-General, the Marquis of Lorne, visited Toronto, and a ball was given in her honour in the Pavilion in the Allan Gardens. Over 500 guests were present, and the Princess danced quadrilles with Lieut.-Governor the Hon. D. A. Macdonald, Commander A. R. Boswell, R.C.Y.C., and Senator Macpherson. Before leaving the ball she also took part in a polka "played in fast time", Captain Harbord, A.D.C., being her partner. Among the nineteen dances on the program the waltz was prominent.

In 1880 the length of the show was reduced to two weeks. Two years later it was no longer necessary to close up at dusk, for the electric lights supplied by the Fuller Electric Light Company of New York and the Ball Company of London enabled the show to remain open until 10 p.m., and kept the buildings and grounds in a state of unprecedented illumination. Many unable to attend in the daytime could now do so in the evening. For several years afterward the bright appearance of the grounds at night remained something of a novelty, and particularly to visitors from rural communities. At this period of the Exhibition's history an attendance of 30,000 was considered "a big day".

In 1883 the program of the Exhibition included the inauguration of an electric railway, the first in Canada. This is described in detail elsewhere,[12] but it may be said

[12]See Chapter VIII, pp. 135-8.

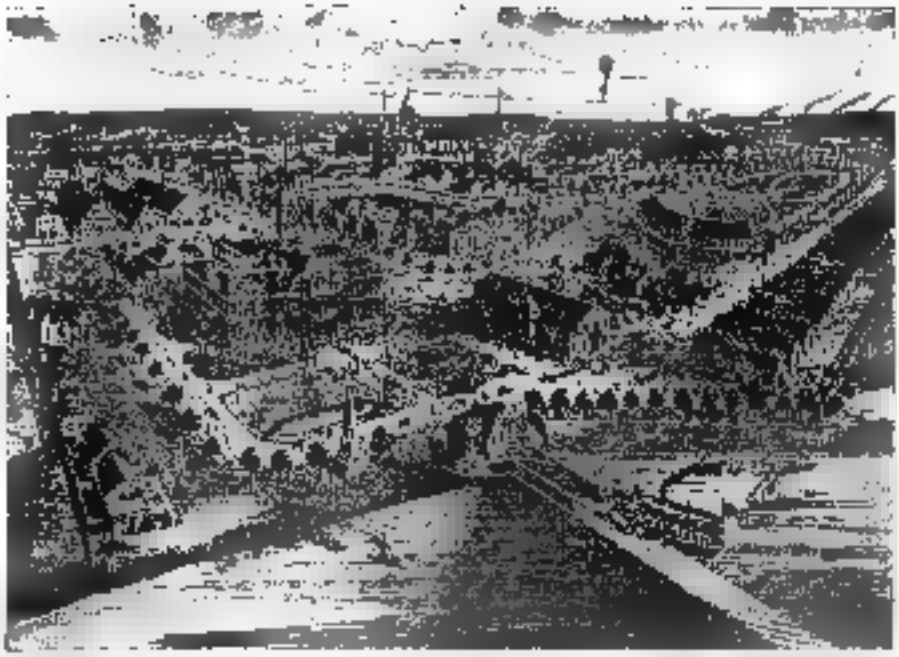
here that the undertaking was largely a failure in that year. Those who were attempting it had merely examined one in operation in Chicago, but a few people enjoyed the novelty of a ride on the small locomotive before its use was discontinued from lack of sufficient power to enable the hauling of a car. In 1884, however, the inventor, C. J. Van Depoele of Chicago, supervised the construction and operation of the line, and it was described as "one of the principal attractions of the Exhibition; . . . . nothing could be more satisfactory." Until 1892 it supplemented the horse-car line half a mile away, and for a fare of five cents carried passengers from the entrance at Strachan Avenue through the grounds to the vicinity of Dufferin Street. The extension, in 1892, of the King Street line down Dufferin made the little railway unnecessary, and at the same time remedied the inconvenience which had long characterised the approach of visitors to the Exhibition.

For many years it had been easy to obtain intoxicating liquor at the grounds, for one or more special licenses rendered it legally available. In 1883 the *Globe*, true to its temperance principles, commented editorially on the abuses which had resulted:

"The Exhibition Association cannot afford longer to run counter to public feeling in the matter of liquor licenses; still less can it afford to put itself in the position of actually evading the law by converting one liquor license into sixteen licenses. It is a question whether public opinion is not ripe for a legislative enactment entirely prohibiting the sale of intoxicating liquors at fairs."[20]

The seventeenth Exhibition, 1895, may be taken as typical of the middle period of its history. The buildings and other equipment were then valued at $600,000 and the total attendance was approaching a third of a million people. It was then advertised[21] as "the largest annual exhibition in the world", and "the people's great annual carnival of instruction, business and amusement". In front of the grandstand was a characteristic presentation—"The Relief of Lucknow"; while among the other items in the grandstand performance was Mons. Ernesto Baldanza,

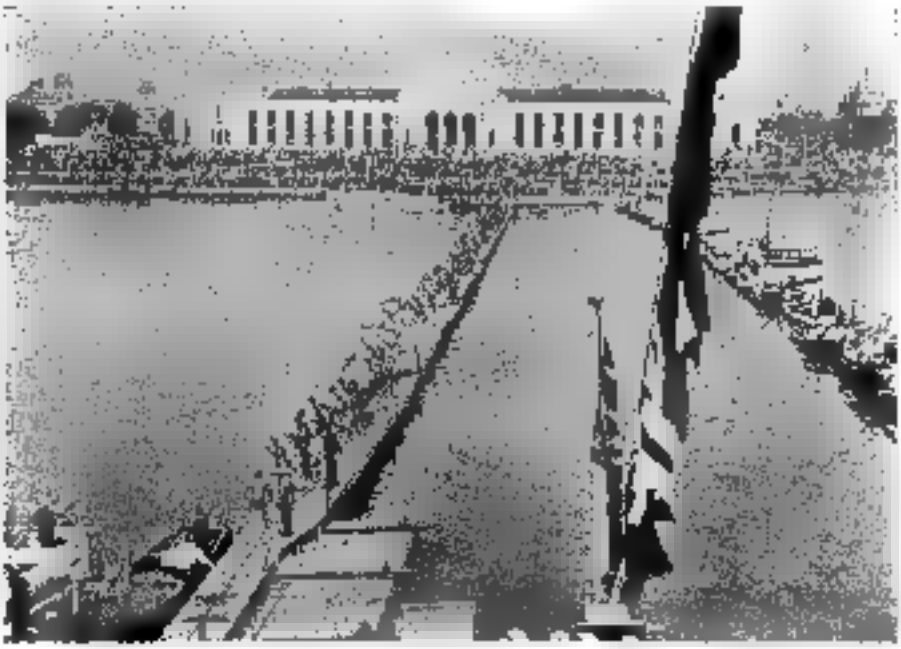
[20]*Globe*, September 24, 1883.
[21]See *Official Programme for Canada's Great Industrial Fair, 1895.*



Reproduced from an old Print by Courtesy of V. M. Roberts, Esq.

VIEW OF THE EXHIBITION GROUNDS, 1891

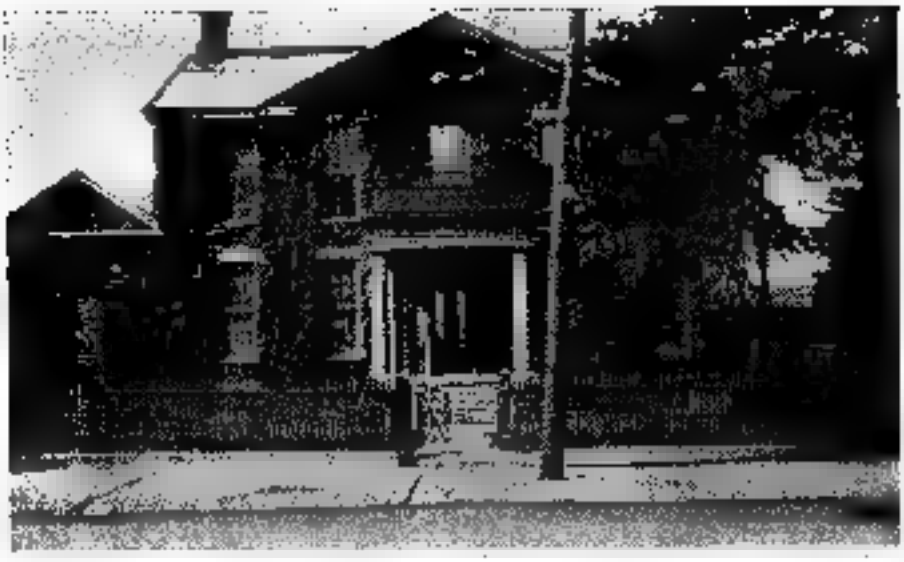
In the foreground is the Dufferin Street Wharf, an important feature when many citizens reached the Exhibition *via* excursion steamships.



Reproduced by Courtesy of the Toronto Harbour Commissioners.

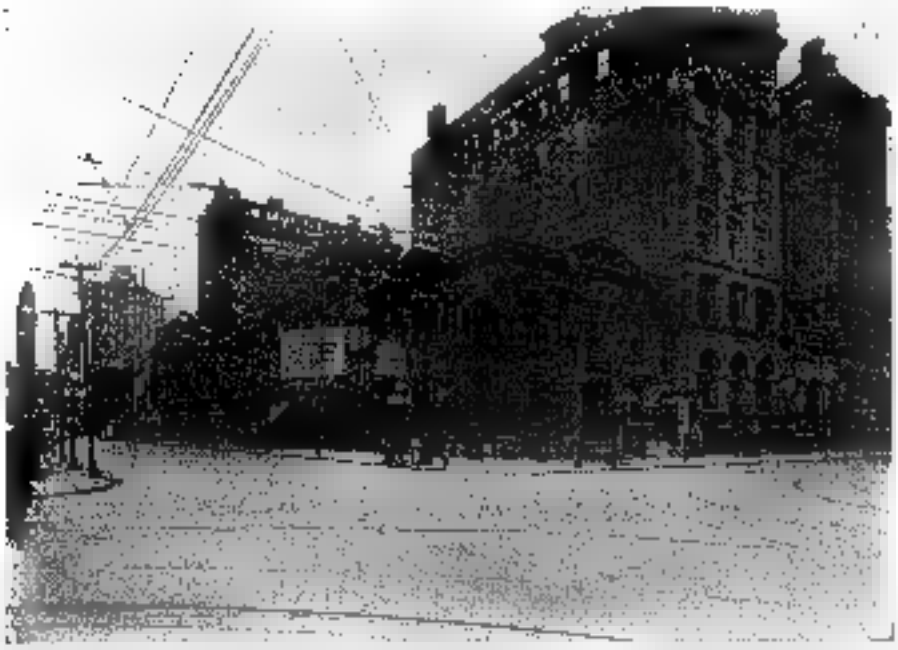
THE START OF THE MARATHON SWIM, CANADIAN NATIONAL EXHIBITION

The magnificent Automotive Building may be seen in the background.



HOME OF CHIEF JUSTICE SIR WILLIAM CAMPBELL, 1822-34

This interesting house still stands at the head of Frederick Street. It has for many years been occupied by the Capewell Horse-Nail Company, but its original appearance has not been altered.



THE CAWTHRA HOME, KING AND BAY STREETS

An excellent piece of architecture, this old home recalls the days when Bay Street was a residential district. Its neighbour, the Canada Life building, shared with the present *Mail and Empire* building the distinction of being the chief skyscrapers of the "gay nineties".

"phenomenal Robusto Tenor, of Bologna, Italy", a troupe of Japanese acrobats and entertainers, and a considerable number of divers, singers, dancers and comedians. The Royal Dragoons' Musical Ride and Lance Drill was also to be seen in front of the grandstand.

Among other features at this exhibition was "Society Row"—the headquarters "of all the principal fraternal societies on this continent". This popular section was to be found on the lawn in front of the Main Building. Another somewhat ephemeral feature was the International Bicycle Exhibit which occupied 6,000 square feet of space in the Carriage Building; and there was also a great bicycle tournament. "Exciting single, double and triple" balloon ascensions formed the counterpart of the aeroplane flights of some fifteen or twenty years later. The twelve bands which performed from time to time during the show were entirely from Ontario, and included the best military and civilian organisations.

The section denominated "Exhibition Pointers for the Guidance of Visitors" gives us some interesting information relative to the times. It is announced with great pride that "many of Toronto's main streets and private thoroughfares are asphalted", and that a person may ride on the electric street car for five cents, but "be sure you get a transfer ticket if you want to go from one car line to another". It was the heyday of bicycles, and those who arrived by pedalling themselves along could check their vehicles "just inside the Western Entrance". Private boarding houses were to be had in abundance at from $3 to $5 per week; while under the head "Some of the Hotels of Toronto" the Queen's and the Rossin House top the list at from $3 to $4.50 per day. Thirty-five others are named, including such survivals as the Black Bull and the Bay Horse. Bringing up the rear is the "Y. W. C. Association, 34 Elm Street (ladies only)". The passing of the open bar wrote *finis* to the activities of many of these inns, though a considerable number of the buildings may still be identified, and a few of the hostelries remain in business.

Among the places of interest which visitors were recommended to see in 1895 were the Lieut.-Governor's Residence, King and Simcoe Streets, and "the New City Hall and

Court House, at the head of Bay Street"; the latter, however, was still some years from completion. The Provincial Lunatic Asylum, Queen Street, had been a building of prominence since its erection in 1846, and the educational and religious buildings, together with the Ontario Parliament Buildings, Osgoode Hall, and St. Lawrence Hall and Market, comprised the chief other places of note. The skyscrapers of that day were the *Mail* Building and the Canada Life Building, at King and Bay Streets, and a view of the city might be obtained from their towers. The places of public entertainment were mainly Massey Hall, Toronto Opera House, Grand Opera House, Princess Theatre and Moore's Musée. Times have greatly changed even in forty years!

In 1904 it was recognised that the Toronto Industrial Exhibition was distinctly national in character, and the name was consequently changed to Canadian National Exhibition. After negotiations lasting three years over 200 acres of the Garrison Common was purchased from the government for $200,000, and this made possible the great modern development of the Fair since 1906, the year of a disastrous and spectacular fire on the grounds. The exhibitions of today are consequently held in a beautiful 350-acre park which, with its buildings, represents an investment of $21,000,000. Almost 2,000,000 visitors annually visit Exhibition City, a self-contained community with its own police force, fire and street-cleaning departments, hospital, post office, bank and telegraph offices, ten miles of paved boulevards, and a mile and a half of waterfront where world-famous aquatic events are held. The entire show has become almost international in scope, and affords a remarkable contrast with the early fairs from which it developed.

CHAPTER XVII

Inns and Taverns

In early days the wayside tavern and the town inn were centres of the social life of settlements to an extent which is hard to realise in modern times. The inn, like the mill, formed the nucleus around which developed many a village; and not infrequently the tavern-keeper, a man of high status in the community, was the best-known and most popular inhabitant. The first church services, elections and circuses were conducted at taverns; while dances, banquets, and the meetings and festivals of Agricultural Societies, lodges and the National Societies of St. George, St. Andrew and St. Patrick were seldom held elsewhere. The conviviality of the general run of innkeepers, together with the pleasures of eating, drinking and smoking, made the hotel an attractive place to many people, and those who, like Sir John Falstaff, enjoyed taking their ease at their inn had plenty of choice in a day of taverns. Though the drinking habits of the period frequently rendered inns anything but pleasant resorts, yet if one avoided the bar-room and centred his attention upon the living-room he might at times find that the roaring logs of the winter fireplace created an attractive atmosphere for the discusion of the questions of the day as well as the gossip of the neighbourhood.

Abner Miles[1] Inn was for some time the most important, if not also the first hotel in York. His diary and day-book for 1795-98 has survived to give us many interesting details of early life in the town.[2] Whether his establishment was at first more than saloon and store is uncertain, for the entries in his day-book for 1795 note chiefly the sale of goods and liquors. In fact in her memoirs[3] Mrs. Breakenridge stated that York had no inn in 1798, but there are

[1]This interesting relic of early times is in the Toronto Public Library, and may be found in print in John Ross Robertson's *Landmarks of Toronto*, 1894-1914. Vol. I, pp. 445-53.

[2]Quoted in William Canniff: *History of the Settlement of Upper Canada*. 1869. pp. 580-1.

numerous references in the day-book for that year which make certain that the establishment was then a hotel.

Some of the gentry were accustomed to give little dinners at Miles', and the charges for these and for liquor were frequently left unpaid for many months. Messrs. Ràby and Hamilton and Commodore Grant are jointly billed in July, 1798, for "twenty-two dinners at Eight shillings, £8 16s. Sixteen to Coffee, £1 12s. Eight Suppers, 16s. Twenty-three quarts and one pint of wine, £10 11s. 6d. Eight bottles of porter, £2 8s. Two bottles of syrup-punch, £1 4s. One bottle of brandy and one bottle of rum, 18s. Altogether amounting to £25 5s. 6d."

Among other events in Miles' Hotel was a "St. John's Dinner", for which Thomas Ridout, Jonathan Scott, Colonel Fortune, Surveyor Jones, Samuel Heron, Mr. Secretary Jarvis, Adjutant McGill and Mr. Crawford are each charged 16s. Chief Justice Elmsley was a prominent patron of the establishment, as was also Judge Powell. A reverend traveller's call at the inn is entered: "Priest from River La Tranche, 3 quarts corn and half-pint wine. Breakfast, 2s. 6d."—a notably frugal order in comparison with the others. Characteristic of the times is an item denoting the giving to "Major Small's soldiers" of a quart of rum "towards digging cellar". A sad entry is that noting the supply to one Hunter of a "small coffin for his child, 8s." The innkeeper was somewhat careless in his spelling, items being frequent for "flower", "nales", "bred" and "chees"; while carrying "frate" to the "skooner" is another example which calls to mind the fact that education was not widely diffused at that period.

Those interested in the names of the drinks of other days will find charges entered in the day-book for "gin slings", "rum slings", "sour punch" and "syrup-punch". The genial landlord occasionally advanced cash to his customers, and carried on in his inn a general store from which butter, eggs, beef, leather, buttons, "cassimere", lumber and other commodities were supplied at the prevailing high prices. His tavern was also the rendezvous for auction sales, town-meetings and club dinners. Miles' Hotel was located on the north side of King Street, between Berkeley and Ontario Streets. He is not mentioned among the

tavern-keepers in 1801, but on December 28, 1805, he was licensed to conduct a tavern on Yonge Street, Thomas Stoyell having taken over the management of Miles' old establishment on King Street. Abner Miles died in the autumn of 1806, an announcement concerning the settling of his estate appearing in the *Gazette* of November 29th.

The issuance of tavern licenses was a matter usually controlled by the Court of Quarter Sessions rather than by the town-meeting, though the records show that it was not done annually but every few years. On March 30, 1801, it was decided that "six persons are a sufficient number for Keeping Tavern in the Town of York", and Hannah McBride, James and Eli Playter, John McDougall, William Cooper, Joseph Hunt and Elisha Beman were approved for the purpose, the applications of John Horton (who had a shop license) and Titus Simons being at the same time rejected. The right to sell wines and liquors was, of course, included, and, "in order that the persons who have been recommended for Tavern Licenses might keep good rule and order in their respective houses, they are appointed Constables in and for the Town of York for the ensuing year," (Hannah McBride excepted).[3]

William Cooper, who was wharfinger, auctioneer and one of York's first schoolmasters, improved the accommodation at his tavern late in the same year, and on December 12, 1801, advertises his "Toronto Coffee House" as ready for business. This combined inn and general store was probably located on Wellington Street. Customers were promised "genteel board and lodging", and "the best liquors, viands, etc."[4] In November, 1802, Cooper inserted the following advertisement in the *Gazette*:

"Toronto Coffee House—William Cooper begs leave to acquaint his friends and the public that he has erected a

[3]Minutes of the Court of General Quarter Sessions, March 30, 1801. See *Report of the Archives of Ontario, 1932*, pp. 16-17. The tavern-keeper of early days was almost always highly respected in the community. As an illustration of the point it may be mentioned that Elisha Beman's wife was a clergyman's daughter whose first husband was Christopher Robinson, and one of whose sons was to become Sir John Beverley Robinson. The status of innkeeper was such that it was no doubt considered that Mrs. Robinson was marrying at least a social equal in accepting Mr. Beman as her second husband.

[4]*Upper Canada Gazette*, December 12, 1801.

large and convenient stable on his own lot opposite the Toronto Coffee House, and stored it well with hay and oats of the very best quality. Travellers will meet with genteel and comfortable accommodation at the above house, and their horses will be carefully attended to.

"He has just received from New York a large supply of the best wines, brandy, Hollands, shrub, fresh lime juice, London porter, oysters, anchovies, red herrings, Devonshire, Navy and Cavis sauces, segars, pipes and tobacco. He has also received a very general assortment of groceries and dry goods, which he will sell cheap for cash or exchange for country produce."[5]

Hotel accommodation in the town was considerably improved at this time by the opening of the York City Hotel. For many years Jordan's was the most fashionable inn in Upper Canada; and in it was held a session of parliament in 1814, after the destruction of the Government Buildings during the American occupation of the previous year. The hotel was located on the south side of King Street, between Berkeley and Ontario Streets, and among its many uses we find that the town's first Sunday School was held there under the direction of a Methodist, the Rev. John Lever.

Another of York's early public houses was that of Daniel Tiers. His establishment was quite distinguished, for he had a billiard table as well as an extra fireplace! His announcement of January 13, 1808, has an English ring:

BEEF-STEAK & BEER HOUSE.

"The subscriber informs his friends and the public that he has opened a House of Entertainment next door east of Mr. Hunt's, where his friends will be served with victualing in good order, on the shortest notice, and at a cheap rate. He will furnish the best strong beer at 8d. N.Y. currency per quart if drunk in his house, and 2s. 6d. N.Y. currency per gallon taken out. As he intends to keep a constant supply of racked beer, with a view not to injure the health of his customers, and for which he will have to pay cash, the very small profits at which he offers to sell will put it out of his power to give credit, and he hopes none will be asked. N.B.—He will immediately have entertainment for man and horse. Daniel Tiers. York, 12th January, 1808."[6]

[5] *Ibid.*, November 27, 1802. [6] *Ibid.*, January 13, 1808.

By 1812 the licensed tavern keepers in the town had increased to nine, as follows: William Smith, Jr., John Evens, Joseph B. Abbott, Seth Cook, Andrew OKeiffee, John Jordan, Joseph Hunt, Osborn Cox, Thomas Hamilton. The Court of Quarter Sessions at the same time refused the applications of Thadeus Gilbert, John Decriver and Haynes Bennett.[7] As will be recognised in connection with certain of these names, spelling was in early times seldom consistent, and many a person knew but little and cared less how his name was spelled. The classic example is to be found in the same record, under date of May 16, 1809, and is worthy of a short digression:

"John Hart, otherwise John Halt, who was appointed Constable for Pickering, appeared in Person and said that his name is John Hait and that he was Constable for Gwillimbury the last Year under the name of John Heath, but whose real name is JOHN ALLAN HAIGHT, and therefore prayed to be discharged from his present appointment; and he is discharged accordingly."[8]

A number of early Toronto hotels were located close to the waterfront. In the winter of 1829-30 one Pinder took over from F. T. Billings the house and premises "facing the York Bay", and advertised that he was making extensive additions and intended opening therein the British Coffee House as a hotel and boarding house. He announced in the *Gazette* of December 17, 1829, that "the house is well fitted up, and furnished in a very superior style, and will be ready for the reception of company by the opening of Parliament. Mr. P. feels confident that ladies and gentlemen and families who honour him with their patronage will find every comfort and accommodation. Among the attractions which he intends to add to the establishment will be a reading-room, which will be furnished with the principal English and provincial papers, periodical works, maps, charts, etc., etc. Boarders can be accommodated with or without lodging, by the day, week, month or year, on reasonable terms".[9]

Farther west there was in later years a well-known hotel on the Esplanade, at the foot of Simcoe Street. Erected in 1861, it was kept by a German, John Betz, until 1872,

[7]*Ontario Archives Report*, 1932, p. 204. [8]*Ibid.*, p. 138.
[9]*Upper Canada Gazette*, December 17, 1829.

when it had to be moved to make way for the second Union Station. Like many an inn, Betz's may be assumed to have attracted more thirsty than hungry men; and another tavern on Front Street of which the same might be said was the Rescue, located a little to the east of Bathurst Street. In the fifties it was in charge of Mrs. Hickman, and was a favourite resort for soldiers from the Garrison in the vicinity. The most conspicuous feature of the Rescue was its signboard, "noticeable not only for its great size but for the wonderful and sensational style of its drawing. The subject was the rescue of her infant by a mother from the nest of some enormous eagles in a rocky pass at the head of some apparently inaccessible mountains. How the woman had climbed the mountains was a mystery, and how she was going to descend them was even more mysterious still. But the sign served one good purpose at any rate, and that, as far as the proprietor was concerned, was the chief one —it drew attention to the house and custom to its proprietor. . . . It was always the first place a picquet made for when soldiers were reported as being absent from tattoo."[10]

Another small hotel, which had much in common with the Rescue, was the Halfway House, midway between the Garrison and the old City Hall. The sign of this tavern carried the legend:

"Within this hive we're all alive—
Good liquor makes us funny;
If you be dry, step in and try
The flavour of our honey."

Needless to say, many stepped in and steeped themselves in the "honey", particularly soldiers passing to and from the Garrison—many of whom consequently spent their nights in the guardhouse.

Along the waterfront also, but at an earlier period, was the Steamboat Hotel, at the present site of 64 Front Street East. It was a two-storey building, remarkable for the spirited delineation of a steam packet of vast dimensions extending the whole length of the building just above the upper verandah. In October, 1828, Ulick Howard adver-

[10]Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 85.

tises for rent his "elegant establishment, unrivalled in this part of the country".[11] Some months later he was successful in letting the hotel, for John Bradley announces on June 11, 1829, that he has taken it over from Ulick Howard, "and begs leave to acquaint the public that he has engaged Mr. Dixon as cook, and his other servants are of the best description. His house will be found at all times supplied with the best provisions, wines and all other sorts of liquors, and neither pains nor expense will be spared to render his establishment worthy the patronage it has so long enjoyed". In a foot-note it is further explained that Mr. Dixon "is well known to be a first-rate cook, having lived with the Governor for three years, and also with other gentlemen of the first respectability in the province". In fact the reputation of the house for "elegant and extensive accommodations" will evidently be more than maintained by John Bradley.[12] The sign of the steamboat was soon after removed, and the inn became known as the City Hotel.

Near by, at the north-west corner of Wellington and Church Streets, was the Ontario House—the Royal York of the eighteen-thirties. David Botsford, late of the Promenade Tavern, Niagara, announces on May 27, 1830, that he has taken over the establishment and fitted it up in a superior style "for the reception of genteel company". In addition to the proximity of the steamboat wharf and public buildings Botsford advertises as an inducement "the extensive view from the galleries, which overlook the town and bay" and render his hotel "particularly delightful". Further, "he has taken care that every department is filled with active and faithful servants, and nothing shall be wanting on his part to render it a fashionable place of resort". He invites visitors to Niagara Falls to make the short and comfortable trip across the lake on the steamer *Canada* and visit his hotel in "the capital of the province, the headquarters for the military, who have a superior band of music attached", the voyage over being attended by "every facility that is necessary for comfort".[13]

There were other special inducements to guests in the

[11] *Upper Canada Gazette*, October 8, 1828.
[12] *Ibid.*, June 11, 1829.
[13] *Ibid.*, May 27, 1830.

Ontario House. In the *Patriot* of May 23, 1837, Botsford advertises that "the parlours are spacious and elegantly furnished with bedrooms attached, airy and pleasant. The beds are large and double, well suited for summer and winter, and it may not be amiss to state that they are warranted free from vermin or insects of any kind, and will be kept so. . . . A splendid pianoforte with a choice selection of music for the use of ladies or gentlemen. . . . For the accommodation of the country gentry wishing to dine before leaving town the dinner hour through the summer season will be at 2 p.m."[14]

The proprietors up to the time that the hotel changed its name from the Ontario House to the Wellington Hotel were Messrs. Campbell, Deering, Pearson, Bernard, Hutchinson and Botsford. In 1845 Russell Inglis refurnished the building and opened it as the Wellington Hotel, and it was patronised by members of the Legislature as well as by frequent visitors from such neighbouring towns as Cobourg, Whitby and Hamilton. The dining arrangements are described by John Ross Robertson as follows:

"On the ground floor at the corner of the main building was the dining-room, a large hall with one great table running down its length where all the guests sat, each, as was the custom of the day, with a bottle of sherry or port before him, for claret was but little drunk, and champagne had not reached its subsequent popularity. Unlike the custom of the present time all the dishes were placed on the table at once and everyone helped himself. The meals were breakfast, lunch, dinner and tea. The price for transient guests was a dollar a day, or for permanent from four and a half to five dollars a week."[15]

A private sitting-room in the Wellington Hotel is notable from the fact that there William Lyon Mackenzie was first received by several members of his family on his return from exile. He proceeded to McIntosh's house on Yonge Street, where a reception of another kind—a riot which the police made no effort to stop—awaited him.

For many years, since it was located close to Weller's Stage Office in the Coffin Block, the Wellington was of great

[14]The *Patriot*, May 23, 1837.
[15]Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 276.

importance to travellers as the leading stage coach hostelry, and stages from all directions brought from eighty to one hundred visitors daily to the establishment. The manager consequently rented the two upper floors of the Coffin House Block as extra accommodation for his guests. The hotel's extensive stables were on Colborne Street, near Church.

Mr. Inglis was still proprietor of the Wellington Hotel in 1858, when it was described as "a comfortable, quiet house, where the charges are moderate and the accommodations good".[16] The establishment gradually sank to the level of a tenement house, however, and in 1861 its demolition to make way for the Bank of Toronto prompted the *Globe* to recall that the "Old Wellington" had been "twenty-five years ago the most popular hotel in Toronto, but it had in time to give place to the three first-class establishments we now possess—the Rossin, American and Revere Hotels".[17]

A hotel of considerable importance at the middle of the century—and earlier—was the North American, on Front Street near Scott. William Campbell was the proprietor in 1836, Thomas Pearson between 1839-1845, and G. C. Horwood in 1846. Evidence that it was a hostelry of prominence is afforded by the fact that on August 8, 1850, when some 200 leading citizens of Buffalo were entertained by the City Council, the dinner which followed the procession of welcome was held there, and the North American was the headquarters of the visitors during their two-day visit to Toronto. W. H. Pearson, whose father was proprietor of the hotel in the early forties, recalled some interesting information about the North American:

"I used to go up to the flat roof, where a view of the whole city could be obtained, and on a clear day the opposite shore of the lake was quite visible. It was a large four-storey building and the principal hostelry in the city. Connected with the hotel, at the corner of Scott and Front Streets, was a one-storey building which was used for ball and assembly rooms and occasionally as a theatre. . . . On the North American a bell was fixed in a frame on the top

[16] *Descriptive Catalogue of the Provincial Exhibition, 1858.* p. 77.
[17] *Globe*, November 29, 1861. The Revere was renamed the Queen's in 1862, the name Revere later passing to the present Iroquois Hotel.

of the roof, which was rung half an hour before dinner-time in order to notify the guests".[18]

A number of important hostelries were early established on the great route of travel—Yonge Street. The northwest corner of Queen and Yonge Streets, now the business centre of Toronto, was in early times the site of the Sun Tavern, where county meetings and elections were frequently held. It was erected about 1825 by John McIntosh, one of three brothers all of whom were captains of Great Lakes sailing vessels. The building was a large, square, white frame structure, and Charles Thompson and one Wilson were later proprietors. Thomas Elliott, the builder's brother-in-law, took over the hotel about 1830, and under his management business greatly improved. The Sun became headquarters of the Reform party, for McIntosh was a brother-in-law of William Lyon Mackenzie; and Mackenzie, speaking from an upper window of the hotel, frequently addressed crowds of supporters in the street below. In later years the inn was known as the Falcon, and then as the Craven Heifer. In 1855, while conducted by Henry Fulljames, it was destroyed by fire. A large open space to the north of this tavern was well-known in the twenties and thirties as the stopping-place of itinerant menageries and circuses.

Another "house of entertainment" on Yonge Street was the Green Bush Tavern, some distance north of the Sun Hotel. The name had originally applied to a hostelry far northward on Yonge, where its proprietor, Mr. Abrahams, had formerly kept tavern at the sign of the pine or spruce tree, a formal painting of that nature occupying a prominent place near the inn. Nearly a mile above the Green Bush Tavern—just below Charles Street, on the east side of Yonge—was the Gardeners' Arms. Its sign exhibited an

[18]W. H. Pearson: *Recollections and Records of Toronto of Old*, 1914, pp. 33-4 and 44. Probably the North American a the hotel described by "An English Visitor" in December, 1834, as "newly erected . . . . and equal in size, elegance and convenience to the Commercial Hotel in Kingston". In general he found the Toronto hotels "numerous and clean; and their prices are by no means extravagant, at least a we judge by the bill rendered at the one we staid at". His very interesting description of Toronto as it was a few months after the city's incorporation was printed in the *Christian Guardian* in December, 1834, and is reprinted in the Toronto Centenary Number of the *New Outlook*, March 14, 1934, p. 168.

heraldic arrangement of horticultural implements, and the building itself was a two-storey frame structure, with a narrow one-storey extension in front and a small wing at the north end. It was described as an unpretentious house of good repute, and troughs and a pump for watering horses and cattle rendered it, in Dr. Scadding's words, "a sylvan halting-place for weary teams".[19] John Ross Robertson gives us a word-picture of the locality as it appeared in 1894:

"For some years the Gardeners' Arms has not been a place of public entertainment. The building has been utilised for various trades and occupations. It is still standing, the second building below Charles Street on the east side of Yonge, but wearing an air of dilapidation in the weather-stained framework, the broken windows and the rickety roof. Waggons of all kinds by the dozen, old and broken, litter up the yard. At one end is a cobbler's little shop. In the wing is a rag shop with piles of rags heaped about, which women and children are assorting.

"Just north of the Gardeners' Arms was the Vauxhall Gardens, a resort conducted in connection with the tavern and deriving its name from the celebrated London gardens, where readers of Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* will remember Joseph Sedley drank too much arrack punch. The garden, with an orchard in its rear, was surrounded by an ordinary fence. The entrance was on Yonge Street, through an archway on which was painted 'Vauxhall Gardens'. Nothing remains of orchard or garden but a reminiscence, as it is flashed into momentary existence by the magic wand of memory."[20]

A directory issued in 1850 mentions this place of amusement with the comment that "the city has also her Vauxhall Gardens (Yonge Street) which have been lately opened to the public, and on the evenings of Monday and Thursday they are tastefully lighted with variegated lamps, and musical entertainments are given."[21] It is of interest to know that the tavern in connection with which the

[19]Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old*, 1873, p. 408.
[20]Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 19-21.
[21]*Henry Rowsell's City of Toronto and County of York Directory, 1850-1*, p. xx.

Gardens operated—the Gardeners' Arms—was still standing in 1924, when it was being used as a blacksmith shop, the only one within a radius of several miles. The building was then in an advanced state of dilapidation, and was soon afterwards demolished.

A short digression to the westward brings us to the site of a notorious tavern. On the north-west corner of Bloor Street and Avenue Road, where for several years a "depression skyscraper" has stood in a half-finished state, was once the Tecumseh Wigwam, a small low one-storey log cabin with a verandah or "stoop". Erected about 1820, this tavern continued to be a drinking-place for over half a century, and it was a favourite resort, especially on Sundays, of numerous young men of York and vicinity. In the fifties its keeper was David King. His son George joined a band of robbers called the Townsend Gang, at one time the terror of the country, and a few years later he was hanged at Cayuga for the murder of a stage-driver. In 1874 the Tecumseh Wigwam was torn down, and we may safely state that no one was the loser by its demolition.

Proceeding northward from the Gardeners' Arms, the early traveller was almost immediately opposite the Red Lion Tavern. This, the most notable of Yonge Street inns, was located on the northeast corner of Yonge and Bloor Streets and was originally operated by Daniel Tiers, who removed thither from the Beef-steak & Beer House, in York; subsequently it was known as Price's, and it became a very important halting-place for teams which had survived the tremendous struggle involved in hauling loads through the Blue Hill Ravine. Dr. Scadding comments thus upon villages and inns, with special reference to the location of the Red Lion:

"In old European lands, in times by-gone, the cell of a hermit, a monastery, a castle, became often the nucleus of a village or town. With us on the American continent a convenient watering or baiting place in the forest for the wearied horses of a farmer's waggon or a stage-coach is the less romantic *punctum saliens* for a similar issue. Thus Tiers', at which we have paused, may be regarded as the germ of the flourishing incorporation of Yorkville. Many a now solitary way-station on our railroads will probably

John Ross Robertson Collection.

THE CRAVEN HEIFER, FORMERLY THE SUN TAVERN, QUEEN AND YONGE STREETS, 1855

The site is now occupied by Woolworth's, and an open space where the Eaton store is situated was an early stopping-place for itinerant menageries.

John Ross Robertson Collection. P. V. Poole.

THE GARDENERS' ARMS TAVERN

Located on the east side of Yonge just below Charles Street, the old building, last used as a blacksmith shop, stood until recent years.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

THE BAR-ROOM OF THE RED LION HOTEL, YORKVILLE

Reproduced by Courtesy of the King Edward Hotel.

A SUPPER DANCE IN THE OAK ROOM, KING EDWARD HOTEL

The rhythm of a good orchestra, a floor show, excellent food, soft lights and beautiful girls combine to make the supper dance one of the most enjoyable of modern social activities. In this instance Luigi Romanelli is providing the music, which is being broadcast—there is even a torch singer at the microphone!

in like manner hereafter prove a centre round which will be seen a cluster of human habitations."[22]

There were numerous reasons for the importance of the Red Lion Tavern:

"By staying at the Red Lion instead of going at once to town the farmers evaded double toll at the Bloor Street gate, as they could go to market and return the same day. Thus it happened as the Home District grew in population the patronage of the Red Lion increased, and nightly ■ was crowded with farmers, who over their glasses discussed the future prospects of the country, the political questions of the day and the personnel of the officials of the time, while frequently no doubt 'news much older than their ale went round'. These nightly assemblages made the Red Lion the most important political centre in the district when party feeling ran high. The Red Lion was one of the polling-places for the election of representatives for the Home District, and in these days, the balloting being prolonged for ■ week at a time, the wayside inn was an animated and excited place."[23]

In the early seventies Dr. Scadding found that the Red Lion, "the *Hotel de Ville* of Yorkville", had a Flemish appearance:

"It might have strayed hither from Ghent. Nevertheless, as seen from numerous points of view, it cannot be characterised as picturesque or in harmony with its surroundings. The shield of arms sculptured in stone and set in the wall above the circular window in the front gable presents the following charges arranged quarterly: a Beer-barrel, with an S below; a Brick-mould, with an A below; an Anvil, with a W below; and a Jackplane, with a ■ below. In the centre, in a shield of pretence, is a Sheep's head, with an ■ below. These symbols commemorate the first five Councillors or Aldermen of Yorkville at the time of its incorporation in 1858, and their trades or callings; the initials being those, respectively, of the surnames of Mr. John Severn, Mr. Thomas Atkinson, Mr. James Wallis, Mr. James Dobson, and Mr. Peter Hutty. Over the whole, as a crest, is the Canadian Beaver."[24]

[22]Scadding, *op. cit.*, pp. 408-9. [23]Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 92.
[24]Scadding, *op. cit.*, pp. 409-10.

But the memories of the old hotel are best described by John Ross Robertson, writing only two years after it lost its tavern license in 1892:

"The famous old Red Lion Hotel was the first place for the accommodation of travellers to the district subsequently known as Yorkville, and a hostelry which for nearly eighty years kept its doors and gates open for the accommodation of man and beast. Deprived of its license two years ago, the old building now stands silent and mournful, thronged with the ghosts of bearded, bronzed farmers, patriotic Reformers, intriguing politicians, bright-eyed girls, and spruce young men—all classes that made up the society of York and its environs. Its walls echo with strains of music and the merry flick-flack of dancing feet, with fierce political harangues, noisy disputes and wine-provoked laughter. The façade of the building" (See illustration p. 128) "stretches along Yonge Street over one hundred feet. At first it consisted of the central or main buildings; afterward wings and extensions were added. Originally this famous old tavern was clap-boarded and painted white, but, as is so frequent with old Toronto buildings, its walls were stuccoed. In the windows are the antique little square panes of glass as they were put in the black sashes at the beginning of the century, before anyone now living can remember. Only a small portion of the ground floor is now utilised, a little part as a fruit store, and the northern part, which once was the bar-room with its heavy oak beams, as a flour and feed store.

"Perhaps to-day the most interesting feature of the old inn is the ballroom in the second storey. This is an apartment about 40 x 20 feet in dimensions, and 18 feet high, with a ceiling arching from the sides. At each end is a large old-fashioned chimney and fireplace. The walls are covered with panels of wallpaper with narrow blue borders. At the basis of the arch is a painted flaming red border. From the centre of the arch depends hooks for sconces, for the old hostelry was in its prime before the days of oil, when candles were in universal use. This ballroom attracted the devotees of the dance, who drove out or walked in pairs from York to attend the entertainments given there. How many times through those antique windows have floated out the sounds of revelry! How many a couple whose voices are

now hushed in the tombs have whispered soft words in this room! Perhaps here many a maiden has breathed that wonderful 'Yes'. Many an officer from the garrison, or half-pay officers settled in the neighbourhood, frequented these social gatherings and lent to them an air of aristocracy."[26]

A concession farther north, on the south-west corner of St. Clair and Yonge, was located a tavern which was in its heyday in the eighties and nineties, when the Red Lion's existence was drawing to a close. Mike O'Halloran's was in a strategic situation, for it was the last drinking-place before the city was reached; but there was another reason for the extensive patronage enjoyed by "Little Mike". Just south of the tavern was St. Michael's Cemetery, and just north was Mount Pleasant, and the presence of the two burying-grounds greatly increased business. It was a standing joke in Toronto that the driving-shed was always full of hacks after funerals, for the attendants—not to say the mourners—were accustomed to adjourn thither and drown some of their sorrow for the departed. Mike's tavern was also a great rendezvous for sleighing parties from the city, and many a "hoe-down" took place in the ball-room over the driving-shed.

Returning again to the town, we may notice a few more well-known hostelries. In 1831, on the north-east corner of York and King Streets, was erected a two-storey frame building which, until 1843, was known as the Mechanics' Boarding House. In that year James Mirfield, an Englishman, established therein the Shakspeare Hotel. In later years Thomas Kerr was landlord. The house was patronised particularly by theatrical companies which visited Toronto, and for a time there was a large frame theatre at the rear of the hotel, the entrance to which was by a lane from King Street. In 1876 the Shakespere was rebuilt and refurnished (even the name was re-spelled!), and James Powell conducted therein a hostelry of somewhat higher reputation. The Imperial, by which name it is now known, is still in business on the corner with two other old-timers—the Prince George and the Iroquois.

A hotel known as the Beauchamp House stood until 1902 on the northwest corner of Front and John Streets, the

[26]Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 88.

site now being part of the railway freight yards. It was a plain two-storey frame building, and had been an inn from the time of its erection in 1825. Edward Wright was the original proprietor, and the place soon took the name Greenland Fishery owing to the chance visit of a sailor. The seaman, in need of money and possessed of some artistic ability, was engaged to paint a signboard for the inn. Being familiar with whaling voyages he accordingly painted an arctic or Greenland landscape on one side, while on the reverse was a representation of vessels engaged in the capture of a whale. The name of the proprietor and the words "Greenland Fishery" were inscribed near by. The whole work, considered to be both spirited and well executed, attracted considerable attention, and added not a little to the landlord's revenue. Mr. Wright, the proprietor, was elected alderman during 1834, the year in which the town of York became the city of Toronto.

Still standing on the north-east corner of York and Richmond Streets is a frame building of a reddish brown hue, in recent years Abiscot's second-hand bookstore. Built about a century ago, it was for many years Crispin's Tavern, a popular resort among gentlemen's servants, butlers and the like, for Richard Crispin —or "Coachman Dick" as he was familiarly known to his patrons—had come out with Lieutenant-Governor Sir John Colborne in 1828, and had served some years as driver of the official coach. He was a big sandy-haired jolly Englishman, and his wife had formerly been employed in Sir John's household. Originally a bright yellow, the dingy building is now largely hidden by signboards, but has not otherwise been altered materially since its erection; and when it was built the York-Richmond-Bay-Queen block was chiefly vacant land owned by two men—a negro named John Long and one Crowther, a carpenter,—the former being in possession of the western portion. To Helliwell's Brewery on the Don, which supplied the tavern with beer, the proprietor was known and entered in the books merely as "Coachman" Crispin. Soon after his death the corner portion of the building became a shop, and its present tenant dispenses soft drinks—as close as possible, under modern laws, to the tavern's traditional activities. To the northward on York Street, as one approaches Os-

goods Hall, have long been located at the sign of the three gilt balls (though the symbol may be missing), numerous small but interesting pawnshops, characteristically overloaded with a conglomeration of second-hand goods which would defy classification.

In 1833, when York had a population of 8,731, the taverns and inns numbered forty, two of which had bowling alleys. There were also, we are informed in George Walton's *Directory*,[20] seven "respectable" boarding houses, and no doubt a considerable number of the other variety! A complete list of the taverns during the early years of the city will be of particular interest to those who appreciate the quaint in names, though but little of romance was inherent in most of the establishments themselves. The following list, totalling twice as many as existed four years earlier, has been compiled from Walton's *City of Toronto and Home District Directory for 1837*:

Albion Inn, Church Street; Anchor Inn, Church Lane; Antrim Inn, near the Catholic Church; William Atkins' Eating House, Market Square; Auld Lang Syne Tavern, Church Street; Argyle Inn, Newgate Street; Black Swan Tavern, 211 King Street; King Alfred Tavern, 197 King Street; Bay Horse Tavern, Yonge Street; Belfast Tavern, Market Lane; Black Bull Tavern, Lot Street; Blue Bonnet Tavern, Yonge Street; Blue Bell Inn, Lot Street West; Ontario House Inn, Market and Church Streets; Bull's Head Inn, 129 King Street; Red Lion Tavern, Yonge Street Road; Queen's Head Tavern, Sandford's Corner, Lot Street; North American Hotel, Front Street; Cavan Arms Tavern, King Street East; Alex. Chisholm's Tavern, 127 King Street; City Hotel, Front Street; Stag Tavern, Market Square; Cotter's (New) British Coffee House, Front Street; Grantham's (Old) British Coffee House, King Street; Cross Keys Inn, York Street; Crown Inn, King and New Streets; Dog and Duck Tavern, Market Square; Edinburgh Castle Tavern, Church Street; Farmers' Hotel, Market Square; Farmers' Arms Inn, 88-90 King Street; City of Toronto Tavern, Front Street; Peacock Inn, Church Street; Burns' Tavern, 8 King Street East; Ship Tavern, Market Street; Greenland Fishery

[20] *George Walton's York Commercial Directory for 1834*. 1833. Facing p. 125.

Tavern, near Parliament Buildings, Front Street; Half Moon Inn, 2 New Street; Camelion Tavern, Church Street; Mansion House Hotel, Newgate Street; William the Fourth Tavern, Market Square; Three Loggerheads Inn, Yonge Street; Four Alls (Awls?) Tavern, March Street; White Swan Tavern, 26 Lot Street; Michael Keating's Tavern and Chop House, King Street West; G. Kendrick's Tavern, Lot Street; John Kerr's Tavern, Palace Street; York Hotel, King Street East; Toronto Inn, Yonge Street, Teamsters' Inn, Market Lane; John McDonald's Inn, Market Lane; Rob Roy Tavern, 70 Yonge Street; Neptune Inn, New Street; White Horse Tavern, King Street West; Michael O'Connor's Inn, Market Lane; Harp and Crown Tavern, Newgate Street; Old Countryman Inn, 127 King Street; Joseph Palin's Hotel, on the Peninsula; All Nations' Tavern, 92 King Street; Harp Tavern, Church Street; Race Horse Inn, Church Street; Raye's Tavern, Yonge Street Road; Red Lion Inn, Market Lane; Rising Sun Inn, Newgate Street; Carpenters' Arms Inn, 210 King Street; Rockingham Arms Tavern, March Street; Union Hotel, Market Square; S. T. Smith's Inn, 14 King Street; Steamboat Inn, Bay Shore; Royal Saloon, Church Street; City Arms Tavern, Market Lane; St. Lawrence Hotel, Market Square; St. George and the Dragon Inn, Church Street; Sun Tavern, Lot and Yonge Streets; Crown and Anchor Tavern, Yonge Street; Yorkshire Arms Tavern, Newgate Street; Toronto Inn, Yonge Street; Toronto and Trafalgar Inn, Church Street; White Lion Inn, March Street; and Golden Ball Inn, Yonge Street.

These establishments, many of which were no more than bar-rooms, total seventy-eight, and the population of the city in 1836 was only 9,652, exclusive of the military, those confined in the jail, and such transient persons as immigrants *en route* to other parts of the province. Included in the list is Joseph Palin's Hotel, on the Peninsula. The mention of this inn recalls that it was first called The Retreat on the Peninsula and had an interesting manager. Early press announcements are usually exceedingly entertaining, and not infrequently contribute much to the delineation of the character of "the subscriber", as he commonly called himself. Reflect upon this neat advertisement of Michael O'Connor, proprietor of the first hostelry on the

Island, and operator of that grandiloquently-named horse-boat, the *Sir John of the Peninsula*:

"Michael O'Connor, formerly Steward of the Steam Packet *Canada*, begs leave respectfully to announce to the Inhabitants of York, and to strangers visiting the capital of Upper Canada, that he has opened a Hotel on the Peninsula, opposite the town; where he will be ready to accommodate Sportsmen, Parties of pleasure, and individuals who may wish to inhale the Lake breeze, with every kind of refreshments. His Wines and Liquors are particularly selected and will be found equal, if not superior, to any in the country. He trusts that from long experience, and strict attention to business, to merit a share of public favour, and that the Retreat on the Peninsula will be patronized especially by those whose recollection of the Spanish Peninsula will ever be dear to their memory, as recorded in the pages of British History.

"N.B. As the proprietor has established a Horse Boat to run regularly between York and this place, ladies and gentlemen can make certain of returning to suit their own convenience.

"Peninsula, Sept. 7, 1833.

"The York Papers, *Montreal Herald*, *Kingston Chronicle*, *Gore Mercury* and *Niagara Gleaner* are requested to give the above three insertions, and send their accounts to the proprietor."[27]

On the north-west corner of Church and Colborne Streets, (the latter formerly known as Market Lane), there once stood a frame hotel, the landlord of which was a negro with the somewhat inappropriate name of Snow. In 1848 Joshua Beard erected a brick hostelry on the site, and its upper floors were for a time occupied by the Masonic and Orange Lodges. Among the later proprietors of this inn was John Montgomery, formerly associated with the tavern on north Yonge Street which was the rendezvous of the rebels of '37.

The mention of Snow's Inn recalls the fact that negroes were not infrequently successful tavern-keepers in early Toronto. Another well-patronised tavern of which the landlord was a negro was that at the head of Toronto Street,

[27]The *Courier of Upper Canada*, October 5, 1833.

where the Post Office now stands. In the early forties the frame hotel on that location was run by James Mink, and adjoining it were extensive stables. Mink retired from business with quite a fortune, and appropriated $10,000 of it to attract a respectable white man as husband for his daughter. One was found and the pair set out on their wedding trip to the Southern States, where the man (as John Ross Robertson tells the story), "with a villainy that we are pleased to say characterises few white men, sold his bride into slavery and abandoned her. Through the efforts of Mink's friends in Canada, and the payment of a large sum of money, Miss Mink was freed and brought back to Toronto, and lived for years with her father in the old home on the hill, on the east side of the Don and Danforth Road."[28]

The Chewett Buildings, structures of red brick at the corner of King and York Streets, first housed John Cotter's New British Coffee House. Commenced in 1833, the building was opened for business in the following year. During the Rebellion of 1837 the Coffee House was closed, and in later years it was used as a barracks, and then as officers' quarters. In 1842 John Eliah carried on a boarding house, private hotel and club-house in the building, the club-rooms later developing into the home of the Toronto Club; and in 1852 a dancing academy occupied part of the old Coffee House. Three years later the Rossin brothers purchased the property with the intention of erecting a hotel, and the Rossin House, opened in 1857, was the result of their enterprise.

A publication almost contemporary with the opening of the Rossin House gives an enthusiastic description of its merits; it says, in fact, that "from its capacity, and the completeness of its arrangements for accommodating travellers and permanent boarders in the most perfect style of modern hotel-keeping, it has superseded and shut up nearly the whole of the other first-class hotels of the city". Referring to it as "among the chief architectural ornaments of the city", the account states that the land and building cost £55,000, the hotel being "five stories in height, faced with white pressed brick, with substantial dressings of Ohio freestone, handsome iron pillars, cornices and balconies".

[28]Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 50.

The frontage on King Street was 202 feet 5 inches, and on York 151 feet 10 inches. We are further informed that "the ground floor comprises a number of handsome shops, varying from 14 to 23 feet in width, and 50 to 60 feet in depth, each elegantly furnished with large plate-glass windows, and having a cellar attached. The offices of the hotel are also on the ground floor. The main entrance, 20 feet wide, is on York Street. The whole number of rooms for the reception of boarders, exclusive of reading-rooms and the principal parlours, is about 220, and during the Exhibition the proprietors will be able to accommodate as many as 500 guests. Fare $2.50 per day."[29]

The enthusiasm of one man for the Rossin House carried him away into intricacies of extravagant language seldom equalled:

"Within its walls is congregated every appliance which affluence can desire, every pleasure which luxury can crave. Here are alluring condiments to tempt the most fastidious taste, vinous acidities to lubricate, and gastronomic ponderosities to titilate the palate! The prandial morceau here ceases from troubling, and the sated stomach is at rest. What magical transformations here await human deglutition!"[30]

In a somewhat more conservative tone the same writer notes the elaborate equipment of the hostelry: the two commodious private entrances . . . . an extensive reading room, lighted by a large and handsome glass dome . . . . fifteen elegantly furnished stores on the ground floor . . . . a long row of parlours and reception rooms, the principal of which is a ladies' parlour. . . . a dining-room 100 feet by 38, and 18 feet high, adjoining which is the carving room, dish room, dessert room, and a glazed gallery connecting these with the kitchen and china pantry . . . . three staircases, two for the use of guests and the third for servants . . . . 220 rooms for the reception of boarders . . . . a very ex-

[29] *Descriptive Catalogue of the Provincial Exhibition, 1858*, p. 77. For an account of the charges and living conditions—even to washing clothes—in Toronto hotels prior to the Rossin House, see the Rev. Henry Christmas' description in his *Canada in 1849: Pictures of Canadian Life, or the Emigrant Churchman*. 1850. Vol. I, pp. 68-70.

[30] Alfred Sylvester: *Sketches of Toronto*. 1858. pp. 18-19.

tensive bar-room, with billiard table underneath . . . . a barber's shop and gentlemen's bathing-room containing ten baths . . . . and a Book and News Depot where one may obtain local or European journals, or handsomely bound volumes "which address alike the students of light or abstruse literature".[31] Such advantages in the eighteen-fifties placed the Rossin House far in advance of the general run of inns and taverns—it was, in fact, for some years considered the best hotel west of New York.

The disastrous fire of November, 1862, destroyed the building, and the Rossins, disheartened, left the reconstruction of the hostelry to Dr. Chewett. The Rossin House was rebuilt in 1863 and continued to operate under that name until 1909, when it was re-named the Prince George Hotel. During the century since the British Coffee House was established on the corner the site has been a centre of the social life of the city. Early a fashionable resort, the Coffee House was noted as a gathering place of the St. Andrew's and St. George's Societies and of the Toronto Club; indeed it is said that each of these organisations was inaugurated in 1835-36 in the rooms of the establishment. The Rossin House was for many years the headquarters of the Liberal party, and the scene of many historic political meetings, banquets and balls. Among the proprietors after Marcus and Samuel Rossin were G. P. Shears, the Nelson brothers and the Thompsons, father and son, Samuel Thompson having earlier been closely associated with Henry Winnett of the old Queen's, the famous contemporary hostelry. The Prince of Wales' suite were quartered at the Rossin House in 1860, the Prince himself being entertained at Government House. Nine years later Prince Arthur of Connaught was a distinguished guest at the same hostelry.

The only hotel in Toronto in the late fifties which could be considered a competitor of the Rossin House was the American House, at the corner of Yonge and Front Streets. In the *Descriptive Catalogue of the Provincial Exhibition* (1858) it is referred to as a hotel of great "intrinsic merit".[32] It was a brick building erected about 1840 by Mr. Rennie, who was succeeded as proprietor by A. F. Pearson in 1853. After five years under his management it passed into the

[31] *Ibid.*, pp. 19-20. [32] *Descriptive Catalogue*, p. 77.

hands of Messrs. David Walker (later of the Walker House) and Paterson, "who have refitted and refurnished it in all those details which add so much to the comfort and pleasure of its inmates". Ninety rooms, many of them quite spacious, and a dining-room 60 feet by 30, and capable of seating 200 persons, placed this hotel in the first class. Its situation near the docks and railways, as well as its comfortable and home-like atmosphere, rendered it popular. Board was $2 per day, and the American could accommodate 150 guests. It remained a well-known hostelry until 1889, when it was demolished. During his visit to Toronto in 1842 Charles Dickens was a guest at this house.

Among private hotels and boarding houses in 1858 probably the Robinson House, near the corner of King and Bay Streets, was outstanding. Those who wished to avoid the formality and bustle of the regular hotels were assured of every comfort in the Robinson House, which contained forty-eight bedrooms. It was "presided over by Mr. John Montgomery, whose experience and well-known urbanity are a sufficient guarantee of the comfort of his guests".[33]

The regular amusements available in Toronto in the late fifties were closely associated with saloons, two of the more pretentious of which were the Terrapin, (formerly the St. Nicholas, and situated on King Street near the site of the present King Edward Hotel), and the Apollo Saloon and Concert Room on the same street. In describing the attractions of these places of entertainment a contemporary publication introduces the subject by noting that "we believe there is no city of its size on the continent which is pestered with so many saloons and taverns; and, if the morals and habits of our people were to be judged by this criterion, the stranger would form a very unfavourable and unjust opinion".[34]

The Apollo Saloon appears to have staged nightly a show which may be called the forerunner of the night club, though it was available upon much more reasonable terms. The price of admission was only twelve and one-half cents, and from his modest investment the patron was entitled to "a smoke or a drink", as well as to witness a "performance of negro minstrelsy, comic and sentimental singing, etc". The

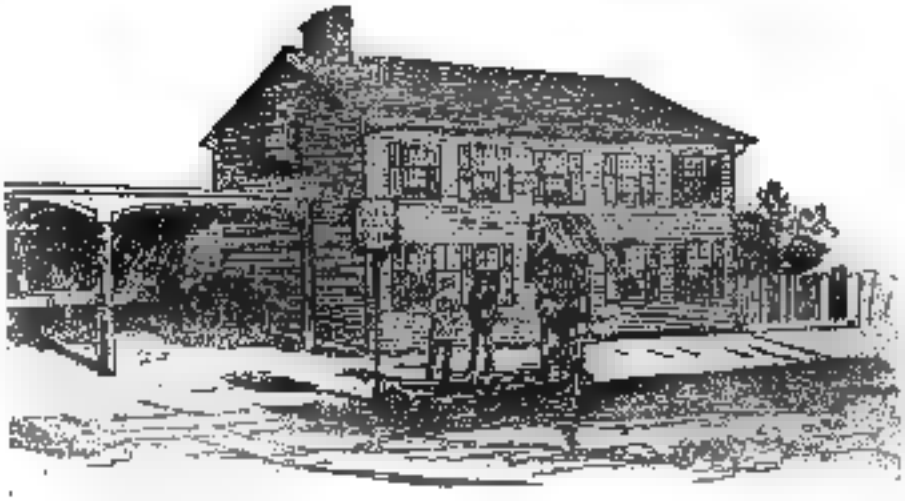
[33]*Ibid.* [34]*Ibid.*, p. 79.

actors, Mr. Burgess and Mr. Den Thompson, are described as "inimitable in their way . . . . the one as a negro performer, and the other as a 'broth of a boy' from the Emerald Isle".[18]

Eastward and westward of the town were numerous well-known inns. To the west, where the roadway along Lot (Queen) Street turned northward, was early located Sandford's Inn, a watering-place on the east side of the bend which was particularly welcome to teams on their way to town. A conspicuous pump was available to fill the large trough—a long section of a huge pine tree dug out like a canoe. A little to the eastward, opposite the Garrison Common, was a rival of Sandford's known as the Blue Bell Tavern. This notable inn carried at the top of a strong and lofty pole in front of its door a sign appropriate to its name, which swung to and fro within a frame. Both of these inns were long familiar to travellers along the Lake Shore Road, as well as to those who entered York from the north and west *viâ* Dundas Street. At the middle of the century, in fact, the Blue Bell gave the name Blue Bell Village to the locality. Of similar importance to travellers was the Black Bull Hotel, at the corner of Queen and Maria (Soho) Streets.

A short distance to the west of the Blue Bell, at the junction with Dundas Street (now Ossington Avenue), stood the Queen's Head Tavern, kept by Lewis Bate, and famous as a resort for city people on summer evenings. Like so many other taverns it was an unpretentious structure of frame, with a verandah facing both Queen and Dundas Streets, and a capacious horse-trough and small driving-shed on the Dundas Street side. After turning westward again from the Ossington Avenue section of old Dundas Street and proceeding beyond Dufferin Street, travellers of other days reached a locality known as the "Appii Forum" or "The Three Taverns", the hostelries being frame buildings much alike in appearance—Collard's Hotel, Joseph Church's Brown Bear Tavern and the Queen Street Hotel, "Bob" James, proprietor. Here, both in summer and winter, racing men were wont to try out their horses and arrange contests. About one hundred yards farther on was the Brockton Toll-bar, kept for many years

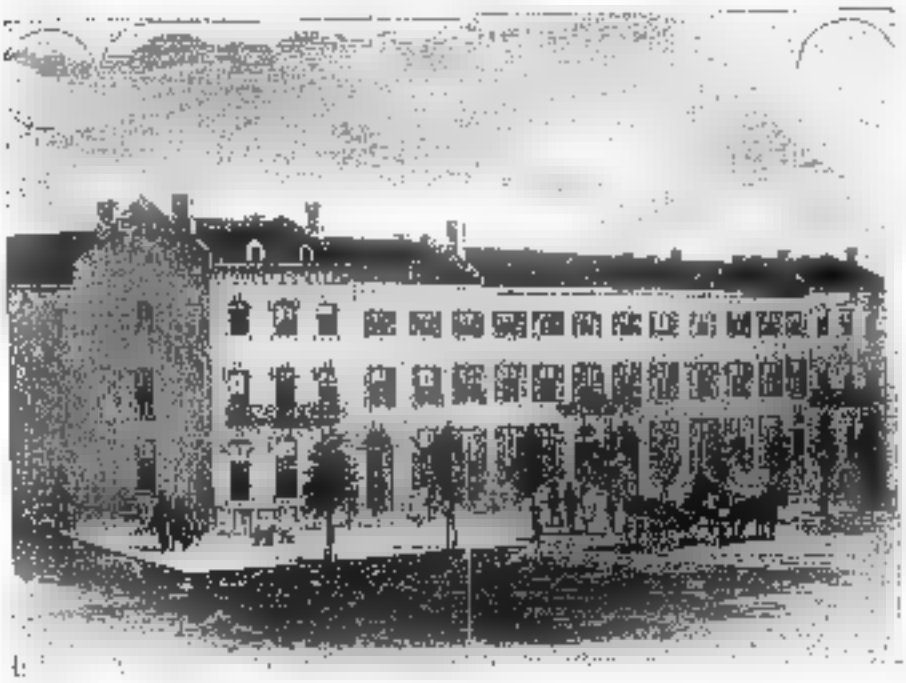
[18] *Ibid.*



John Ross Robertson Collection.

The Blue Bell Tavern

The nucleus of Blue Bell Village, this inn opposite the Garrison Common was long well-known to travellers entering Toronto from the north-west and west.



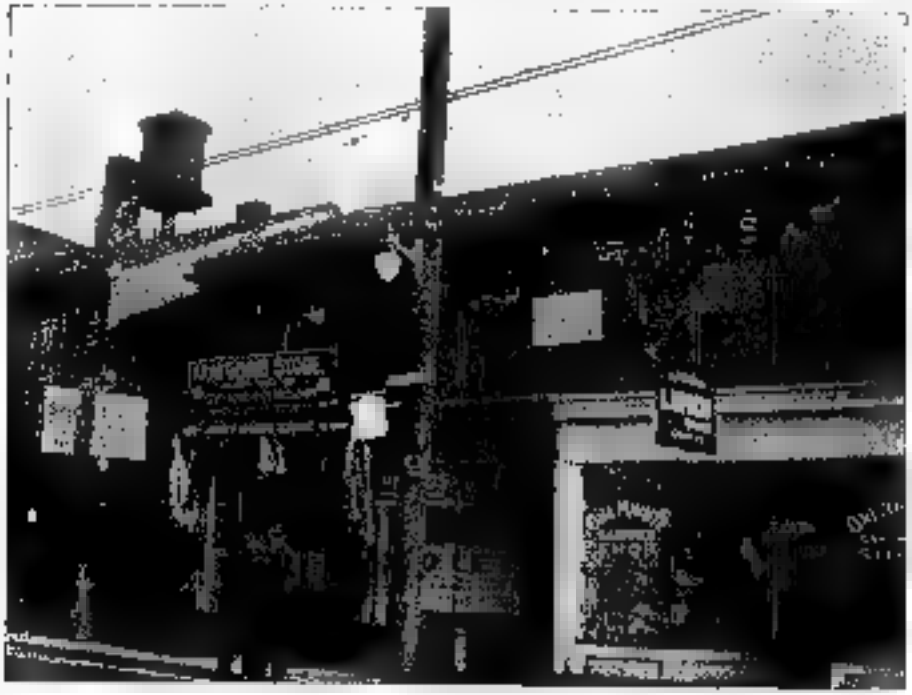
Canadian Illustrated News.

The Queen's Hotel of 1863

This shows the first Queen's, earlier called Sword's Hotel and the Revere House. As may be seen from the illustration, a number of separate buildings were combined to form the hotel. In the vicinity at that time were "several comely mansions within their garden walls shaded with trees"—among them Holland House and Bishop Strachan's residence.

LOOKING NORTHWARD FROM THE INTERSECTION OF YORK AND RICHMOND STREETS, 1934

Hardly to be distinguished under the modern billboard decorations is "Coachman" Crispin's Tavern, 1836, a clapboard structure erected a few years earlier and used as a grocery store. An even dozen second-hand stores occupy the other ancient buildings leading to Osgoode Hall.



THE TAVERN TYRONE, 125-127 QUEEN STREET WEST

Among many other dilapidated buildings a hundred yards west of the City Hall stands the old Tavern Tyrone. The cows of its proprietor, John Trueman, were responsible for those unique stock-yard gateways by which the Bench and Bar still approach Osgoode Hall.

by James Kerr. Near the gate was a small general store in charge of Mrs. Larkin, who was also postmistress of Brockton.

In 1850 there was a well-known tavern in what is now the east end of the city, but the entire district was then a rural locality. The Butchers' Arms was located on the east side of Mill Lane (now Broadview Avenue), between the present Sparkhall and Hogarth Avenues. About 1845 Thomas Smith built the house, selling it a few years later to William Vine. The tavern was well patronised by the sporting fraternity, for there was a race-course on the south side of the Kingston Road where the Sunlight Soap Works was later erected; and there were, too, numerous devotees of cock-fighting in the vicinity, that so-called sport not then being illegal. There were other customers who, entirely undesired by the keeper, frequented the Butchers' Arms and made it notorious: these were members of the Brooks' Bush Gang, a group of hardened criminals whose headquarters were a short distance eastward. At least one of the gang was hanged, but others equally guilty escaped conviction. When the Butchers' Arms was at its height there were few buildings in the neighbourhood. One or two were located across the road, and to the north were the brickyards of Whitemore and Stotesbury, while there was a large expanse of vacant land to the southward. The tavern was discontinued in 1877, and William Vine died two years later; but the old building was standing in 1907, and the innkeeper's widow, aged ninety, was still living. The whole district, however, was then vastly changed, wayside taverns were fast disappearing, and the rough and tough days of heavy drinking were slowly but surely approaching their end.

About a mile to the southward, near the south-east corner of Queen Street and Broadview Avenue (formerly the Kingston Road and Scadding Street, respectively,) was located the Tam O' Shanter Inn. A swinging sign depicting a white horse with Tam astride lent character to the place, and in the rear a towering elm was a noted landmark. The location should with more reason be remembered, however, because in the next house lived Alexander Muir, well-known Toronto school teacher, and famous as the author of *The Maple Leaf Forever*.

In the same vicinity was the Rising Sun Inn, opened about 1844 by William Knight. Immediately behind it was a race-course, and the followers of that sport formed the greater part of the tavern's patrons. It was for some years the only inn between the Don River and Leslie's nursery, but in the early fifties other taverns were opened. In 1857 the old race-course ceased to be used, and the Rising Sun, its business greatly diminished, was closed soon afterwards.

During the same period, about seventy years ago, there stood one mile to the eastward, on the Kingston Road, the hub of the village of Leslieville—Uncle Tom's Cabin. This hotel was kept by two typical Englishmen, George Smith and William Cook, and it was a centre of the social life of the district. Brick-making and tree-growing were the principal occupations of the inhabitants round about, and as these industries were inactive in the winter months Uncle Tom's was the rendezvous for cards, dominoes and drinking. Although beer and whisky sold for two-pence a glass, it is said that there was but little drunkenness at this hotel. About 1874 "Codder" Smith and his partner sold out to a son-in-law of "Bill" Vine, proprietor of the Butchers' Arms, and he in turn disposed of the house to Henry ("Hank") Callendar, who remodelled the tavern and operated it under the name Callendar's Hotel until the license was taken away many years later.

In 1897, when John Ross Robertson was making his notable collection of Toronto *Landmarks*, there was a two-storey red brick building at 1010 Queen Street East. The structure itself, however, was neither old nor unusual, but at its western end was a well of fresh water. This well provided a link with the past, and we cannot do better than let John Ross Robertson tell the tale:

"Fifty years ago that well and clumsy home-made pump formed part of the equipment of a roadside tavern yard. The tavern itself was a long low building, always painted a dazzling white, with a cottage roof and green shutters on its four front windows, which, two on either side, flanked a door, also painted green, in the centre.

"A few yards distant from the western end of the tavern was a low red building used as a driving-shed. Between the hotel and shed was the well referred to. At the eastern end

of the hotel and somewhat to the south of it stood two substantial uprights between which hung a heavy wooden signboard, explaining to the world at large and teamsters in particular the purposes for which the building was intended. The hostelry stood about fifty feet back from the roadway then called the Kingston Road, and now known as Queen Street East. In front of it were three heavy posts, that the aforesaid teamsters might there secure their horses while they themselves partook of liquid comfort at the bar, which was at the western extremity of the hostelry in convenient proximity to the pump.

"The tavern, and much of the land surrounding it, was owned by a pioneer settler named Charles Watkins, who came out from England early in the thirties. The hotel was built in 1835 or the year previous. Watkins liked farming better than hotel-keeping, and followed the former pursuit while he rented the tavern. The first landlord was known as Sandy Watson. He kept hotel there for a dozen years, and then James Shaw rented the place.

"Tavern-keeping in that locality was then in its palmiest days. There was an almost continuous stream of traffic passing by during the winter,—great, comfortable farmers' sleighs bringing in loads of produce to the rising young city; rough, heavy wood-sleighs, piled high with sweet-scented pine and rough cordwood; besides vehicles conveying passengers and the mails, for in those days the Kingston Road was one of the mail routes. All year round, but particularly during the winter, the many taverns in this locality —Shaw's was the most easterly one at the time—did a roaring trade. Mr. Shaw was very fond of horses, and it was one of the sights of the neighbourhood to see the black hostler, an old escaped slave known as 'Doc', trot out Mr. Shaw's team to water every morning."[30]

The large number of taverns in early times, and the excessive drinking that was typical of the period, made some regulation of bar-rooms essential, though it was exceedingly elementary. As early as 1818 the Magistrates ordered that "bars are to be closed on the whole of the Lord's Day, and on no account, except in cases of extreme necessity or to give refreshments to persons lawfully travelling, to be

[30]Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 310.

opened; nor is any spirituous liquor to be sold or suffered to be drunk otherwise in the premises on the Sabbath Day; in the winter, *i.e.*, from 20th September to 20th March, bars to be closed at 9 p.m., and in summer at 10 p.m., and after these hours not to be opened except to afford accommodation to travellers". Innkeepers were warned likewise that they must not "permit any person to remain drinking or tippling" in their taverns—except travellers or "such as shall be invited by any traveller and shall accompany him only during his abode there, and other than labouring and handycraftsmen".[37]

In the year the city of Toronto was created, the Grand Jury, in commenting upon inns and taverns, included them all under the name "Tippling Houses". In 1836 it was enacted that bars should remain shut every Sunday and on Christmas and Good Friday, and that each inn must have at least three beds and stabling accommodation for two horses; while in 1841 certain games came into disfavour, for we find that no license would be given to any tavern-keeper who kept a "bowling alley, ten-pin alley, Fives Court, or other gaming resort", or who kept shop in the same building. The demand for tavern and shop licenses increased greatly as time passed, and as early as the forties there was some public feeling against bars, though an increased license fee was the chief result. In 1836 and 1837 Grand Juries were particularly outspoken about the "great increase of crime and pauperism due to the large number of taverns", which not only affected the victims of intemperance but also "the unfortunate children of such parents, who, whilst they are trained in every species of falsehood or deception, become inured to crime and wickedness, ... and cannot fail to grow up a pest and a nuisance to society". Little, however, appears to have resulted from these attacks on the liquor evil.

That many a so-called hotel was little more than a barroom is obvious to those who can remember the days prior to the Ontario Temperance Act. At least as early as 1841 it was found that many licensed inns in Toronto had no

[37] See J. Edmund Jones: *Pioneer Crimes and Punishments in Toronto and the Home District*, 1924, pp. 165-173, for a résumé of the Court records upon which the material in this and the following paragraph is based.

accommodation for travellers. A special committee of the Council reported as follows on January 4, 1841:

"Your committee have examined every licensed inn in the city and liberties. In all cases where there could exist a doubt of the existence of the accommodation required by the statute your committee have proceeded through the entire premises, and have ascertained that twenty-two licensed innkeepers are entirely destitute of stables, that eleven are destitute of a single spare room for the accommodation of travellers, that fifteen have not a spare bed over those required for their families, and that six of the above number possess none of the accommodations of an inn except a bar."[38]

In 1846 the Toronto Magistrates were curiously optimistic, for it was considered that, if bar-rooms contained a copy of the Lord's Day Act, drinking on Sundays would be curbed; and it was accordingly ordered that one be hung in every such room. Two years later a committee of the Magistrates of the Home District passed a resolution suggesting that the Legislature adopt the principle "that no houses should be licensed as inns where intoxicating liquors are sold".[39] Nothing came of the suggestion, however, and, though in later years the principle of local option enabled many districts to abolish the bar, conditions in Toronto steadily became worse. Police statistics for 1857 show that approximately one-ninth of the inhabitants of the city were haled before the magistrate for crimes or misdemeanours arising from the drinking customs of the day. In the one year 4,996 persons, of whom 1,025 were women, were drunk or disorderly or were accused of one or another of the crimes usually associated with heavy drinking; and at the same time vagrancy was becoming so common that contemporary writers refer to beggars as everywhere a nuisance, pestering people outside stores, churches and homes with a tenacity of purpose that brooked no denial.

As the city increased in size, so, for many years, did the taverns and beer-shops in number, and in 1874 there were 538 licensed places to get liquor—and, in addition, Toronto had plenty of bootleggers. Two years later the

[38]Minutes of the City Council, January 4, 1841.
[39]Jones, *ibid.*

Women's Christian Temperance Union requested the City Council to limit the taverns to one per 1,000 population. As a result of their petition licenses were restricted to 215 taverns and 100 shops, and the license fee was increased to $200—a sum which suggests the profitable nature of the business. By 1911, though the 1874 population of 68,000 had been multiplied more than six times, public sentiment had restricted the licenses to 110 tavern, 50 shop and 11 wholesale. The lucrative nature of the hotel business in the days of the open bar is best shown by the fact that $25,000 could easily be obtained for the license of a small establishment; and it was well-known, too, that the control of many licenses had passed to the owners of breweries and distilleries. In 1914 still higher prices were paid, for a newspaper informs us that "a shop license was transferred recently in this city at the price of $38,000, and a hotel license at the price of $52,000. The bar should be abolished, and the shop with it",[40]—a wish that was soon to become an established fact; but we have gone too far ahead.

A roll-call of the chief hotels of Toronto in the nineties will be of interest. Visitors to the Exhibition in 1895 were promised the best accommodations at the Queen's Hotel and the Rossin House, which lead the list at $3 to $4.50 a day. Among the others will be noticed the Black Bull and the Bay Horse, names reminiscent of an earlier period:

"Walker House, Palmer House, Albion Hotel, Clancy's Hotel, Richardson House, Black Horse Hotel, Grand Union Hotel, Hotel Metropole, Arlington, Elliott House, Kensington Hotel, Russell House, Commercial, Daly House, Power House, Robinson House, Clyde Hotel, Grosvenor House, Somerset House, O'Connor House, Schiller House, Black Bull Hotel, Carleton House, Bay Horse Hotel, Empress, Crystal Palace, Imperial Hotel, Armory Hotel, York Hotel, Nealon House, Union House, Gladstone House, Lake View Hotel, Brown's Avonmore."[41]

The gradual development of temperance sentiment, as a result of which liquor-drinking in public places was restricted and finally prohibited, put many of these inns and taverns—and many others of less merit which were never

[40]The *Globe*, February 7, 1914.

[41]*Official Programme for Canada's Great Industrial Fair, 1895.*

more than saloons—out of existence, and left the hotel business proper to a few *bona fide* establishments, in which category several of the above still remain; and of those of the primitive type not a few may yet be seen among the tumbledown shacks which, in spite of the ravages of time, still contrive to remain propped up, sometimes between incongruous neighbours of recent construction. After nearly a century, for example, the frame of the Tavern Tyrone still remains at 125-127 Queen Street West; and it is quite likely that, if one could trace their history, a good half hundred public houses of other days might be discovered still standing in the older portions of the city. But—to return to the larger hotels—the importance of "houses of public entertainment", lessened somewhat by the coming of the railway, was still further diminished by the speedy travel made possible by the motor-car, and the intimate touch between host and guest has largely departed; while at the same time the legitimate hotel business has been greatly decreased by the competition of the road-houses, tourist camps and refreshment booths which dot every highway. The signs of the times, however, suggest that there has been a notable weakening in temperance sentiment, and we may see a new era of tavern days on a grand—even if not glorious—scale.

Among Toronto's hotels of the past, none surpasses the Queen's in glory and reputation. The old building which was demolished in 1927-28 to make way for the Royal York covered a site which has had a variety of occupants. About 1843 a row of four three-storey dwelling-houses called Ontario Terrace was constructed there, and in 1846 they were joined to form the first Knox College. When in 1853 the College was removed to Elmsley Villa, St. Vincent and Grosvenor Streets, the building became Sword's Hotel. In 1859 the property passed into the hands of B. J. Riley, and the name was changed to the Revere House. Three years later Captain Thomas Dick took charge and named his establishment the Queen's Hotel. During the next few years four additions were made to the hostelry, which had, by 1869, its characteristic appearance. T. McGaw, Mark Irish and Henry Winnett were variously associated in its management for some years, and after Mr. McGaw's death his widow and Mr. Winnett were joint proprietors.

The Queen's was unique among early hotels in many particulars. The enterprising managers introduced the most modern conveniences as they became available. It was the first hotel in Canada to use a hot-air furnace—wood stoves and fireplaces usually providing heat in those days; it first had a passenger elevator and electric bells, led the way in providing running water in the rooms, and installed the first business telephone in Toronto; while the introduction by the Queen's of bedrooms with bath provided the origin of that well-known joke on the back-countryman, who, arriving at the hotel on a Thursday, remarked to his wife: "What a pity it is not Saturday night!" In 1886, when C. C. Taylor published his *Toronto Called Back*, the Queen's was, perhaps, at the height of its glory:

"This popular hotel has recently been renovated and changed in many respects from the first to the third story. A year ago its elegant and commodious dining-room was very handsomely frescoed. During the last three months many of the parlours, corridors and halls have been tastefully decorated and painted. New private staircases have been fitted up in the Queen Anne style. Each landing has a magnificent stained glass window, and as one ascends these unique windings the idea must flash upon him that he has mistaken the Queen's Hotel, and is ensconced in some baronial hall. The halls and corridors have been relaid with costly and luxurious carpets. When all these changes are added to the previous commodious and handsomely furnished drawing-rooms and bedrooms with bathrooms,—to say nothing of the fine suites of rooms which were fitted up for the Princess Louise and the Marquis of Lorne on the occasion of their first visit to Toronto, as well as other suites that were prepared several years ago in a magnificent style for the reception of the Grand Duke Alexis, then heir-apparent to the crown of Russia—the Queen's stands unrivalled in this respect by any hotel in the Dominion, and as regards the 'cuisinerie' and the daily 'menu', nothing is left to be desired."[42]

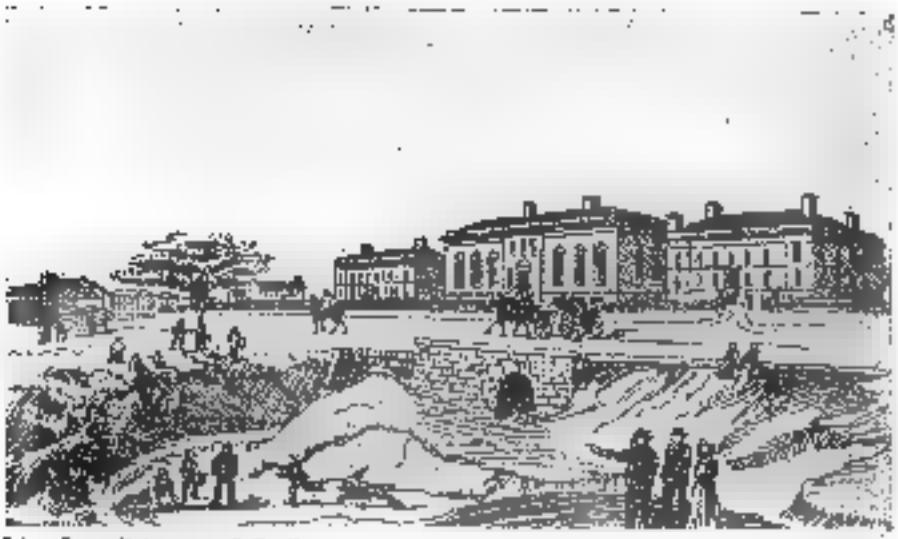
The grounds surrounding the Queen's have been put to a variety of uses. In the sixties the field west of the hotel grew oats for Captain Dick's horses; in the mid-seventies

[42]C. C. Taylor: *Toronto Called Back*. 1886. pp. 258-9.

Reproduced by Courtesy of the Canadian Pacific Railway.

JORDAN'S YORK HOTEL, 1801, AND THE ROYAL YORK, 1929

A famous pioneer inn contrasted with a magnificent hostelry, the largest in the Empire, and whose cost—$18,000,000,—is thirty-five times the total value of property in the city in 1824.



John Ross Robertson Collection. Thomas Young.

THE PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS IN 1836

Erected about 1830 and used until 1892, the third Parliament Buildings were demolished in 1902.

Illustrated London News.

THE ALL-ENGLAND CROQUET CHAMPIONSHIPS AT WIMBLEDON, 1870

When it was a major sport the Queen's Hotel had a croquet lawn.

the travelling circus was frequently to be found there; while in the early eighties Alderman Harry Piper's Zoo—Toronto's first Zoological Gardens—occupied the spot. In 1886 the grounds of the hotel were described by C. C. Taylor as "both spacious and airy, and, with croquet and chevalier lawns, nothing more pleasant could be desired by business men, pleasure-seekers or tourists".[43]

Many notable visitors honoured the Queen's with their presence. Sir John A. Macdonald and other prominent parliamentarians found it most convenient in a day when the Provincial Parliament Buildings were less than two blocks away. Many a Conservative caucus took place in the famous Red Parlour, while the banquets—political and otherwise—which were held in the Queen's are almost innumerable. T. A. Reed, well-known authority on Toronto of old, has this to say of the hotel's distinguished guests:

"Nearly every Governor-General, at one time or another, stopped at the Queen's. His Majesty King George V, when a Lieutenant with the North Atlantic Squadron, visited this city and stayed at the hotel in September, 1883, in company with his uncle and aunt, the Marquis of Lorne and the Princess Louise, who were then making their farewell visit as Her Majesty's representatives in Canada. H.R.H. Prince Leopold—Duke of Albany—the Duke and Duchess of Connaught, the Grand Duke Alexis of Russia, the Earl and Countess of Dufferin, Lord and Lady Aberdeen, President Taft, General Sherman of the U.S. Army, Jefferson Davis, President of the Southern Confederacy, Sir Henry Irving, Ellen Terry, Sara Bernhardt, Adelina Patti and Jenny Lind are but a few of the distinguished names on the old registers."[44]

When the King Edward Hotel opened on May 10, 1903, the Queen's became noticeably old-fashioned. Described in the press as "the new palace hotel", the King Edward cost some $2,000,000 to build and equip, and for twenty-seven years had the high-class hotel field largely to itself. W. C. Bailey of Chicago was the first manager, but the changes in ownership since that time have been numerous. In 1921 an extensive "skyscraper" addition altered the hotel materially

[43] *Ibid.*

[44] MacMurchy, A., and Reed, T. A.: *Our Royal Town of York.* 1929, p. 25.

and added greatly to its accommodations. During its history the roll of famous guests has been similar to that of the Queen's in other times. J. Pierpont Morgan, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Prince of Wales are representative personages who have distinguished the hotel by their presence; while of the theatrical world Sir Henry Irving, Sir John Forbes-Robertson, Lillian Russell, Anna Held and Julia Arthur may be mentioned—not to forget the supper dance and the official reception accorded by the City Fathers to the platinum-blonde beauty of Hollywood, Jean Harlow, while a guest at the hotel in 1932.

The Royal York Hotel, the Queen's successor on the site, was erected when economic conditions were at the height of post-war prosperity. The hotel, beautifully designed and tastefully appointed in every particular, was constructed and equipped at a cost of $18,000,000 (some thirty-five times the total value of property within the confines of Toronto in the first year of the city), and the elaborate service maintained not only for transient guests but for large conventions, service clubs and private entertainments, has placed modern hotel-keeping on a plane which—like many another development—would have astonished the pioneer residents of the town of York.

CHAPTER XVIII

Old-Time Elections

Democratic institutions are based upon the political rights of citizens, but conditions at the polls during the exercise of the franchise in early times were very different from the quiet proceedings usual today. People then took their politics very seriously, and election week was not infrequently a period of turmoil, fighting, and other disturbances and disorders; in fact a whole season was sometimes characterised by confusion resulting from the preparations for, and the effects of an election. A few examples will illustrate conditions which, while not always present, were not at all unusual, and may be considered in keeping with other characteristics of the times.

Among notable provincial elections was that of 1836, when representative government was in force only partially, and responsible government not at all. The Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Francis Bond Head, became, for all practical purposes, the leader of the Family Compact party, and he was, to put it mildly, most unpopular with Reformers. Strained relations between him and the Reform party in power grew still more tense, and it is not too much to say that either he or the legislature had to go. The prorogation of the Assembly on April 30th was the signal for a concerted agitation throughout the province for responsible government. Sir Francis dissolved the Legislature in May, and stumped the country himself in the hope of defeating the Reformers in the ensuing election. He and his advisers misrepresented the issue at stake to be "the maintenance of British connection", and as a result there was a political landslide which returned a large majority of Tories.

In the Second Riding of York the opposing candidates were William Lyon Mackenzie and Edward William Thomson. The latter was a rather mild Tory, and he was returned over Mackenzie by about 100 votes. Among the means used to obtain his election were, according to the Reformers, direct and indirect bribery, the manufacture

and use by voters of bogus qualifications, and various types of dishonest influence. A petition for investigation was dismissed owing to a technical error in procedure, but the usual electoral practices of the times suggest that many of the complaints were well founded.

The chief variation in descriptions of elections arises merely from the source of the information, and it is quite evident that no party had a monopoly of the abuses of open voting. On the opposite side of the political fence from Mackenzie was Sheriff William Jarvis, who describes in a letter to his brother George his experiences as a candidate at the polls:

"After six days' hard fighting against as an 'unholy alliance' as was ever formed against an individual or government, I have been left on the 'poll book' in the minority of 8, and James E. Small, Esquire, has been declared 'duly elected'. Now I intend to contest the matter to the last extremity, knowing as I do that I have a majority of eight votes—and that I have been thrown out by perjury. I do not suppose that there ever was an occasion upon which the nature of an oath seemed to be held so lightly as during the election for this City, and with its usual effect—the temporary triumph of the party resorting to that means, which must eventually recoil upon their own heads. Notwithstanding all their villainy I was within two or three of beating them when they thrust upon some perjured rascals, and those two or three in attendance being lukewarm, thinking all was over, refused to vote."[1]

Much enthusiasm and excitement characterised the early political career of William Lyon Mackenzie. When he was expelled from the House by resolution of the Legislative Assembly on December 12, 1831, a new election was ordered. What followed at the Red Lion Inn, Bloor and Yonge Streets, is described by John Ross Robertson, quoting largely from a contemporary source:

"The election was held at the Red Lion, January 2, 1832. Although the election was held on the same day that town-meetings were in progress throughout the country, over two thousand persons were present. The morning was clear

[1] William Jarvis to George Jarvis, October 13, 1834. See Alden Meredith: *Mary's Rosedale and Gossip of Little York*. 1928. pp. 94-5.

and pleasant, the weather mild and agreeable, and the sleighing excellent. By ten o'clock the farmers had assembled in great numbers around the hustings, and soon afterward the Yonge Street triumphal car carrying the ensign of the United Kingdom and several Highland pipers passed down toward the town followed by farmers in sleighs. Forty sleighs came down into York and escorted their champion to the polls. It was generally believed that Colonel Washburn would stand up against Mackenzie, but he withdrew his name and gave his support to Mr. Street, who was introduced to the electors by Col. E. W. Thomson. Mr. Mackenzie was proposed for his third candidature by Joseph Shepard of York, seconded by Jogart of Whitchurch. Mackenzie made a speech, and the names of the candidates were submitted. A forest of hands went up when Mackenzie's name was proposed. But one hand was raised when Mr. Street's name was presented. Mr. Street demanded a ballot. At 1:20 o'clock the polls opened. At 3 o'clock Mackenzie had polled one hundred and nineteen votes and his opponent one. The latter then withdrew from the unequal contest.

"Over one thousand voters stood around the polls, and for twenty-four hours after the election closed they continued to pour in. It was estimated that five thousand votes would have been cast for Mackenzie had the polls been kept open for a week. The assemblage was the largest ever witnessed up to that time in the Home District on any occasion. Upon the closing of the poll the committee appointed to present the medal and address, followed by as many as could get in, proceeded to the ballroom. A great shout went up for Mackenzie. At this there entered at the eastern end of the ballroom a slight-built man of scarcely medium height, five feet six inches, with a massive head, quite bald, high and broad in the frontal region, well rounded, a long broad chin, lips firmly compressed, deep dimpled cheeks set in a framework of whiskers, massive brow over arching, deepset, keen, restless, piercing blue eyes that seemed to read one's very thoughts, and ceaselessly and expressively active fingers that kept opening and closing nervously: this was William Lyon Mackenzie. After the tumult had subsided, Charles McIntosh, in behalf of the

committee, presented Mr. Mackenzie with a gold medal and chain and read an address to which Mr. Mackenzie made a brief reply. The heavy cable chain attached to the medal contained forty links each about one inch in length. The medal was of fine workmanship and cost $250. On one side were the rose, thistle and shamrock with the words, 'His Majesty King William, the People's Friend'. On the other side was the inscription, 'Presented to William Lyon Mackenzie, Esq., by his Constituents of the County of York, U.C., as a Token of their Approbation of his Political Career, January 2nd, 1832'.

"A procession was then formed in front of the Red Lion, which wended its way to town. It was led by a large sleigh belonging to Mr. Montgomery, drawn by four horses and filled with a score of men and the Highland pipers playing vigorously. Following it came one hundred and thirty-four sleighs, carrying from five to fifteen persons. It was estimated that two thousand men were in the line. The march was past the Government House, Parliament House, Mr. Cawthra's and Mr. Mackenzie's houses, at each of which cheers were given. A little printing press kept warm by a furnace beneath it stood on one of the sleighs. As the procession moved through the streets boys struck off New Year's addresses and threw them to the people. Over the press floated a crimson flag with the motto 'The Liberty of the Press'. Other flags carried aloft bore such legends as 'King William IV and Reform', 'Bidwell and the Glorious Minority', '1832, a Good Beginning', 'A Free Press the Terror of Sycophants'.

"Much spirit was manifested in the proceedings, but generally order and sobriety were maintained. There was no treating of any kind either at the polls or afterwards. Many soldiers and non-commissioned officers of the 78th Highland Regiment, then stationed here, took a great interest in the election. Quite a number went to the polls and joined the triumphal procession on its entry into the town, cheering while the bagpipers played and the farmers rejoiced in their victory. But they paid dear for their enthusiasm. Governor Colborne ordered the articles of war to be read at the head of the regiment for several days, and directed that the soldiers should be confined in the fort dur-

ing the great public meeting of January 19th, and also during the whole week of the February election. Upon the cessation of the public demonstrations in the streets of the town Mr. Mackenzie was carried into his home on the shoulders of his exultant admirers."[2]

A few weeks later, on March 23, 1832, a notable meeting, called to discuss the grievances of the people, was to take place in the Court House. The following account well describes what ensued:

"Dr. Dunlop of the Canada Land Company, and Mr. J. Ketchum, member for York County, were respectively proposed as chairman. As usual in most cases of political excitement, both parties claimed the victory; but Dr. Dunlop took the chair, when the Reform section withdrew and organised an open meeting in front of the Court House, making use of a farmer's waggon for a platform, Mr. Ketchum being made chairman. Mr. Mackenzie began to address the meeting, when stones and other missiles were thrown at the speaker by the opposing party. The disturbance soon assumed a serious aspect; one person in the crowd drew a knife, with which he threatened the speaker. The waggon on which the chairman and speaker were standing was drawn for some distance, amidst threats and imprecations, along King Street, and thrown into a deep and muddy ditch. The Sheriff told Mr. Ketchum that he was unable to preserve the peace, and begged him to bring the meeting to a close. Someone hit upon the expedient of advising the 'friends of the Governor' to go up to the Government House and cheer His Excellency. This being done, peace was restored, a new chairman appointed, and an address to the King resolved upon.

"Immediately afterwards the crowd which had been to cheer the Governor returned bearing an effigy of Mackenzie, which they burned, and then made an attack upon the office of the *Colonial Advocate*. They broke the windows and destroyed some of the type, and were only prevented doing further mischief by the exertions of a few individuals, among whom was an apprentice in the printing office named Falls, who fired a gun loaded with type, overawing the

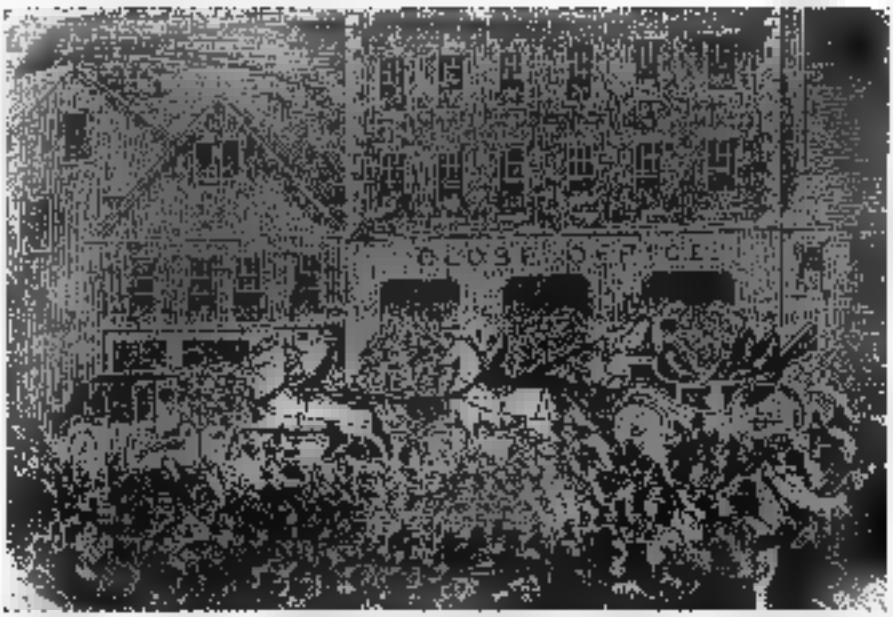
[2]John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*. 1894-1914, Vol. I, pp. 94-5.

rioters. Captain Fitzgibbon did everything in his power to restore peace, and the Lieutenant-Governor gave orders for seventy-five soldiers to be ready at a moment's notice, if required. Three or four magistrates remained at the police office all night, swearing in special constables, and a guard of citizens volunteered to protect Mr. Mackenzie's house and printing office. At midnight a mob surrounded the office, when Captain Fitzgerald ordered them to disperse, and threatened if they did not obey to call out the troops, which were kept under arms all night. This admonition had the desired effect, and the crowd, which was led by a son of one of the executive councillors, moved off without effecting any further violence. The house had to be guarded for three weeks, during which time Mr. Mackenzie remained in the country for safety, and the young man who fired on the rioters had to leave the city in consequence of his life being threatened. It is affirmed that in this disturbance the Roman Catholics were very prominent by their bitter demonstrations against Mackenzie. On this occasion, contrary to their usual habit, they were found in alliance with the Family Compact."[2]

On December 16, 1833, Mackenzie was once more re-elected without opposition. The proceedings resulting from his entrance into the House were as exciting as the events at the polls in 1832:

"A large body of the electors made known their intention to accompany him to the House of Assembly, which place they reached soon after mid-day. The galleries were soon filled; some were admitted below the bar, and others remained in the lobbies for want of room inside. The result was waited with great anxiety by the great body of electors, who were becoming indignant at being thus disfranchised. Considerable uneasiness existed among the members of the House. Mr. Perry rose to present a petition against a repetition of the proceedings by which the County of York had been deprived of half of its legal representatives. Several members spoke against receiving it. Mr. MacNab, in opposing its reception, was hissed from the gallery, and an order at once given by the Speaker to clear it; and, when this operation was partially completed, the Sergeant-at-

[2]J. Timperlake: *Illustrated Toronto, Past and Present*. 1877. pp. 31-2.



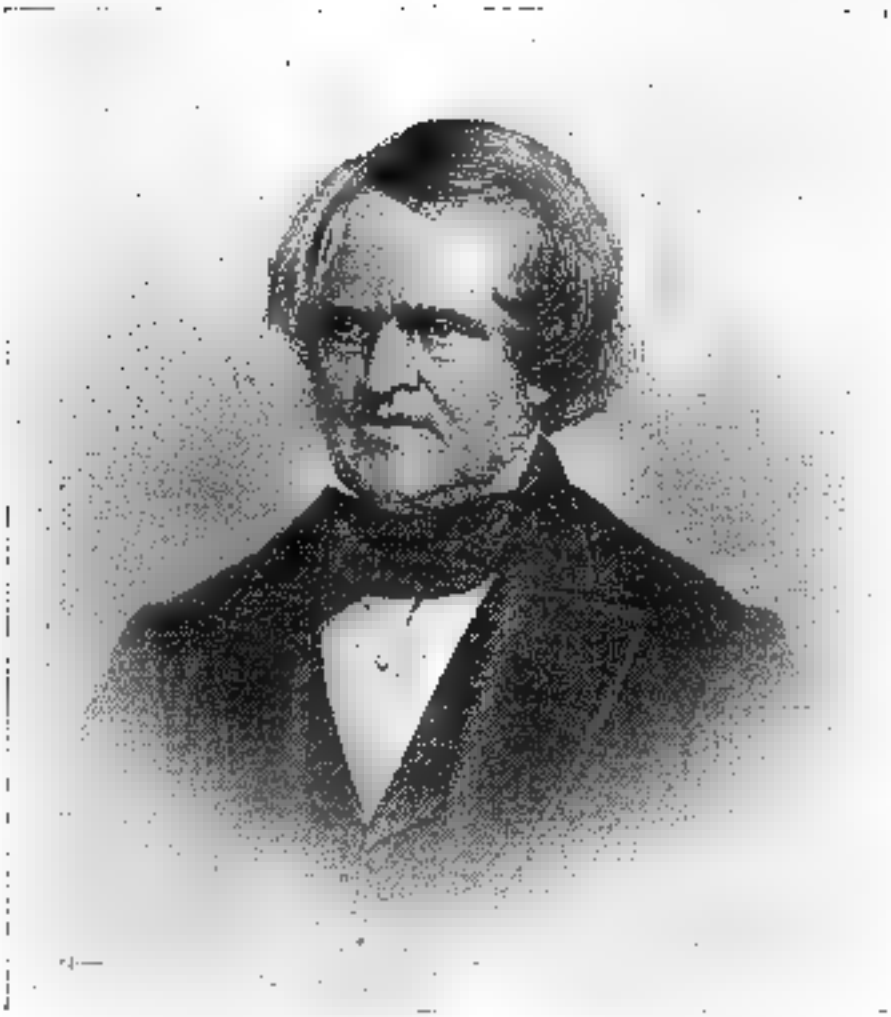
Canadian Illustrated News.

TORCHLIGHT PARADE IN HONOUR OF GEORGE BROWN, 1862

From a Painting in the Ontario Parliament Buildings. R. R. Osgoode.

"OLD UNION JACK"

Sir John A. Macdonald addressing a night gathering during his last campaign. He was exceedingly proud of the title "Old Union Jack".



Yours Truly
W. L. MacKenzie

William Lyon Mackenzie was the first Mayor of Toronto, and under his leadership the newly-created city received its initial impetus.

Arms went up to Mr. Mackenzie, who was waiting below the bar to be sworn in, and ordered him to leave. He replied that, as had been stated by Mr. Perry, he had been unanimously elected for the County of York, and that the writ had been duly returned. The Sergeant-at-Arms, Mr. MacNab (father of the member), then seized him by the collar and tried to drag him towards the door to put him out. A brawny Highlander, one of a few friends who were near Mr. Mackenzie, interposed, either with a blow at the officer of the House, or held him back. As soon as the door was opened the crowd, who had descended from the gallery to the lobby, rushed forward; but, before they could get in, the door was bolted and barricaded with benches, members and officers pressing towards the door to prevent its being forced. The galleries, which had only been partially cleared, were the scene of great confusion. The excitement was extreme, and the business of the House was brought to a stand. Several of the members, fearing that the excitement of the people might lead to serious acts of violence, went out and harangued the people. The question of sending to prison the stalwart Highlander who had interfered with the Sergeant-at-Arms was raised, but a bystander remarked that 'he feared it would be no easy matter to find the jail on such an errand'."[4]

A comparatively small number of citizens possessed the franchise in early days, but if votes were few the deficiency was more than made up by the fierceness with which elections were contested, and the tenacity of purpose which characterised everyone's attitude. Political processions were often to be found in the immediate vicinity of the polls, and it can hardly be contended that an Orange band playing *Boyne Water*, *Protestant Boys*, or *Croppies Lie Down* was in any sense conducive to the free exercise of the franchise. The municipal elections in January, 1841, resulted in a Tory sweep except in three instances, and this was the prelude of a very bitter provincial contest in the spring of the same year.

On May 3rd the election began, and, as was not unusual in the good old days of open voting, each party employed men with cudgels to overawe those who found any difficulty

[4]*Ibid.*, pp. 86-7.

in voting the right way. The violent language used on this occasion by both candidates and press has probably never been surpassed. In the First Riding of York James Hervey Price, Reformer, defeated John Gamble, "dyed-in-the-wool" Tory, and the Toronto *Examiner* had this to say of the candidates, and of Mr. Gamble's supporters in particular:

"The voters were the most rabble whisky-drinking fellows that could be collected. . . . Who were the candidates? One was the former member, a rich man—the head of all the magistrates—the licenser of the tavern. The other a plain private gentleman, known till the Rebellion only as an honest lawyer and the mild intelligent friend; yet the former is rejected and the latter chosen."[6]

Still more excitement, however, was provided in Toronto by the contest between J. H. Dunn and Isaac Buchanan, Reformers, and Henry Sherwood and J. Monro, Tories. The Reformers won the very close contest of that stirring week, and their organ, the *Examiner*, gleefully commented upon the victory in "this hitherto Compact-ridden, corporation-ridden, Orange-ridden city". The victors arranged a triumphal procession for Monday, May 10th. The events of the day are well described by J. E. Middleton:

"At 1 o'clock in the afternoon the successful candidates, escorted by so many citizens that the parade was over a mile long, set out from the Ontario House on the Market Square, proceeded by way of Market Street to Yonge, along King Street to Simcoe, up Simcoe to Lot (Queen), eastward to Yonge, then south to King and east past the City Hall and the Market. All along the route there were indications that supporters of the other party meditated some measure of violence. Too many bully-boys with knobby sticks were on the streets, and particularly on the grounds of St. James' Church. Mayor Monro was warned that police protection might be necessary, but he is reported to have

[6]Quoted in Robertson, *Ibid.* The editors of the newspapers of a century ago had no scruples about saying just what they thought. The following item appeared in the editorial columns of a local paper in the first year of the city: "Mr. John Poore, son-in-law of Mr. James Secord, has just come forward from Halton. His advertisement occupies one and a half columns of the *Gore Mercury*, and all we need say about his candidacy is that he has as much chance of becoming an M.P.P. as his grandmother's grey cat had sixty years ago."

said that they might go to the Devil for protection. Since His Worship was one of the defeated candidates his testiness may be understood.

"East of the Market on King Street stood the North of Ireland Coleraine Inn, where an Orange flag was displayed. The Reform hangers-on had a menacing attitude. They drummed on the doors and on the outside of the building with their sticks, and a woman threw a stone of protest against the Orange order. The persons in the house appeared at the upper windows, and one of them fired a pistol-shot at the crowd. A man named James Dunn, of course an innocent bystander, recently arrived from overseas as an immigrant, fell dead. Several other shots followed. Four or five other persons were wounded, among them being F. Langril and a lad named Cathcart.

"The mob would have torn the house to pieces if it had not been for the appeals of Dunn and Buchanan, the Members, but while their angry followers halted between two opinions a company of British Regulars came upon the double, pressed back the mob, and brought seven or eight persons out of the house, conveying them safely to the jail. These seven or eight were said by the *Examiner* to be 'as bloodthirsty-looking men as ever disgraced the human form'.

"Neither party had a monopoly of hard words and extreme statements, for the atmosphere was electrical. It was said by Francis Hincks that during the polling in the two provinces from ten to twenty persons had been murdered and hundreds had been beaten and mauled. In Toronto during the week about fifty followers of Dunn and Buchanan had their heads laid open. The *Examiner* considerately neglected to mention how many Tories received similar treatment."[8]

This notable election inspired several political pamphlets. One, *The City of Toronto Poll Book*, consisted largely of a classified list of voters according to occupation and political adherence. The open vote made it easy to record how each one exercised his franchise, whether "for Dunn and Buchanan on the part of the Government and People",

[8] J. E. Middleton: *The Municipality of Toronto, a History*. 1923, Vol. I, p. 210.

or "for Sherwood and Monro on the part of the Family Compact and Corporation".[7] Another publication gives a Reformer's account of the riot already described, but the additional details therein contained make it worth quoting even at the risk of some repetition:

"About 12 o'clock noon the Procession started from the Ontario House, and such a procession for respectability and show never perhaps was seen in Toronto—upwards of 100 Banners, Flags, etc., with inscriptions and devices of all kinds—preceded by an excellent band of music; at one time, when it was organised, it seemed to reach nearly the length of King Street. . . . The citizens with their wives and children principally were in Carriages, Curricles, Gigs, Chaises, Waggons, etc.

"On arriving at the corner of Church Street it was assailed first by hisses and groans by a body of men supposed [to have come] from the country around with Bludgeons, who had taken their stand in Martial Array immediately under the windows of Mr. Sherwood's Office, in which were seen the Sheriff Jarvis, Saml. Sherwood, Crawford and others, it is said by some apparently urging on the men below. As the procession was passing along, some men occasionally inquired of those in waggons if they had not a coffin or coffins concealed—this seems to have been designed by the plotters of the mischief as an invention to work upon the the feelings of the Orangemen, they having been informed that it was designed as a burlesque to bury the Family Compact and bring socialism. There was no foundation whatever for the Report—it was pure invention by the Tory Party to act as a stimulus to a riot.

"At this spot a general onset soon commenced upon the persons forming the procession by throwing pieces of ice, bricks, etc., also a general cudgelling of the people by the men before alluded to. The alarm was immediately given to the front ranks that their friends in the rear were attacked, who immediately came to their assistance and a general fight ensued in which the assailants, the Bludgeons, were driven off, and many retreated into a house known as the Colerain Tavern, to which place they were followed. This house was made notorious by its being one of the open

[7] *The City of Toronto Poll Book*, 1841.

houses of the Sherwood Party and an Orange Lodge; for several days during the election parties of men sallied forth into the street and abused and knocked down several opponents, and, on the morning of the chairing, McLean and his son, a Scotch piper, on their way to join the procession, were knocked down and his pipes destroyed most wantonly and maliciously."

With further reference to the fight in front of the inn the account continues:

"During the scuffle . . . . three or four small pieces of firearms loaded with balls were discharged from the windows of the House—one killed a man on the spot, named Dunn, a Tailor; a Catholic and three others were severely wounded. A part of the military was immediately sent for, who protected the inmates of the house from the fury of the people, and subsequently took the landlord, Allen, Kelly, a carter, and several others into custody, all of whom were liberated with the exception of Kelly, the coroner's jury not [being] agreeable in a verdict."[8]

In 1856 a law was passed making the members of the Legislative Council elective. The next election, in 1858, was very fiercely contested in Toronto, and discreditable practices were resorted to by both political parties. A remarkable feature was the support given by William Lyon Mackenzie to the Conservative candidate, G. W. Allan, whose father had been a prominent member of the old Family Compact. Amidst great excitement in the city and the county the election for the Legislative Council took place in October, and resulted in Mr. Allan's victory over C. E. Romain by a majority of 1,384.

The celebrated Brown-Cameron election riot took place in Toronto in 1857. The main fight occurred near Richmond's blacksmith shop, at the north-east corner of Queen and William (now Simcoe) Streets. Across the street on the north-west corner Clinkunbroomer's brick house was in process of erection. John Ross Robertson notes that a pile of bricks to be used in the structure "were put to the very best possible use by the rioters. The friends of John Hillyard Cameron had come down from the neighbourhood of St. Patrick's Market, while the George Brown faction

[8] *A Toronto Election*, 1841.

assembled round the corner of this street, making Richmond's blacksmith shop their coign of vantage. Bob Moody and five hundred from St. John's Ward came down to help the Reformers, and the pile of bricks that stood about twenty feet square was levelled almost to the ground before the rioters got through exercising themselves with these missiles. The hot part of the riot occurred on Queen Street a little west of Sheppard's Marble Works, although on Queen Street from St. Patrick's Market to Simcoe many houses had not a complete pane of glass."*

The bitterly-contested general election which occasioned this riot was notable for the extent to which impersonation was practised—even members of the British Royal Family voted! It is of interest to recall in this connection that among the vaunted 1,280,000 signatures to the "People's Charter" in the great English Chartist agitation of 1839 was "Victoria Rex"; but we have a parallel in Toronto, for in the 1857 election "Prince Consort" cast no fewer than four votes against George Brown!

The ballot was introduced in municipal elections on January 1, 1867, and in 1874 a Dominion Act put an end to open voting. The closing of taverns, bar-rooms and liquor shops during elections greatly restricted the supply of liquor, and there was an almost immediate improvement in the conditions accompanying the exercise of the franchise. The excitement, too, was limited to a day instead of a week or more. As time passed, politics ceased to play the important part in the life of the people that was once the case, and modern Canadian elections disturb the equilibrium of the nation only to a comparatively small extent, though in the United States—and in New York and Chicago in particular—the old-time gangster election accompaniments are not unusual.

*Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 46.

CHAPTER XIX

Schools of Other Days

For many years after the first settlement of Upper Canada the government, which for all practical purposes meant the Lieutenant-Governor alone, made no provision whatever for education. In 1797 the Legislature presented an address to the King, praying "that he would direct his government in this Province to appropriate a certain portion of the waste lands of the Crown as a fund for the establishment and support of a Grammar School in each of the eight districts into which it was proposed to divide the province"; and also that a college or university be established for the whole province.[1] In the following year 500,000 acres of land was set aside for these purposes, and the proceeds of its sale were to be devoted to the erection of schools and the payment of teachers' salaries. The cost of each Grammar School was estimated at $3,000, and its annual maintenance charges at £180.

There was at first a great deal of opposition to the establishment of these secondary schools, for it was considered by many people that provision for elementary education should be made first, and that Grammar Schools would otherwise provide learning merely for the children of the rich, who could afford to patronise private elementary schools. Consequently bills introduced into the Legislature in 1805 and 1806 were defeated, though that of 1807 was accepted. Classics and mathematics were to be the chief subjects taught, and it is evident that such studies were of no value to the sons of poor citizens who had never been taught to read and write. In 1807, at the time of the passage of the Grammar School Act, the first school of that type was established in York. Meanwhile, however, private elementary schools had for some years been conducted in the town.

[1] This address, and many other documents referred to in this chapter, may be found in J. G. Hodgins: *Documentary History of Education in Upper Canada, 1791-1876*. 28 volumes. 1894-1910.

The first school in York appears to have been a small one established on George Street by William Cooper in 1798. Private tuition in the home, or the occasional visit of an itinerant schoolmaster, previously served the needs of the town in a rather unsatisfactory manner, while the sons and daughters of a few officials were sent to Lower Canada or the United States, where educational facilities were more advanced. Cooper advertised in the *Gazette* of November 3, 1798, that "he intends opening a school at his house in George Street on the 19th instant for the instruction of Youth in Reading, Writing, Arithmetic and English Grammar. Those who chuse to favour him with their Pupils may rely on the greatest attention being paid to their virtue and morals".[2] In the summer of 1799 Cooper passed an examination before the Rev. John Stuart, a step necessary because the government had decided that "itinerant characters" should not in future be allowed to impose upon the inhabitants of the country.[3]

Six years later, on January 3, 1803, a school of somewhat greater pretensions was commenced by Dr. William Warren Baldwin. He had emigrated with his father from Ireland in 1799, settling first near Baldwin's Creek, in the Township of Clarke. In 1803 he married Phoebe Willcocks, daughter of William Willcocks of York, and they resided in a cottage at the corner of Palace and Frederick Streets. The school was first held at Willcocks' house on Duke Street, a much more pretentious building than Baldwin's small cottage. Dr. Baldwin's announcement of his school first appears in the *Gazette* of December 18, 1802, and contains a number of interesting particulars:

"Doctor Baldwin, understanding that some of the gentlemen of this town have expressed much anxiety for the establishment of a Classical school, begs to inform them and the public that he intends on Monday the 3rd day of January next to open a school in which he will instruct 12 boys in Writing, Reading, and Classics and Arithmetic. Terms for each boy eight guineas *per annum*, to be paid quarterly, one guinea entrance, and one cord of wood to be supplied by each boy on opening the school.

[2]*Upper Canada Gazette*, November 3, 1798.
[3]*Ibid.*, July 6, 1799.

"N.B. Dr. Baldwin will meet his pupils at Mr. Willcocks' house in Duke Street."[4]

Another early school had its inception owing to the exertions of certain parents who desired their children to be educated and who effected the arrangements themselves. In 1805 a number of the gentlemen of York associated themselves in a project to employ William Carson to teach some 25 children spelling, reading, writing and arithmetic. From May 1st to October 1st the hours of teaching were to be from 8 to 12 and 2 to 5; while during the rest of the year the decreased daylight suggested the elimination of the first and last hours of the schedule. No holidays were provided for, and it may be assumed that Sunday was the only day of rest for teacher and students. The school was held in a house owned by William Jarvis on the north side of Duke Street. £3 15s. a month was the remuneration of the schoolmaster, together with "good and sufficient board and lodging, liquors excepted".

Charles McDonnell, Duke Street, kept school in York in 1811 and for some time previous. He announces in the *York Gazette* that he "returns his grateful and sincere thanks to the Public for their countenance and patronage. He has just built a large Room for the comfortable reception of their Children; and hopes through his steady attention to the Morals and Education of the Pupils placed under his care he will still gain their future approbation and encouragement". From a postscript to the advertisement we learn also the interesting fact that an evening school, commencing "precisely on the first of September", was conducted by Mr. McDonnell.[5]

As previously stated, the first school supported by the government in York was not a "common" or primary school but one of the secondary type long called Grammar Schools. In the early years of the nineteenth century, probably not later than 1805, the Rev. Dr. Okill Stuart erected a small frame house as his residence at the south-east corner of King and George Streets. He also constructed a small low stone building, not much larger than a root-house, and attached to his dwelling at the south-east corner. In later years the stone walls were covered by a coating of clap-

[4]*Ibid.*, December 18, 1802. [5]*York Gazette*, November 13, 1811.

boards. This primitive building was for some time the Home District Grammar School, and Dr. Stuart was the first teacher when it opened on June 1, 1807. In 1813 Dr. Strachan was in charge, the school having been removed in that year to a barn at the corner of King and Yonge Streets. Another building was soon necessary, and in 1816 the Blue School, to the north of the present St. James' Cathedral, was occupied; the need of a coat of paint was met when Dr. Strachan collected funds for that purpose from prominent citizens. In 1829 the building was removed to the south-east corner of New (Jarvis) and March (Lombard) Streets, where it was used by Upper Canada College until 1831. After being closed for several years the Grammar School was re-opened in the old building in 1834.

With reference to the families represented in the classes at this school Dr. Henry Scadding notes that "the lists of the school at York always presented a strong array of the old, well-known and even distinguished Upper Canadian names. This will be seen by a perusal of the following document, which will give an idea of the variety of matters to which attention was given in the school. The numerous family names which will at once be recognised will require no comment. The intervals between the calling up of each separate class for examination appear to have been very plentifully filled up with recitations and debates".[6]

The document quoted by Dr. Scadding suggests that examinations at that time were largely oral. Considerable stress was laid upon orations and debates, and it is probable that these displays were popular with the audience, and particularly the proud parents of the participants. The description is headed "Order of Examination of the Home District Grammar School", and is as follows:

Wednesday, 11th August, 1819. First Day. The Latin and Greek Classes. Euclid and Trigonometry. Thursday, 12th August. Second Day. To commence at 10 o'clock. Prologue, by Robert Baldwin.—Reading Class.—George Strachan, "The Excellence of the Bible". Thomas Ridout, "The Man of Ross". James McDonell, "Liberty and Slavery". St. George Baldwin, "The Sword". William McMurray, "Soliloquy on Sleep". Arithmetic Class—

[6]Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old*, 1873, pp. 157-8.

James Smith, "The Sporting Gentleman". William Boulton, jun., "The Poet's New Year's Gift". Richard Gates, "Ode to Apollo". Orville Cassell, "The Rose". Book-keeping.—William Myers, "My Mother". Francis Heward, "My Father". George Dawson, "Lapland".—First Grammar Class.—Second Grammar Class.—"Debate on the Slave Trade". For the Abolition: Francis Ridout, John Fitzgerald, William Allan, George Boulton, Henry Heward, William Baldwin, John Ridout, John Doyle, James Strachan. Against the Abolition: Abraham Nelles, James Bâby, James Doyle, Charles Heward, Allan McDonell, James Myers, Charles Ridout, William Boulton, Walker Smith.—First Geography Class.—Second Geography Class. James Dawson, "The Boy that told Lies". James Bigelow, "The Vagrant". Thomas Glassco, "The Parish Workhouse". Edward Glennon, "The Apothecary".—Natural History.—Debate by the Young Boys: "Sir William Strickland", Charles Heward. "Lord Morpeth", John Owens. "Lord Hervey", John Ridout. "Mr. Plomer", Raymond Bâby. "Sir William Yonge", John Fitzgerald. "Sir William Windham", John Boulton. "Mr. Henry Pelham", Henry Heward. "Mr. Bernard", George Strachan. "Mr. Noel", William Baldwin. "Mr. Shippen", James Bâby. "Sir Robert Walpole", S. Givins and J. Doyle. "Mr. Horace Walpole", James Myers. "Mr. Pulteney", Charles Bâby.—Civil History.—William Boulton, "The Patriot". Francis Ridout, "The Grave of Sir John Moore". Saltern Givins, "Great Britain". John Boulton, "Eulogy on Mr. Pitt". Warren Claus, "The Indian Warrior". Charles Heward, "The Soldier's Dream". William Boulton, "The Heroes of Waterloo.—Catechism.—"Debate on the College of Calcutta". Speakers: "Mr. Canning", Robert Baldwin. "Sir Francis Baring", John Doyle. "Mr. Wainwright", Mark Burnham. "Mr. Thornton", John Knott. "Sir D. Scott", William Boulton. "Lord Eldon", Warren Claus. "Sir S. Lawrence", Allan Macaulay. "Lord Hawkesbury", Abraham Nelles. "Lord Bathurst", James McGill Strachan. "Sir Thomas Metcalf", Walker Smith. "Lord Teignmouth", Horace Ridout.—Religious Questions and Lectures.—James McGill Strachan, Anniversary of the York and Montreal

Colleges anticipated for 1st January, 1822. Epilogue, by Horace Ridout.[7]

Referring to modes of discipline Dr. Scadding describes a variety of remedies for minor indiscretions:

"Now and then a lad would be seen standing at one of the posts, with his jacket turned inside out: or he might be seen there in a kneeling posture for a certain number of minutes; or standing with the arm extended holding a book. An alley or apple brought out inopportunely into view during the hours of work might entail the exhibition, article by article, slowly and reluctantly, of all the contents of a pocket. Once, we remember, the furtive but too audible twang of a jewsharp was followed by its owner's being obliged to mount on the top of a desk and perform there [illegible] air on the offending instrument for the benefit of the whole school.

"Occasionally the censors (senior boys appointed to help in keeping order) were sent to cut rods on Mr. McGill's property adjoining the playground on the north; but the dire implements were not often called into requisition: it would only be when some case of unusual obstinacy presented itself, or when some wanton cruelty, or some act or word exhibiting an unmistakable taint of incipient immorality, was proven."[8]

Grammar School life did not contain the varied activities which almost overburden the students of today. The notable event of the school year was probably the "feast" which was allowed just before the midsummer closing. For this party everyone contributed pastry and other delectable dainties, as well as more substantial foods. It might seem that the scope of the fun was somewhat restricted from the fact that the place of meeting was the schoolroom, but it is said that it was frequently quite a riotous affair.

Soon after the passage of the School Act of 1807 petitions began to be sent to the Legislature asking that the money voted be applied to Common (primary) schools instead of those provided for in the Act. The Legislative Assembly made repeated efforts to have the Act repealed as worthless to the middle and lower classes, but the Legis-

[7] *Ibid.* [8] *Ibid.*, pp. 163-4.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

THE FIRST SCHOOL IN LESLIEVILLE

Leslieville, on the Kingston Road, was an important suburb of Toronto.

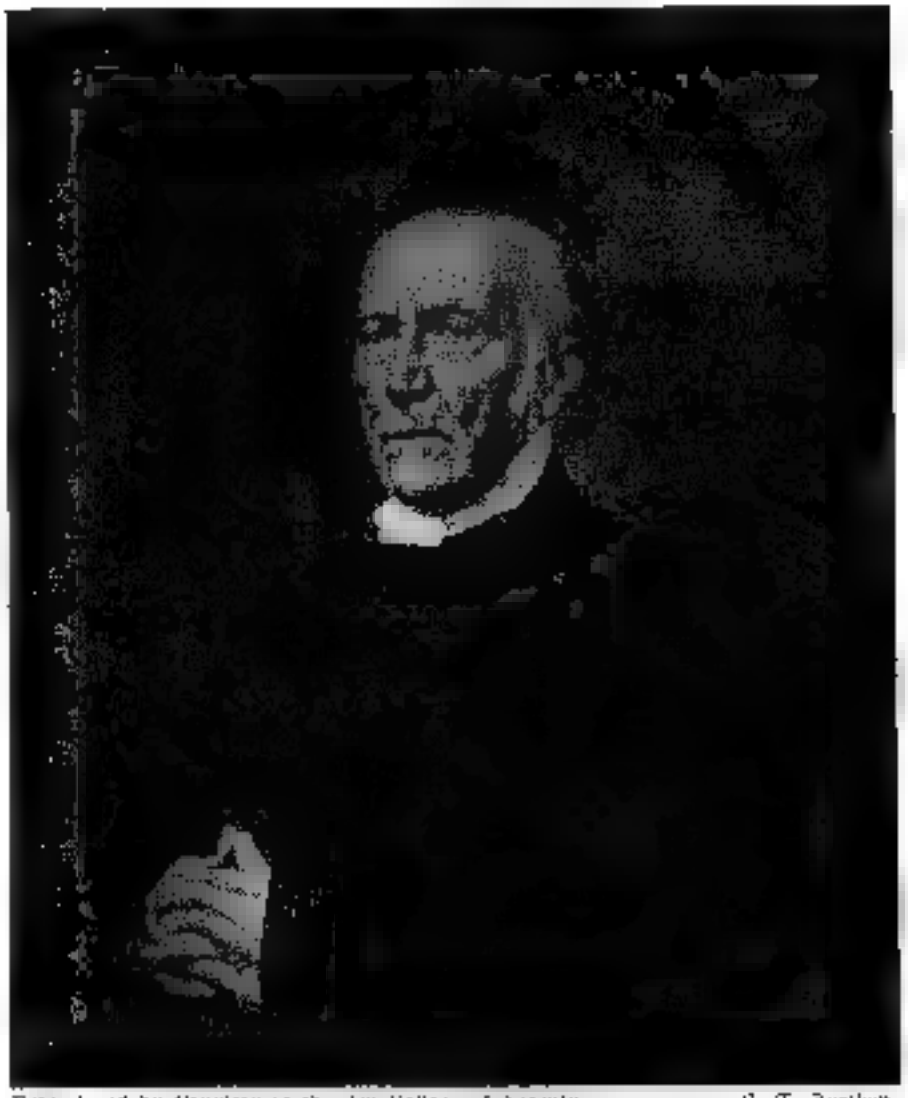
John Ross Robertson Collection.

THE BLUE SCHOOL, 1816

Dr. Strachan gave a course of lectures on Natural Philosophy to raise money to paint the Home District Grammar School, Toronto's first secondary school—though it commenced in 1807 in a small shed. The Blue School was situated north of St. James' Cathedral.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

OLD UPPER CANADA COLLEGE, KING STREET WEST



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BISHOP STRACHAN

For half a century a prominent and public-spirited citizen of Toronto.

lative Council blocked all moves of this nature. The result was that private schools and academies became more and more numerous throughout the province, and provided the elementary education which the Government had denied. The deadlock between the two legislative bodies was finally broken, but it is probably to be credited more to an enlightened address by Lieut.-Governor Gore than to any voluntary change in the views of members of the Legislative Council. The Governor's suggestion that it would be desirable to have "some provision for the establishment of schools in each township which shall afford the first principles of learning to the children of the inhabitants" was effective in securing the passage of the Common School Act of 1816.

This Act was a start, but the £6,000 a year that it made available for elementary education throughout the province was pitifully inadequate. The election of three trustees in each municipality, an attendance of at least twenty pupils to rank as a fully organised school, and a maximum allowance of $100 towards the salary of each teacher were among the provisions of the Act. No American text books were to be used, but the failure to provide any others led to the ignoring of the regulation. The Act remained in force until the Union of Upper and Lower Canada in 1840 made new legislation essential.

The general condition of schools in Upper Canada under the Act of 1816 was unsatisfactory. In many instances incapacitated soldiers or other broken-down men supposedly fit for nothing else provided the personnel of the profession, and their remuneration was whatever they could squeeze from the parents of their pupils—from $5 to $10 per pupil *per annum* was usual. There were instances where the Bible was the only text book, but more generally books of American manufacture were prominent as the only ones available. General conditions of elementary education before 1832 are outlined by Dr. Thomas Rolph:

"It is really melancholy to traverse the Province and go into any of the Common Schools: you find a herd of children instructed by some anti-British adventurer instilling into the young and tender mind sentiments hostile to the parent State; false accounts of the late war—geography setting forth New York, Philadelphia and Boston as the largest

and finest cities in the world; historical reading-books describing the American population as the most free and enlightened under Heaven; insisting on the superiority of their laws and institutions to those of all the world; American spelling-books, dictionary and grammar, teaching them an anti-British dialect and idiom."[9]

A noted Common school in the years just previous to the inauguration of the city of Toronto was the Central or National School on the north-west corner of Adelaide and Jarvis Streets. There were separate sections for the instruction of boys and girls, and, as the following announcement in *Walton's Directory* states, those who could not afford to pay fees might be admitted without charge:

"York Central or National School at the corner of Newgate and New Streets. His Excellency Lieut.-Gov. Sir John Colborne, patron. His Excellency, being desirous that the course of instruction at this school should include all the branches usually comprehended in a good English education, has directed that it be conducted in the following manner. Boys' school, First Department, Joseph Spragge, master. English, reading, writing and arithmetic on the principles of Ball & Lancaster. Second Department, J. T. Wilson, headmaster. English, reading, writing, arithmetic, English grammar, book-keeping, elements of geography. Girl's school, Rebecca Sylvester, mistress. English, reading, writing, arithmetic and drawing. Scholars are to pay $1 per quarter. No family to pay for more than two children at a time, whatever be the number attending. Parents are requested to send children regularly in as neat and decent an order as their circumstances will permit. Free tickets of instruction to children of parents who cannot pay may be had of Archdeacon John Strachan, or Lieut.-Col. Joseph Wells. Received instruction in year ending April 30, 1833, boys, 402, girls, 235. At present in actual attendance, boys, 200, girls, 138."[10]

John Ross Robertson gives a description of the school and its teachers, as well as reminiscences and memories of the schoolboy pranks of our great-grandfathers:

[9]Thomas Rolph: *A Brief Account . . . . of the West Indies and the United States; . . . . together with a Statistical Account of Upper Canada.* 1836. p. 262.

[10]*George Walton's York Commercial Directory for 1834.* 1833. p. 125.

"Mr. Appleton was one of the first teachers at this school, and at a later date Mr. Spragge. In the Central the girls were upstairs, and the boys downstairs. The entrance for the girls was by the side stairs, running up the north side of the building from Jarvis Street, or New Street. The entrance for the boys was through a big gate on Adelaide Street. The lower floor of the Central had large folding doors, so that the two rooms could be thrown into one. Mr. John Fenton, a literary genius of the day, was at one time Mr. Appleton's assistant teacher here. Between the boys attending the Central School and the boys of the Grammar School, difficulties, of course, arose, and on many occasions feats of arms, accompanied by considerable risk to life and limb, were performed on both sides with sticks and stones. Youngsters ambitious of a character of extra daring had thus an opportunity of distinguishing themselves in the eyes of their less courageous companions. The same would-be heroes had many stories to tell of the perils to which they were exposed on their way to and from school. Those of them who came from the western part of the town had, according to their own showing, mortal enemies in the men of Ketchum's Tannery, with whom it was necessary occasionally to have an encounter; while those who lived in the east of the town, narrated, in response, the attacks experienced or delivered by themselves in passing Shaw's or Hugill's Brewery. . . .

"Across the road from the playground at York (?) Street, on the south side, eastward of the church plot, there was a row of dilapidated wooden buildings, inhabited for the most part by a thriftless and noisy set of people. This group of houses was known in the school as 'Irishtown', and 'to raise Irishtown' meant to direct a snowball or other light missive over the playground fence in that direction. Such an act was not infrequently followed by an invasion of the field from the insulted quarter. Some wide chinks, established in one place here between the boards, which ran lengthwise, enabled anyone so inclined to get over the fence readily. Once two men who had quarrelled in one of the buildings of Irishtown adjourned from over the road to the playground, accompanied by a few approving friends; and, after stripping to the skin, had a regular fight with fists.

After some rounds a number of men and women interfered, and induced the combatants to return to the house whence they had issued forth for the settlement of their dispute."[11]

Contemporary with the National School was a private seminary called the York Commercial and Classical Academy, conducted by Thomas Caldicott, Superintendent, and George Jeffery, Samuel Caldicott and Alexander Forsythe. Some conception of their methods is to be obtained from their announcement that, "in order that the supporters of this Institution may have the best opportunity of witnessing their children's improvement, the books of the Pupils will be invariably sent home for the inspection of those parents who reside in town, on the last day of every month; and for the inspection of parents resident in the country, as often as may prove convenient; there will, moreover, be a public examination annually at Midsummer."[12]

Among other duties the teacher serves to relieve parents from the arduous duty of looking after their children and keeping them out of mischief, and this was as true a century ago as now. We find that in the early thirties there was "the York Infant School, adjoining the Presbyterian Church, Hospital Street, formed 28th September, 1831, Miss S. D. Bliss, Mistress." The mistress was quite broad-minded for her day, for she announces that "Children of any religious persuasion under 7 years of age admitted at a charge of 7s. 6d. per quarter. The school at present consists of 80 or 90 children".[13]

In spite of the fact that taxes to support schools were frequently paid by people who had also to pay fees for their children's attendance, the principle of free schools had many opponents. At the same time the lack of facilities for elementary education in many districts made it the practice of over half the Grammar Schools to take in pupils who had not learned even to write. Some progress in educational policy might have been made earlier had it not been for the confusion resulting from the Rebellion of 1837, for a provincial system was commenced in 1832. A new

[11]John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*, 1894-1914. Vol. I, pp. 378-80. York Street is an error for Jarvis Street.
[12]*Walton's Directory*, p. 161.
[13]*Ibid.*, p. 125.

era was inaugurated in 1843 by legislation enabling the establishment of government-aided public schools in self-governing municipalities. This was followed in 1844 by the appointment of Egerton Ryerson to the position of Superintendent of Education, and the great developments of succeeding years were made possible. Though Dr. Ryerson's contribution to our educational system is nowhere doubted today, the political prejudices of his own times resulted in the following comment in the press concerning his abilities:

"That Mr. Ryerson is incompetent to discharge the duties of Superintendent of Education is no longer a debatable question; the fact is insisted upon by Reformers, admitted by Tories, assented to by Conservatives, and proclaimed by Moderates."[14]

In Toronto, meanwhile, a select committee of the City Council had, under the Act of 1843, been placed in charge of the school system, and these men proceeded to advertise for teachers and to rearrange school districts to enable equalisation of pupils. It was suggested at the start that one or more schools be for girls, and that education should have no sectarian bias. A committee of six, four of whom were clergymen, was asked to take charge of the arrangement of the curriculum. In 1844 George Barber was appointed Superintendent of Education for the city, and under his direction twelve common (elementary) schools with 1,000 students enrolled were in efficient operation.

By amendments to the School Act in 1847 provision was made for the establishment of a Board of School Trustees nominated by the City Council. The first Toronto Board met on November 20, 1847, and was composed of the following gentlemen: W. H. Boulton (chairman), the Hon. J. Elmsley, W. Cawthra, J. McMurrich, F. W. Barron, J. G. Bowes and John Cameron. Under recent legislation the schools were to be free, but as the City Council refused to supply funds they were closed on June 30, 1848, and so remained until July 1, 1849. Some aldermen, in fact, proposed in the interests of economy that they should be open only six months a year; for by 1848 the cost to operate the city's fifteen schools had increased to £2,009, and a

[14]The Toronto *Examiner*, February 24, 1847.

higher tax rate was inevitable. The School Act of 1850 provided for the election of school trustees in each ward, and the first board so elected had full power to develop educational facilities, the City Council being obliged to provide funds. On March 15, 1851, the principle of free admission to all city schools was adopted in spite of much opposition by ratepayers, many of whom could see no good reason why anyone should support schools except those whose children attended. Of the fifteen schools in Toronto at the middle of the century eleven were conducted in small rented houses, only four of which were of brick; and of the sixteen teachers thirteen were men and three women, their average annual salary being £122 10s. and £45, respectively. There were 1,260 pupils attending in summer and 1,432 in winter. The cost of heating the schools at that period was very small when compared with the outlay at present, for in 1852 the city purchased 561½ cords of wood for that purpose, the cost, including cutting, being only £60 18s. 8½d.—not much over 40 cents a cord. The number of pupils per teacher was very high, the twenty-one teachers of 1854 teaching an average of 69 pupils each; ten years earlier, when the school system commenced, there were, in fact, 1,194 pupils and only 12 teachers.

A survey of the other educational institutions existing at that time shows that there were three colleges with a total enrolment of 350 students, the Grammar School with 80 pupils, and ten private schools and seminaries with 190 in attendance. The corner-stone of King's College, the first institution of higher education in Toronto, was, after many years of planning, finally laid on St. George's Day, 1842. An elaborate procession of soldiers, judges, clergy and scholars, each group in its characteristic costume, inaugurated higher learning in Toronto, and Dr. John Strachan was appropriately pre-eminent during the proceedings of the day.[13] King's College was erected in Queen's Park, on the site of the present Parliament Buildings, and the institution was long the target of Reformers who urged its reorganisation on a non-sectarian basis, and of lesser critics of one type or another, each with his quota of real or imagined grievances. The first convocation for

[13]This notable event is described at greater length on pages 455-6.

the conferring of degrees was held on February 8, 1848, Dr. John McCaul, who was to be the first President of the University of Toronto, presiding. Six men received the degree of Bachelor of Arts, and seven that of Bachelor of Common Law, a very small graduating class in comparison with those of modern times.

It is a fundamental principle of the Roman Catholic Church that education must be closely correlated with religion, but religious prejudices long prevented or limited separate schools. The first Roman Catholic teacher in York was John Harvey, who had a school on Jarvis Street in 1830. Soon afterwards there were others. In 1841 Denis Heffernan conducted a private school on Richmond Street, east of Church Street, and it is recorded of him that he was "an accomplished classicist and mathematician, educated in Ireland. He birched frequently and with no little vigour, but his boys, who were both Protestant and Catholic, did him infinite credit".[14] Two years later he was teaching in the Catholic District School at the corner of Berkeley and Duke Streets. Forty boys ranging from 7 to 16 years of age were taught in a plain schoolroom with long narrow desks and benches without backs, and Mrs. Heffernan sometimes instructed a few girls in a small room upstairs. From 50c. to $1 a month per pupil was the fee which Mr. Heffernan attempted to collect. This establishment, the first separate school in Toronto, was made possible by legislation in 1843 providing for such schools, either Protestant or Roman Catholic. The demand for additional separate schools in Toronto led to an amendment in 1851 enabling one to be established in each ward if required. At that time the one separate school had three teachers.

A short description of the principal educational buildings in 1858 will be of interest, applying as it does to a time when Toronto was just entering the period of great expansion and had still many of the characteristics of the large town. The *Descriptive Catalogue of the Provincial Exhibition of 1858* refers to the commencement in the previous year of work upon "the new University Buildings on the west side of the ravine at the head of the College Avenue", referring, of course, to University College, Tor-

[14]Middleton, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 693.

onto's most notable architectural ornament. Pending the completion of this building the University classes were being accommodated "in a small building at the head of the College Avenue" (now University Avenue). Old Trinity College, "near the Exhibition Grounds" of that day, was described as "a handsome building of the third period of pointed English architecture which prevailed in the 14th and 15th centuries". Knox's College, "conducted in Elmsley Villa on Grosvenor Street, a building which was occupied by the Governor-General from 1849 to 1851", and St. Michael's College, "a fine building recently erected on Clover Hill, between the City and Yorkville", complete the survey of institutions of higher learning.

Upper Canada College, "situated between King and Adelaide Streets, west of Simcoe", was erected in 1829, the first important educational building in Toronto—if one may omit the Grammar School. The present Normal School on Gould Street, erected in 1851-2, is described as "among the finest buildings in Toronto"; nearly 150 students were in attendance to qualify as teachers throughout the province. Finally, "the Common School buildings of Toronto are in every way creditable to the city. The six principal schools are situated on George, Louisa, John, Phoebe and Victoria Streets, and one in the Park, having been erected at a total cost, including the price of sites, of £16,000".[17]

Private schools, which exist today to provide an educational and cultural life for those who can afford to pay for it, and who, for one reason or another, believe that such an environment is superior to that of the public school, were a necessity during the infancy of our government school system. Typical of early private schools for boys was that of Mr. Hart on Church Street. The material which John Ross Robertson collected concerning this old academy, its master and his pupils, is highly illuminative of school days of old:

"On the west side of Church Street, nearly midway between Queen and Richmond Streets, stands a small two-storey double frame house, Nos. 126-8, the lower floor of which is now (1894) occupied by a newsdealer and another shop. The whole of the building was once

[17] *Descriptive Catalogue of the Provincial Exhibition, 1858*. 1858. p. 49.

occupied as a school and residence by Mr. Hart, a small grey-haired Irishman, who habitually wore eye-glasses and a suit of iron-grey tweed. The school was started about 1843, and continued until 1848. The school room was on the ground floor of the northern half of the building. The remainder of the house was occupied by Mr. Hart as a residence. Thirty or forty pupils, all boys, attended the school, among whom were William and B. Hart, the sons of the master, A. W. Gardner, John Dixon, P. Bethune, J. Dalrymple, W. Mulholland, Raymond Baby, Dr. John King, William Liddell, Walter and Henry Kidd, Tip and Gordon Hellwell, Sam and Tom Allen, the latter now a resident of Ottawa, William Pearson, Secretary of the Gas Company, and James Tilt, Q.C.

"The school room was arranged in a peculiar fashion. The master sat behind a high desk on one side, with his back to the wall. Around the other three sides were ranged one continuous row of benches with desks in front of them. On these benches the boys sat, every one with his back to the master and his eyes to the wall. By this method of arranging his pupils he could watch every boy's movements unknown to him, and frequently when two boys were racing pens across the desk he would quickly descend from his perch and, stepping on tip-toe across the room, would suddenly seize each by the shoulder, greatly to their consternation. English branches and Latin constituted the course of study at the school.

"Mr. Hart was very attentive to his duties, very humorous, and although very passionate at times was rather a favourite among the boys. He seemed to live in constant dread of his wife, a tall, lean, angular and wiry-looking woman. A switch of nine tails was his weapon of punishment. It was his habit to mention how many blows—'pandies' they were called in the schoolroom vernacular—the convicted boy was to receive. The customary number was eight, four on each hand. John Dixon used to give great amusement to the boys and great vexation to the master by his argumentative resistance to punishment by the cat. After dodging and squirming to avoid the blows, he would dispute the count until the master became so confused and enraged that he would give him two or

three extra cuts with the stick end of the cat, but John invariably beat him on the count. With all his supposed cleverness as a master the smart boys would outwit him. One gave him every day for three months the same problems worked out by the Rule of Three. School hours were from nine to twelve and one to three except on Saturdays, when the boys were given a half holiday.

"The plank sidewalk in front of the building was used for marbles, peg-tops, and other school-boy amusements. The older boys, nearly every one of whom owned a rooster, indulged in the more advanced sport of cock-fighting in the adjoining field of Mr. Harvis. The lane at the south of the house was the battlefield, and here nearly every day a pugilistic encounter took place. On several occasions J. Dalrymple, after a truant's trip of a week, was brought to the schoolroom by his mother, tied hand and foot and in a cart. These were red-letter days for the master, who would superintend his disembarkation with great glee, rolling up his coat-sleeves, flourishing his instrument of torture, and calling out in exultant tones, 'Bring him in, bring him in by the nape of the neck till I give him a taste of the flail'."[18]

In the early twenties a "select school for young ladies" was directed by Mrs. Goodman, and later by Mrs. Cockburn. It was advertised as under the patronage of Lady Sarah Maitland. The type of education provided, and the fees and other conditions enforced upon those who attended, are outlined in the *Gazette* of May 23, 1822:

"For education in the English language grammatically, History, Geography, the use of the Globes, with plain and fancy needlework, £2. Writing and ciphering, 10s., the French language, £1, drawing and painting on velvet, £1 10s. For board and lodging, £8 10s.

"Music, dancing, flower- and card-work are also taught in the school and charged moderately.

"Mrs. Cockburn will receive a junior class of little children from four to seven years of age for five dollars per quarter each.

"Entrance, One Guinea. Every lady to provide a table- and teaspoon, knife and fork, sheets and towels, and to pay for her own washing."[19]

[18]Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 247.
[19]*Upper Canada Gazette*, May 23, 1822.

Canadian Illustrated News.

BOYS' MILITARY DRILL IN 1863

Military drill for school boys was decidedly a novelty at that time.

HART'S SCHOOL, 126-8 CHURCH STREET

The old school is shown as it appeared many years afterwards.

Canadian Illustrated News. William Armstrong.

UNVEILING THE RIDGEWAY MONUMENT, JULY 1, 1870

Nine members of the Queen's Own Rifles lost their lives in action against the Fenians at the Battle of Lime Ridge in 1866.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

KING'S COLLEGE

Toronto's first institution of higher learning stood on the site of the present Parliament Buildings.

Among ladies' private schools of note was Pinehurst, a select academy conducted just east of The Grange. The house was built about 1840, and in 1850 Monsieur and Madame Des Landes opened a ladies' school there. The fashionable clientele attracted during the three years in which they conducted the classes was continued during the long tenure of Mrs. Forster, a charming and accomplished school-mistress who presided over the establishment until 1866. The daughters of many prominent Canadian families received their education in this school. Mrs. Forster died in 1876, while Pinehurst was demolished in the late eighties to make way for the extension of McCaul Street to College Street.

Miss MacNally's private school was located on the north side of Wellington Street, in a large brick house east of Emily Street. The establishment opened in 1845-6, and the headmistress was assisted by her three sisters. About twelve years later she ended her connection with the school when she became the wife of Mr. John Boyd, at one time principal of a famous school on Bay Street—the Classical and Commercial Academy of the thirties. Miss MacNally was particularly proficient in modern languages, and her school attracted the patronage of many prominent families.

Another well-known ladies' academy was located at 32[illegible] King Street West during the years 1854-60. Miss Macartney, the lady principal, was the daughter of an English officer, and her school was highly regarded not only in Toronto but in other parts of the province. Later, as Mrs. Nixon, she conducted a school closely connected with the Church of England.

Upper Canada College has long been pre-eminent among private schools in Toronto. Originally endowed by a gift of 66,000 acres of Crown Lands, this famous school was able to inaugurate its work on a scale which could not be approached by others less fortunate. Upper Canada was originally called Minor College, presumably to distinguish it from the University of King's College which was part of the projected educational system, but which was some years later in its commencement. The original advertisement concerning the construction of Minor College appeared in the *U. E. Loyalist* in 1829:

"Minor College. Sealed tenders for erecting a School House and four dwelling-houses will be received on the first Monday of June next. Plans, elevations and specifications may be seen after the 12th instant on application to the Hon. Geo. Markland, from whom further information will be received. Editors throughout the Province are requested to insert this notice until the first Monday in June, and forward their accounts for the same to the office of the LOYALIST, York. York, 1st May, 1829."[20]

At the end of that year the school was ready to receive students, and the announcement of its opening appeared in the *Upper Canada Gazette* of December 17th. It will be observed that most of the first teachers were Cambridge graduates and clergymen. Upper Canada College still continues the policy of having about half of its masters from England, though the former custom of preferring clergymen as teachers in private schools of the Church of England is now in general restricted to the Headmaster, and even he is frequently a layman. The advertisement of the opening of the school is as follows:

"Upper Canada College, established at York. Visitor, the Lieutenant-Governor for the time being. This College will open after the approaching Christmas Vacation, on Monday the 8th of January, 1830, under the conduct of the Masters appointed at Oxford by the Vice Chancellor and other electors, in July last. Principal, the Rev. J. H. Harris, D.D., late Fellow of Clare Hall, Cambridge. Classical Department: Vice Principal, The Rev. T. Phillips, D.D., of Queen's College, Cambridge. First Classical Master: The Rev. Charles Mathews, M.A., of Pembroke Hall, Cambridge. Second Classical Master: The Rev. W. Boulton, B.A., of Queen's College, Oxford. Mathematical Department: The Rev. Charles Dade, M.A., Fellow of Caius College, Cambridge, and late Mathematical Master of Elizabeth College. French, Mr. J. P. De la Haye. English, Writing and Arithmetic, Mr. G. A. Barber and Mr. J. Padfield. Drawing Master, Mr. Drury. . . . (Signed) G. H. Markland, Secretary to the Board of Education. York, Upper Canada, Dec. 2, 1829."[21]

[20]The *U. E. Loyalist*, May 2, 1829.
[21]*Upper Canada Gazette*, December 17, 1829.

We cannot enter here into the history of the College, but a paragraph from an important publication of the late seventies, edited by the father of the present Principal of the school, recalls the old King Street building which stood near the site of the present Royal Alexandra Theatre, and the controversy which for a time threatened its existence:

"Regaining King Street, and turning to the west, we come upon Upper Canada College and the fine grounds that surround that historic institution. The building itself has no architectural attractions. The charm of the place is its foreground, with its bright, green sward, and the foliage of the trees that overhang the sidewalk. The College, which was founded by Sir John Colborne in 1829, has the good fortune to be well endowed, and is under the direction of a committee of the University Senate. Attached is a boarding-house; and the institution has a well-equipped staff. Many of the leading public men of the country have acquired their early education at the College: it consequently has some traditions. Some educational reformers now regard it, however, as out of line with the Secondary School System of the Province; and its right to exist has recently become a matter of fierce debate."[22]

It is fortunate that the opponents of Upper Canada College were not successful in terminating its career, for it is and has always been something greater than a school, and its graduates, in larger numbers, probably, than those of any other Canadian school, occupy positions of prominence throughout the world.

As the years passed, the public school system increased in scope with the growth of the city. By 1879 there were nineteen public schools, of which Dufferin, Ryerson and Wellesley were described as "large and handsome"; and five separate schools provided instruction for the children of Roman Catholics. Not until 1880 did the city make any provision for secondary education. In that year was commenced the policy of arranging for the entrance each year into the Grammar School of a few of the brightest pupils of

[22]G. M. Grant (Ed.): *Picturesque Canada*. 1879, Vol. I, p. 430. The most extensive account of Upper Canada College is George Dickson: *A History of Upper Canada College, 1829-1892*. 1893. In addition several shorter descriptions and collections of reminiscences have appeared in print.

the common schools. In 1865, when the Toronto Grammar School was located on the east side of Dalhousie Street, just east of Gould, it was first officially recognised as the high school of the city.[33] In 1870 old King's College, Queen's Park, provided temporary accommodations, while greatly increased civic grants made possible in 1871 the opening of a new building—the forerunner of Jarvis Collegiate—at the corner of Jarvis and Carlton Streets. The building cost slightly over $34,000 and accommodated 220 pupils, 75 of whom were in the "female department"—then a novelty. The students paid fees amounting to $5 a quarter, and the salaries of the staff varied from $1,600, paid to the Principal, the Rev. Dr. Wickson, to $250 received by one of his six assistants. Night schools started with a rush in October, 1855, but the 260 young men who entered the courses soon dwindled to 56, and as a result such supplementary instruction fell into disuse for twenty-five years. In 1875 Miss Ada Marean was appointed first Kindergarten Directress, an innovation due to a visit to Toronto, at the invitation of the Department of Education, of two American exponents of that work. The work, however, did not commence until September, 1883, when 80 pupils were enrolled in the Victoria Street School.[34]

[33]Much information concerning the establishment of the Toronto public school system, and its development under Superintendent Barber after his appointment in 1844, is contained in the printed *Report of the Past History and Present Condition of the Common or Public Schools of the City of Toronto*, 1859. See also [G. P. Ure]: *The Handbook of Toronto*, 1858, pp. 102-135, for a good summary of educational facilities at that date, together with an outline of the history of Toronto schools and colleges. Several chapters in J. E. Middleton: *The Municipality of Toronto, a History* (1923) are devoted to the subject, and similar valuable material may be found in E. J. Hathaway: *Jesse Ketchum and his Times* (1929), pp. [illegible]-122 and 274-82. The most notable contribution to our knowledge of the social and academic life of our fathers and grandfathers in attendance at the University of Toronto is W. J. Loudon's *Studies of Student Life*, (8 volumes, 1923-30); while the standard historical work upon the development of the provincial university is W. S. Wallace: *A History of the University of Toronto, 1827-1927*, 1927.

[34]A short but valuable summary of the history of the Board of School Trustees of Toronto is contained in the preface of the 1898 edition of *By-laws and Regulations of the Toronto Public School Board*. There is also a table of real and personal property of the Board, including the date of construction and other information concerning each of the 47 schools in existence at that time.

It is impossible here even to outline the great developments which have characterised the field of education in recent years. The scope and purposes of educational curricula as adapted to the needs of the individual have advanced at a rapid pace since the initial steps were taken to provide a small measure of technical and vocational training and guidance. The crippled child, the under-privileged and the subnormal, who received little but neglect or blows in earlier times, are now given the specialised attention which is their due; and it is probable that the exceptionally bright student will soon be similarly treated. Coincident with these advances there has been evident an ever-increasing *esprit de corps* among teachers, who now hold an honourable position in the state commensurate with the trust reposed in them as educators of the youth of the nation.

CHAPTER XX

THE MECHANICS' INSTITUTE

THE York Mechanics' Institute, or Society for Mutual Improvement in the Arts and Sciences, was established during the winter of 1830-31 in the Masonic Hall on Colborne Street near Church, and the first lectures and meetings were held in that building. In imitation of similar associations established in London and Edinburgh in the early eighteen-twenties, the organisers of the York Institute announced that "the object of this society shall be the mutual improvement of mechanics, and others who become members of the Society, in arts and sciences by the formation of a library of reference and circulation, by the delivery of lectures on scientific and mechanical subjects, the establishment of classes for the instruction of members in the various branches of study, and for conversation on subjects embraced by this constitution, from which all discussion on political or religious matters is to be carefully excluded".[1] At the time of the Institute's organisation the town of York had a population of about 3,000. Joseph Bates, who had had experience in such associations in England, was one of the leaders in the movement, and James Lesslie, Dr. Baldwin, Dr. Rolph, Dr. Dunlop, Sheriff Jarvis, Jesse Ketchum, John Ewart and David Paterson were the first office-bearers. 7s. 6d. was the annual fee, and the library, open to the members each evening "at Mr. Timothy Parsons', 215 King Street",[2] provided a place of diversion and education at a time when the tavern and beer-shop were the chief alternatives. The following extract from the third annual report of the Institute outlines the activities of the year. When we consider that the great majority of the members had not had the advantage of higher education it would seem that, apart from the conversation class, the proceedings must have been well over the heads of many of those who were intended to benefit:

[1]This sentence formed part of the original constitution of the Institute.
[2]*George Walton's York Commercial Directory for 1834*, 1833, p. 133.

"It is with feelings of gratitude and satisfaction that our committee have been enabled by the gratuitous exertions of their scientific friends to keep up the regular supply of lectures on the different subjects adapted to the objects of the institute. During the last year the following subjects have been taken up and ably discussed: the principle of matter—attraction, cohesion and repulsion; astronomy—the nature and properties of the sun and the phenomena of the planets Mercury and Venus; natural history—the cause and effect of climates, and other subjects of natural philosophy, such as electricity and pneumatics, with experiments and illustrations. The conversation class has likewise contributed greatly to those who have availed themselves of it, in bringing much interesting matter under their consideration."[3]

In 1835 the Institute received a grant of £200 from the government, and the money was expended largely upon scientific apparatus to illustrate "the principles of natural Philosophy, Geography, Astronomy and Mathematics", and which did not prove of much use. During the excitement of the Rebellion of 1837 there was a lapse in interest in the Society, but in 1838 the City Council provided a suite of rooms in the south-east corner of the Market buildings, and greater enthusiasm was aroused. The annual report of 1841 noted that the membership was 94, and that courses of weekly lectures were given "by the Rev. Mr. Lilley, on the Mind; by the Rev. Mr. Leach, President, on Education; by Dr. Lang, on Chemistry; and one by the Rev. Mr. Roaf, on Geology; for the untiring zeal of these gentlemen, under the depressing circumstances which the Institute has had to struggle with, the Committee tender their grateful acknowledgments". As is so often the case, some of the efforts of the directors of the Institute failed because of the disinterested attitude of the very persons who would be most helped by them. The report states that "an attempt was made to establish a class to meet five nights in the week, intended to combine the advantages of a reading-room and an academy, which unfortunately failed from the unexpected opposition of the persons chiefly intended to be

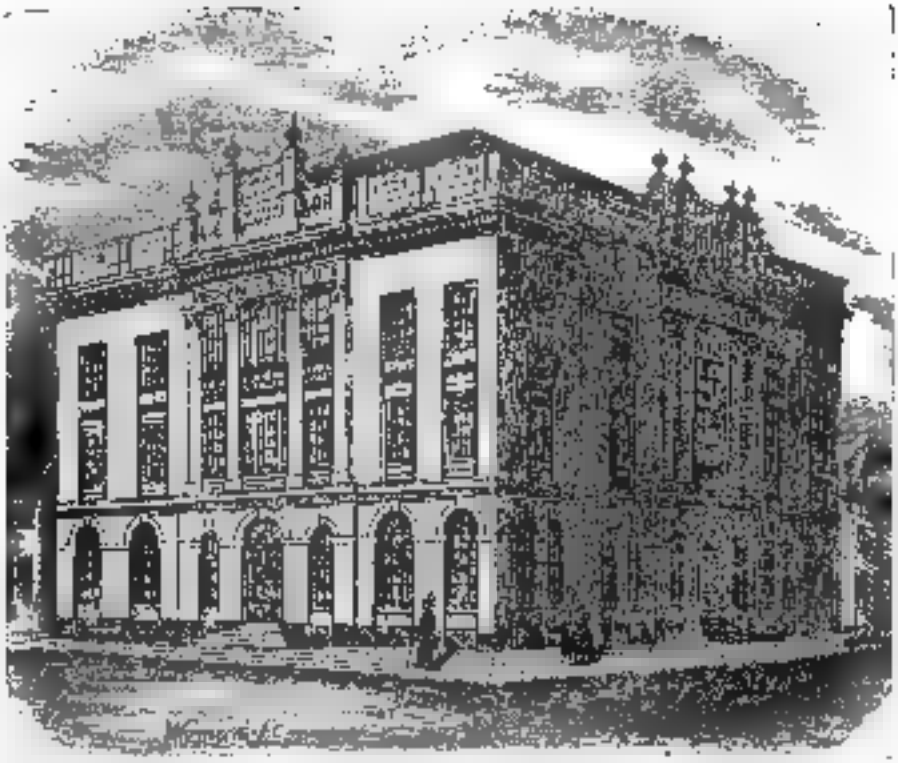
[3]The *Patriot and Farmers' Monitor*, February 17, 1834.

benefitted by it".[4] Anyone, however, who has attended night school even two nights a week will readily excuse those who found it a hardship to come five nights. The same report noted also that many members did not return books loaned to them—human nature changing not at all in this respect down through the centuries.

In 1844 the Institute's quarters were changed to rooms on King Street, the Court Room being made available to them for lecture purposes. In the next year a firehall was commenced on Court Street, and the Institute obtained the use of the second storey by raising $1,861 to pay for the cost of that part. In 1848 the first of a series of exhibitions of fine arts, machines, ladies' work, etc., was held for a period of ten weeks. Receipts exceeded expenditures by about $200, so the exhibition was financially successful. In succeeding years similar displays were held, that of 1850 containing a model steam locomotive which attracted great interest, for there were at that time no steam railways in the province. The model was made by A. Parkes, woodturner, Adelaide Street, and a small spirit lamp propelled it on a raised track which ran around the room.

In 1851 was made the first suggestion of the necessity of increased space for the activities of the Institute. In that year the exhibition netted only $48, but it was one of the best displays yet held. In 1853 the north-east corner of Church and Adelaide Streets was purchased at auction for $6,529, and $4,800 was raised by public subscription towards defraying the cost of a building thereon. On April 17, 1854, the corner-stone was laid under Masonic auspices. A procession of Masons in full regalia, accompanied by the officers of the Institute and led by the band of the Royal Canadian Rifles, marched in procession from St. Lawrence Hall to the site. T. G. Ridout, D.G.M. of Canada, laid the stone with a silver trowel presented to him by Thomas J. Robertson, President of the Institute, and so was commenced "a hall for the public use of the mechanics of this city", as Mr. Ridout remarked. On the opposite side of the street, near St. James' school-house, a small cannon fired a salute

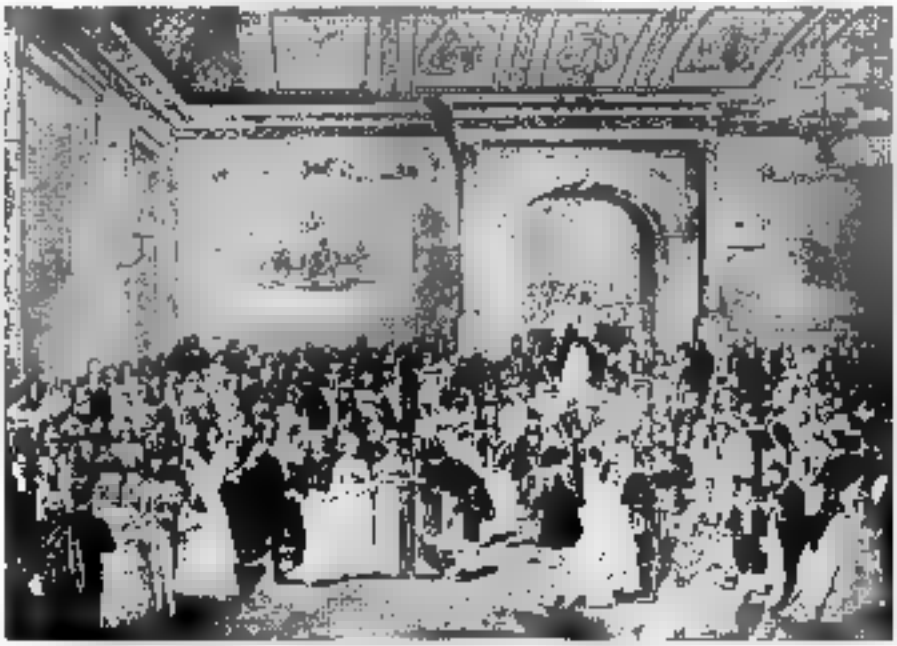
[4]See John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*, 1894-1914, Vol. II, pp. 756-7.



John Ross Robertson Collection.

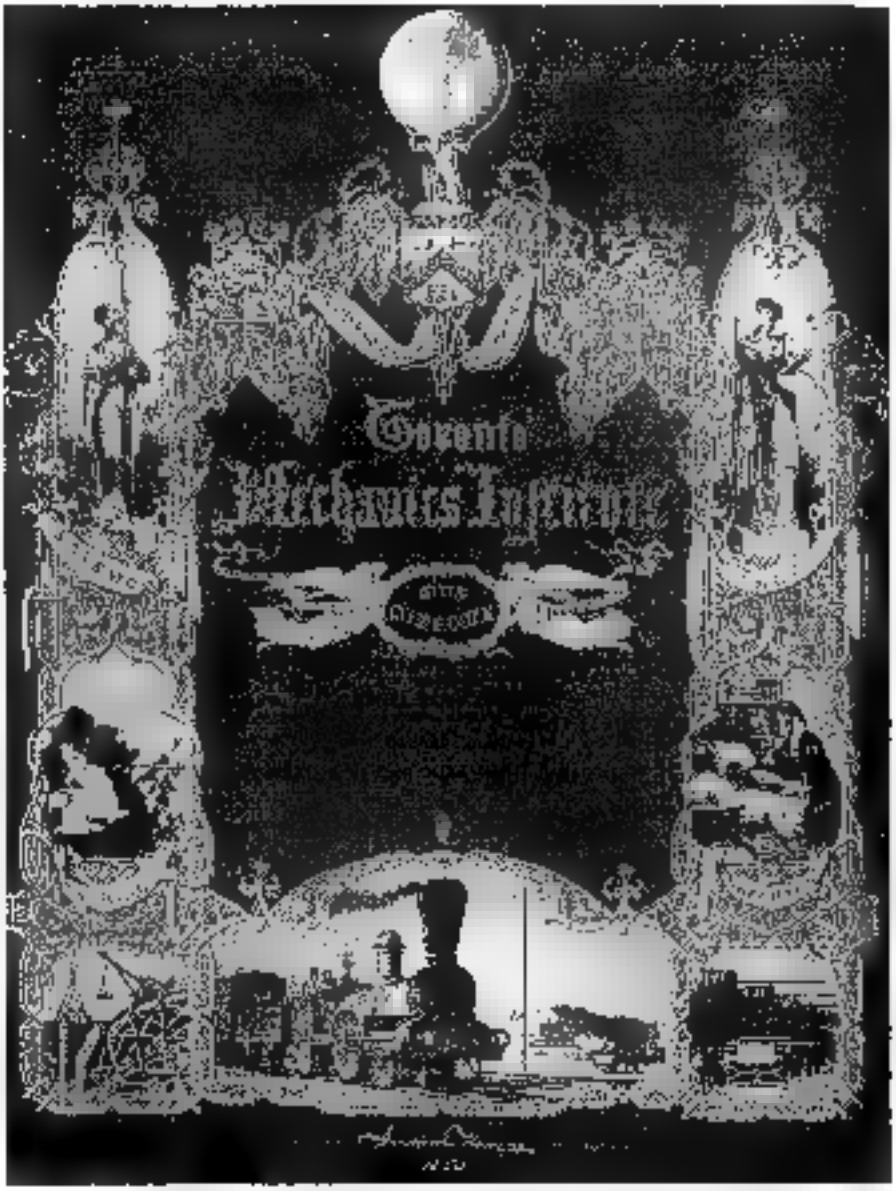
THE MECHANICS' INSTITUTE, ADELAIDE AND CHURCH STREETS

The building afterwards became the Public Library.



Reproduced by courtesy of Miss Ida Rowan, who appears at the lower right

FANCY DRESS BALL IN THE MUSIC HALL OF THE MECHANICS' INSTITUTE, APRIL 19, 1870



John Ross Robertson Collection.

A DIPLOMA OF THE TORONTO MECHANICS' INSTITUTE

For half a century the Institute afforded library and recreational facilities now provided by the Public Library and numerous clubs and societies.

of three rounds, and the proceedings ended with three cheers for the Queen.

It was found impossible to complete the project without outside help, and the Provincial Government granted over $21,000 within the next few years to finish the building, at the same time using some of it for offices. In 1861 it was completed at a total cost of $48,380.78. Meanwhile St. Lawrence Hall had been used for some of the lectures. Lists for 1857-58, as well as earlier and later courses, suggest that it must have been exceedingly difficult to arouse interest, among persons comparatively uneducated, in lectures which today would hardly be given outside of the university classroom. Scientists, professors and clergymen predominated among the speakers, and a random selection from the lists includes such topics as "Optics", "Heat and Light in their Chemical Relations", "Fixed Stars and Nebulae", "The Origin of Literature", "The Poetry of Insanity" and "The Anatomy and Comparative Anatomy of the Eye". The term "mechanics", however, must be taken to include business men, tradesmen and manufacturers as well as unskilled labourers and factory operatives; and many tradesmen were at that period men of some education who had come from the Old Land. In fact the Institute undoubtedly attracted to its lectures many non-members, of the same cultured classes which in our time patronise educational courses held under such auspices as the University of Toronto, the Art Gallery, and the Royal Canadian Institute. In 1857-8 non-members paid a "York shilling" (12½c.) admission, or $1 for the course, while members and ladies were charged only 50c. for the season. In 1858 the Institute had 800 members, and there were 4,000 volumes in the library—a number four times that of 1850. The expenditures in that year were £851 12s. 2d., a few pounds less than the receipts.

In 1862 a series of literary and musical entertainments was instituted and proved a great success; consequently similar programs were given in later years. During the same year the evening classes were reorganised, and continued until 1880, when the School Board established similar classes in three of the schools.

The early exhibitions of the Institute were evidently not

held every year, for in 1868 the display is called "the eighth annual exhibition". Artists, and persons possessing works of art, were invited to loan them to the Society, and the exhibit included ladies' needlework, engraving and photography. Over 700 pictures, including many "old Masters", were on display on this occasion, though the admission charge of 10c. did not produce enough to meet expenses, a deficit of $100 resulting.

From time to time additional attractions were introduced in the Institute. Billiard tables and chess were available in the recreation rooms, and there was a ladies' reading-room in addition to that originally provided for the members. A list of the presidents of the association between 1831 and 1883 includes many of the most prominent citizens of Toronto, some of whom devoted a great deal of time to the interests of their less fortunate fellows. W. Edwards, for example, was a prominent worker for thirty years, and many others might be mentioned whose activities in the Mechanics' Institute extended from eight to seventeen years. In 1883 the Institute was merged into the Toronto Public Library as a result of the acceptance of the Free Library by-law by the citizens.

The history of libraries in Toronto is obscure and fragmentary. A private circulating library was established in York in December, 1810. Among buildings entered by the American soldiery during the occupation of 1813 was the town library, and it suffered in consequence, though some books were later sent back by the American commander. In 1822 a meeting of the directors and subscribers was held in De Forest's Hotel for the purpose of disposing of such books as remained in the possession of the treasurer of the Library, William Allan, and it was suggested in the *Gazette* that other books still held by individuals should be returned to that official.[5] Another library was in existence in the early thirties, for an advertisement of the York Circulating Library appears in *Walton's 1834 Directory*.[6]

The Toronto Athenaeum was formed in the forties for the purpose of supporting a Public Library and Museum.

[5]*Upper Canada Gazette*, October 1, 1822.
[6]*Walton's Directory*, facing p. 124.

But this library and that of the Mechanics' Institute had on their shelves in 1849 a scant 1,000 volumes. The origin of the present library system dates from the acceptance of the Free Library by-law on January 1, 1883, and the Public Library instituted at that time was due particularly to the energy of Aldermen Hallam and Taylor. An outline of the early years of the institution is given by John Ross Robertson:

"On taking possession of the building made over for the use of the Public Library by the late Mechanics' Institute, it was found necessary to alter the interior so as to afford space for the present reading-room, and to erect an additional building at the rear for the reception of the volumes. To carry out this work application was made to the Council of Toronto for $50,000 in debentures, the proceeds from which were placed to the credit of the Board. The nominal number of volumes possessed by the Mechanics' Institute when it became merged into the Public Library was 8,000, but of these all but 2,000 were worthless or nearly so. In June, 1883, the officers of the new institute were appointed, and in September of the same year Chairman John Hallam and Chief Librarian James Bain, jr., visited New York and London for the purpose of purchasing books.

"On March 6th, 1884, the library was formally opened by the Lieutenant-Governor. On this occasion addresses were delivered by Sir Daniel Wilson, President of University College, the Hon. G. W. Ross, Minister of Education, Professor Goldwin Smith and the Rev. Dr. Withrow. The members of the first board of managers were John Hallam, the Mayor, Dr. George Wright, James Mason, John A. Mills, John Taylor, W. H. Knowlton, George D'Arcy Boulton and William Scully. James Bain, jr., Chief Librarian; John Davy, assistant Librarian and Secretary. The reading-room of the new Library was opened March 10th, 1884, but no books were issued until April 2nd, when the demand was so great that it was necessary to enlarge the staff and duplicate and triplicate many books. Branches were established at St. Andrew's Market and St. Paul's Hall. Subsequently two other branches were established, making one in the west, one in the northwest, one in the north, and one

in the eastern portion of the city. The Library now (1894) contains about 55,000 volumes. The reference library has grown so extensive that there is an imperative need for more space for its patrons, and an enlargement for their convenience is now under consideration."[7]

In the forty years that have elapsed since this was written the development of library facilities has more than kept pace with the growth of the city. From time to time new branches have been opened, and the existing system under Dr. George Locke provides educational and recreational advantages for many thousands of people whose acquaintance with the best literature would otherwise be greatly circumscribed. There are at present eighteen public libraries in Toronto. The average annual expenditure upon new books over the last five years was $70,606, and in 1933 there were 4,433,761 books loaned. In recent times the number of small commercial lending libraries in Toronto has greatly increased, many of them being a part of the equipment of the "general store" of the day—the corner druggist; but usually they supply little but the current sensational novel, and could hardly be considered a satisfactory substitute for the service provided by the city's large staff of trained librarians.

[7]Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 399. John Hallam's public-spirited services and generous gifts towards the foundation of our public library system place him in the foremost rank of the city's benefactors.

CHAPTER XXI

"A City of Churches"

As was to be expected, the Established Church of England gained a foothold in Upper Canada somewhat earlier than other denominations, though not to the extent that might have resulted from determined efforts by that body. Even as late as 1839 there were only 77 Anglican clergymen in the province, though the larger share of the blame for such a condition should be laid upon the Imperial Parliament, which controlled grants in support of the extension of the Upper Canadian Church. But, in spite of the fewness of Church of England clergy, arrogant governors and lesser officials long discriminated against all "dissenters". An attitude of social and religious exclusiveness was early characteristic of the (for most practical purposes) "established" church, but probably no one carried his feelings of superiority quite so far as an eccentric clergyman in the Bay of Quinté district, the Rev. John Langhorn. While travelling his circuit on foot during intense heat he was offered a horse by a considerate Presbyterian. Kindness was rewarded by this unique retort: "Sir, you are a promoter of schism in the flock of Christ. I cannot, therefore, have any intercourse with you, much less accept any favour from you. Please keep on your side of the road and go your way."[1] It was, however, a day of strong religious and political opinions, and Anglicans had certainly no monopoly of intolerance.

While the erection of a church[2] in York was not seriously considered until 1802, the Anglican service had for sev-

[1]Professor A. H. Young of Trinity College discovered this unique item during his research into Langhorn's life. The Church of England was, of course, never legally "established" in Upper Canada.

[2]In considering early religious life in Toronto it is intended particularly to portray the beginnings of the various denominations. The reminiscences of men like Dr. Henry Scadding concerning quaint events of no particular importance, perhaps, —but none the less illustrative of the times,—are added here and there.

eral years been held in the Government Buildings. At first the schoolmaster, William Cooper, read the service; and later the Rev. Thomas Raddish resided in York for eight months. The first permanent incumbent was the Rev. George Okill Stuart, who came to York in 1800 as missionary and remained in charge until 1812, when the Rev. John (later Bishop) Strachan arrived in York to become Archdeacon, and rector of St. James'. On July 9, 1803, a meeting of the subscribers to the proposed St. James' Church was held, and it was decided that the building should be of stone, and pine and oak planks;[3] this decision was changed, however, for the church was constructed entirely of wood. The building, which was not in use until 1807, had no steeple and was much like a house. Space was left for a burial-ground around it, and a few years later it was surrounded by a split rail fence.

The original St. James' Church was greatly altered in 1818, when a spire was added; and in 1831 the old structure was demolished and replaced by a stone church. This building was largely destroyed by fire in 1839, and the reconstructed church was among the many buildings burned in the great fire of 1849. The present[4] St. James' Cathedral was erected in 1850-52, the congregation meanwhile worshipping at Holy Trinity and other churches. With reference to the musical portion of the service at old St. James' C. C. Taylor wrote:

"Ecclesiastical music was entirely destitute of organs or melodeons. At the Church of St. James a Mr. Hetherington officiated as clerk, and his mode of procedure was to announce the psalm or hymn, give out the tune on the bassoon, and then accompany the vocalists present with original and often grotesque improvisations on that instrument. At one time a choir was formed at this church with a base viol, clarionet and bassoon as the accompanying instruments. The music was almost entirely confined to the churches that then existed, the choirs being accompanied by flutes, violins, violoncellos, and occasionally a trombone."[5]

[3] *Upper Canada Gazette*, July 16, 1803. A preliminary meeting was held in January of that year.

[4] For a traveller's account of the laying of the corner-stone see Chapter I, pp. 32-3.

[5] C. C. Taylor: *Toronto Called Back*, 1886, pp. 271-2.

Trinity Church, King Street, which was erected in 1843, was the second Anglican church in Toronto, though a year earlier the first St. Paul's was opened on Bloor Street, then outside the city limits, near the village of Yorkville. At that time "Church Street extended only as far as Carlton Street. Jarvis Street from the corner of Queen was only a sandy lane, as was also Sherbourne Street, then known north of Queen Street as Allan's Lane. West of St. Paul's on the south side of Bloor there was scarcely a house between the church and Yonge Street, and on the northern side there were only some three or four houses between the end of Jarvis Street and the Red Lion Hotel, on the north-east corner of Yonge and Bloor Streets, close to which was the toll-gate."[9] St. Paul's did not originally have a steeple. Concerning the acquisition Dr. Scadding says:

"While crossing the First Concession Line (Bloor Street), now in our northward journey, the moment comes back to us when on glancing along the vista to the eastward formed by the road in that direction we first noticed a church-spire on the right-hand or southern side. We had passed that way a day or two before, and we were sure no such object was to be seen there then; and yet, unmistakably now, there rose up before the eye a rather graceful tower and spire, of considerable altitude, complete from base to apex, and coloured white.

"The fact was: Mr. J. G. Howard, a well-known architect, had ingeniously constructed a tower of wood in a horizontal, or nearly horizontal position on the ground close by, somewhat as a shipbuilder puts together 'the mast of some vast admiral'; and then, after attending to the external finish of, at least, the higher portion of it, even to a coating of lime wash, had, in the space of a few hours by means of convenient machinery, raised it on end, and secured it permanently in a vertical position.

"We gather some further particulars of the achievement from a contemporary account. The Yorkville spire was raised on the 4th of August, 1841. It was 85 feet high, composed of four entire trees or pieces of timber each of that length, bound together pyramidically, tapering from ten

[9]John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*. 1894-1914. Vol. IV, p. 15.

feet base to one foot at top, and made to receive a turned ball and weather-cock. The base was sunk in the ground until the apex was raised ten feet from the ground; and about thirty feet of the upper part of the spire was completed, coloured and painted before the raising. The operation of raising commenced about two o'clock p.m., and about eight in the evening the spire and vane were seen erect, and appeared to those unacquainted with what was going on to have risen amongst the trees as if by magic. The work was performed by Mr. John Richey, the framing by Mr. Wetherell, and the raising was superintended by Mr. Joseph Hill.

"The plan adopted was this: three gin-poles, as they are called, were erected in the form of a triangle; each of them was well braced, and tackles were rove at their tops: the tackles were hooked to strong straps about fifty feet up the spire, with nine men to each tackle, and four men to steady the end with following poles. It was raised in about four hours from the commencement of the straining of the tackles, and had a very beautiful appearance while rising. The whole operation, we have been told, was conducted as nearly as possible in silence, the architect himself regulating by signs the action of the groups at the gin-poles, being himself governed by the plumb-line suspended in a high frame before him. . . . .

"The original St. Paul's before it acquired in this singular manner the dignified appurtenance of a steeple, was a long, low, barn-like, wooden building. Mr. Howard otherwise improved it, enlarging it by the addition of an aisle on the west side. When some twenty years later, *i.e.*, in 1861, the new stone church was erected, the old wooden structure was removed bodily to the west side of Yonge Street, together with the tower, curtailed, however, of its spire.

"We have been informed that the four fine stems, each eighty-five feet long, which formed the interior frame of the tower and spire of 1841, were a present from Mr. Allan, of Moss Park; and that the Rev. Charles Mathews, occasionally officiating in St. Paul's, gave one hundred pounds

in cash towards the expense of the ornamental addition now made to the edifice."[7]

With an evangelical appeal directed particularly among the "common" people, Methodism was already a strong denomination in the United States when its first influence was felt in Canada. This fact alone was enough to create intense suspicion, and Egerton Ryerson, speaking in 1837, noted that in the early days of the province "Methodism was a subject of scorn and ridicule. Its principles were deemed absurd; its ministers were viewed as ignorant, idle, hypocritical adventurers and political spies".[8]

That there was some excuse for this attitude is obvious when we remember that all the first Methodist missionaries and pastors were sent out by American conferences, and in most instances were Americans. After the formation of the Canada Conference in 1824 and, five years later, the separation of the American and Canadian churches, the opposition to the Methodist body was gradually dispelled.

Among the earliest Methodist circuit-riders to visit Little York was the Rev. Nathan Bangs, who was there in the last days of December, 1802, having been appointed to cover a circuit "from the village of Kingston to the town of York". While in the district he travelled up Yonge Street and held meetings at various places, noting that the people had "their own code of decorum" and were "fond of disputation". This was particularly exemplified in one locality about ten miles from the town, where that abomination of Methodists—a fiddler—was not repressed without a struggle. Dr. Bangs' account of the episode serves to recall an attitude of mind which persisted as long as Canadian Methodism:

"There was a great awakening among the people, but an

[7]Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old*, 1873, pp. 405-7. The mention of J. G. Howard, who donated High Park to the city, recalls that he was for many years one of the most important surveyors, architects and builders in Toronto, St. George's Church and the Lunatic Asylum being among his contributions to architectural design. He was drawing master at Upper Canada College from 1839 to 1856. The first white bricks to be used in Toronto were made in 1842 from clay obtained near Sheriff Jarvis' home, "Rosedale", and Howard used 20,000 of them in that year to build a store at 103 King Street, which also had German silver sashes and plate glass.

[8]Cited in J. E. Middleton: *The Municipality of Toronto*, Vol. II, p. 698.

inveterate fiddler seemed set on by the great adversary to contest the victory with me inch by inch. He had earned considerable money as the musician of the winter-night dancing parties of the settlers; but he was now willing to fiddle for nothing, if they would meet to dance and frolic rather than to pray. He contrived every possible method to keep the young people from our meetings. For some time he carried matters with a high hand, and the war was at last fully opened between us. One Sabbath morning, however, I fairly caught him. I was preaching on Galatians v. 19-21, and when I came to the word 'revelings' I applied it to his tactics and said, 'I do not know that the devil's musician is here today; I do not see him anywhere'. But he was sitting in a corner out of my sight, and he now put out his head and cried out, 'Here I am, ha! ha! ha!'—making the place ring with his laughter. 'Ay,' said I, 'you are there, are you?', and turning toward him I addressed him in language of rebuke and warning. I finally told him that if he did not cease to allure the young people into sinful amusements I would pray God either to convert him or take him out of the way, and I had no doubt that God would answer my prayer. The power of God evidently fell upon the assembly; a divine influence seemed to overpower them. The guilty man began to tremble all over like a leaf, and turned deathly pale. He finally got up and rushed out of the house. He went home, burned his fiddle, and we were thenceforth rid of his interference with our meetings and his opposition in the community."[9]

Yonge Street was first made a circuit in 1805, but the Rev. Daniel Pickett, who was in charge, does not appear to have organised a class in York. In fact the first Methodist meetings seem to have been held in 1817-18 "in the House of Assembly and sometimes in the home of Dr. Stoyles, in the Rev. Thomas Stoyles' house, and in the residence of the Dettars". Another authority gives a different origin of Methodism in York, linking it with the arrival in 1818 of James Lever, under whose influence a religious group assembled in a manner characteristic of the commencement of religious bodies all over Canada:

[9]Quoted in John Carroll: *Case and His Contemporaries*. 1867-77. Vol. I, pp. 95-6.

"James Lever and his family emigrated from England and came to York this year. He had heard Mr. Wesley preach, was a pious man, and a member of the Methodist Society. He inquired if any Methodists were in the town, and was directed to a tailor. He went to him, and they agreed to have a prayer meeting once a week. At first but few came, but the number gradually increased. Mr. Ryan thought there was encouragement enough to build a frame meeting-house; and with his usual energy determined on and accomplished the object."[10]

The church so erected in the summer of 1818 was in charge of the Rev. David Culp, first resident minister. The building was situated on the south side of King Street, just west of the present Jordan Street, a site now occupied by the head office of the Canadian Bank of Commerce. John Ross Robertson describes the chapel, typical of many others in Canada at the time, as follows:

"It was a little low commonplace-looking frame structure, originally forty feet square, but afterwards enlarged to forty by sixty feet. Its builder was Robert Petch. The little chapel had a solitary double doorway opening towards King Street. On each side of the entrance was a window, which, as compared with the size of the building, were of considerable dimensions. Three windows of similar size lighted the interior from each side. The interior was fitted up with a high square box-like pulpit at the end. Rude wooden benches were ranged along each side, leaving a narrow passage down the middle from the door to the pulpit. The entire cost of the building was about $250, and it is said that the congregation were three years in raising this amount. . . . In the first Methodist Church the custom prevailed of separating the men from the women, the former sitting on the right hand entering the building, the latter on the left."[11]

A prominent Toronto Methodist recalled that "the social

[10]The first quotation is from T. E. Champion: *The Methodist Churches of Toronto*, as reprinted in connection with the history of the King Street Methodist Church in the Toronto Centenary Number of the *New Outlook*, March 14, 1934, p. 166; while the second origin is from George F. Playter: *History of Methodism in Canada*, 1862, p. 167. "Stoyles" is more correctly "Stoyell".

[11]Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 140. For many further details see the authorities referred to in Note 10.

status of the adherents and members of the Methodist Church" was not as high in the fifties and sixties as it has been in more recent times: "In fact to become a member of that Church was to some extent to lose caste. . . . There were very few professional men connected with the body, and none who were wealthy. . . . The Methodist Church was much more strict then, attendance at theatres, dancing and card-playing being specifically prohibited in the rules of the Church. . . . The rule against 'the putting on of gold or costly apparel', although generally ignored, was observed by some by whom the wearing of flowers on their hats or bonnets or having flounces on their dresses was considered worldly". He remembered—and there was the same sincerity with varied manifestations in other denominations—that "Love Feasts, held quarterly, were generally crowded. . . . . Attendance at class-meetings was a condition of membership. There were, however, exceptions made in the case of persons of well-known Christian character, who constitutionally were unable to relate their religious experience before others."[13]

Richmond Street Church, long called "the Cathedral of Methodism", and the mother of a large number of congregations, was erected in 1822. The building itself was not, however, distinctive, being merely "a plain, common-looking brick structure with not a single external ornamentation to relieve the painful severity of its plainness. But the old-fashioned portico with its four pillars gave it a rather unique appearance, and in earlier times must have made it imposing before more impressive architecture and more palatial church structures came to crowd it out".[14] Many changes and additions were made from time to time, until eventually the building extended to Temperance Street. By the eighteen-eighties the structure showed signs of

[13]W. H. Pearson: *Recollections and Records of Toronto of Old*, 1914, pp. 248-50. The proceedings at early Methodist services were frequently very similar to the activities which one may witness in many a Negro church in the southern United States today. An excellent description of a Methodist service in Toronto in 1838—the exhortation of the minister, the moans of sinners, and the general emotional excitement—may be found in a recent novel based upon a diary, Patrick Slater's *The Yellow Briar*, 1933, pp. 90-8. Similarly, the usual events at a Roman Catholic wake are truthfully depicted, pp. 106-16.

[14]Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. IV, p. 343.

dilapidation and insufficient maintenance, though it was still in use. In 1888 the site was sold and the old building torn down, its congregation removing to a church on McCaul Street.

The ranks of Methodism were early split by controversies which resulted in the establishment of various sects, among them Episcopal, Primitive, and British Wesleyans; but the Wesleyan branch was by far the largest and most important. In the eighteen-sixties and -seventies several of these reunited with the Wesleyan body, and men like the Rev. Morley Punshon, who was in Toronto in 1868, did much to make Methodism the powerful body which entered the United Church of Canada in 1925.

The first Roman Catholic priest to visit York was the Rev. Edmund Burke in 1796, but it was many years before the denomination was organised. The transference of the capital from Niagara to York in 1798-7 removed several Roman Catholic families to the town, notably the Macdonells, and at the same time land was allotted to Father Burke for religious purposes. Again in 1806 four prominent Roman Catholics were issued a patent for the lot at the corner of George and Duke Streets, for over half a century the site of De La Salle Collegiate Institute. This land was intended to be the site of a church, but was sold in 1821 and the proceeds used to purchase a lot at the corner of Queen and Power Streets, where the first church, St. Paul's, was erected in 1823-6. Prior to the completion of the church its adherents were accustomed to meet in one another's homes. The first priest was Father Crowley, but he removed to Peterborough in 1828. The original structure was a small frame building, soon to be replaced by a substantial edifice of brick which remained in use until the eighteen-nineties.

St. Paul's was for some years the cathedral church of Roman Catholicism, but in 1842 Bishop Michael Power purchased the site of the present St. Michael's Cathedral, the land then being covered with forest. On May 8, 1845, he laid the corner-stone of the edifice, and on September 29, 1848, the cathedral was consecrated by the Bishop of Montreal. Some 4,000 people, many of whom were Protestants who had contributed towards the cost of the church,

attended the ceremony of laying the corner-stone, and it is recorded that "in a leaden box which it contains are, besides a great many other articles, fragments of a stone pier from the nave of the Cathedral of York and of the English oak roof of the same, which was built in 1340, and also a fragment of one of the earliest Roman temples in England, built before the conversion of the Britons".[14] The spire of St. Michael's was not added until 1862.

Itinerant missionaries of the Dutch Reformed Church of the United States provided the earliest contact of Presbyterianism with York and vicinity. In the first years of the nineteenth century the Rev. Robert McDowell visited the town, and in 1810 the Rev. John Beattie of the same religious body preached at York during an eighteen weeks' tour of the north shore of Lake Ontario. As early as 1818 an organised group of Presbyterians was holding meetings under the direction of the Rev. W. Jenkins, Scottish missionary from the United States. In 1821 several of them were attending service each Sunday in a small house on Hospital (Richmond) Street, the Rev. James Harris having organised a congregation in the previous autumn. Mr. Jesse Ketchum not only donated the land, but also paid £125 for the construction of a small wooden chapel. The church lands extended to Queen Street, that portion, we are told, being used "mainly for the cultivation of potatoes. It was leased for 21 years at a rental of £45 per annum, the rents to go to the minister".[15] The new church was opened on February 18, 1822, and was the only Presbyterian Church in York until St. Andrew's was erected on the southwest corner of Adelaide and Church Streets in 1830.

As in the case of the Methodists, the Presbyterian body was early divided into sects arising from differences of opinion in matters of ritual or organisation. The first congregation, on Richmond Street, for example, was unconnected with the Scottish church; but St. Andrew's on Adelaide Street, the opening service in which was held on Sunday, June 19, 1831, was affiliated with the National Church of Scotland. Prominent among the

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 311.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 215. For a detailed account of the origin of the first Knox Church, as recorded by James Harris in 1870, see the Toronto Centenary Number of the *New Outlook*, March 14, 1934, p. 167.

organisers of this congregation was Dr. William Dunlop, a picturesque pioneer whom one meets frequently in the pages of the early history of this province. St. Andrew's Church was a building "of unadorned simplicity, crude in all its appointments, with the old-fashioned, elevated, semi-circular wine-glass pulpit and sounding-board, and stiff, straight, high-backed uncomfortable pews ranged in rectilineal form, heated by large stoves in which wood was burned".[16] The 79th Regiment of Scotch Highlanders attended the opening service, and many members of this and the 71st Regiment were prominent in St. Andrew's congregation as long as they were garrisoned at York.

In 1843 occurred the "disruption" of the Established Church of Scotland, and those who seceded from that body formed the Free Church of Scotland. The main point of difference was that the latter group believed in the complete separation of church and state. The controversy spread to Canada, and 83 members withdrew from St. Andrew's Church, uniting with the earlier congregation on Richmond Street. The united body took the name Knox Church in December, 1844. On May 31, 1847, the church building was destroyed by fire; and, after worshipping for a time in St. Andrew's Church and in the Temperance Hall, the congregation occupied the new Knox Church in the early autumn of 1848. The edifice is described as "a plain, brick structure, with the old-fashioned, high, square-backed pews both on the gallery and main floor, arranged in stiff, formal manner straight across the church. The only ornamental portion of the room was the pulpit and its oak and walnut canopy—a most ornate and artistic piece of workmanship; the canopy with its pinnacles and graceful gothic lines being especially noteworthy".[17]

Characteristic of other times when people held strong convictions was the attitude of a considerable minority in Cooke's Presbyterian Church in 1880 who registered violent protest against the purchase of a reed organ. While the leader and his "music circle" were rehearsing for Sunday service, members of this group removed the offending organ from the church. The tuning-fork was good enough for the old-time Scottish, and we find in earlier days other out-

[16]Robertson, *ibid.*, p. 225. [17]*Ibid.*, p. 215.

breaks of a similar nature against "the Deil's kest o' whustles". In fact there is a Presbyterian church on the Kingston Road within the boundaries of Toronto where the tuning-fork is still retained among other traditional religious usages. In this connection it is of interest to know that St. Andrew's was the first Presbyterian church in Canada to permit instrumental music at its services. In 1852 the band of the 71st Highland Light Infantry played at the morning service, and in the following year a melodeon was purchased and a choir formed.

While there were members of the Baptist Church in York at least as early as 1820, the commencement of regular services appears to have been in 1829, when a few people were accustomed to meet in the Masonic Hall, the upper room of a Colborne Street building. The first Baptist Church was erected in 1832 on March (later Stanley, and now Lombard) Street. It was a small, square, one-storey chapel with a seating capacity of about 160. The first minister was the Rev. A. Stewart, 1829-1836, and for the four years following several laymen conducted the services in the absence of a regular incumbent. Among the first lay workers was T. F. Caldicott, later a clergyman, but at that time a member of the 29th Regiment—a school teacher who was often called "the soldier preacher". His life work —in later years he was the Rev. Dr. Caldicott—merited the eulogy that it was "the solid rock foundation upon which is built the present prosperity of the Baptist Church in Toronto".[18]

When the Baptist congregation was first organised in 1829 twenty-three persons contributed towards running expenses. From old records we learn that the minister's salary was £171; that "Elder Butler received 10 shillings for one day's sermons" on March 8, 1841; and that in July of the same year "Elder Moon was paid 10 shillings for a sermon on Election".[19] In 1844 the chapel was sold and the congregation removed to Bond Street. Jarvis Street church traces its origin to the March Street chapel, and among later congregations may be mentioned that of Walmer Road, whose church, erected in the early nineties, was long considered one of the handsomest in Canada.

[18]*Ibid.*, p. 424. [19]*Ibid.*

Artist Unknown.

YORK IN 1803

The population at that time was 456, and the taxes collected amounted to a mere £62.

John Ross Robertson Collection. Hon. G. W. Allan, after an earlier sketch.

TORONTO'S FIRST CHURCH: ST. JAMES', 1807

Reproduced by Courtesy of the Canadian Bank of Commerce. E. C. Hood.

KING AND JORDAN STREETS, 1834-1934

Erected in 1818, the Methodist meeting-house was the Theatre Royal in the first year of the city. In the city's Centennial Year the magnificent 33-storey Canadian Bank of Commerce Head Office occupies the site.

Congregationalists were never a strong religious body in Toronto. Their organisation dates from the first year of the city, 1834, when seventeen members become associated under the leadership of the Rev. Mr. Merrefield, a member of the Independent Church in England. The first services were held in the Masonic Hall on Colborne Street, where the early Baptists also held their meetings. In 1837 the use of the Methodist chapel on George Street was secured, and the congregation became known as Zion Church. In 1839 a new church was erected on the north-east corner of Bay and Newgate (Adelaide) Streets, the structure being "a neat and commodious edifice, 40 x 80 feet, capable of seating 700 persons, with a basement for the Sunday school. It was brick-faced, with plaster made of white marble dust, and cost, exclusive of the land, about $10,000".[20] This was the mother church of Congregationalism in the province.

Among the citizens of early Toronto who took an active part in religious life may be mentioned Jesse Ketchum, "the Children's Friend". At first a pew-holder in St. James' Anglican, he frequently attended the Methodist chapel after 1818, and taught in the Sunday School. His home was always open to travelling ministers, and family prayer was conducted there twice a day. His gift to the Presbyterian Church has already been mentioned. He was a strong temperance advocate, and even when eighty years of age was accustomed to give short addresses to the boys and girls in Toronto Sunday Schools. His generosity in subscribing liberally to public enterprises of a religious, educational and philanthropic nature has ensured him a distinguished place in the memories of the past.[21]

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 474. For further details see the official report dated 1872, quoted in the *New Outlook*, March 14, 1934, p. 156.

[21] Mr. Ketchum aided financially in the construction of ten churches of several denominations in Toronto. Temperance Street was opened by him through his property and named by him; and he erected Temperance Hall on its south side and presented it to the Temperance Reformation Society—it now (alas!) houses the Empire burlesque theatre. When in later years he removed to Buffalo his philanthropy was equally characteristic of his life there. A good biography of Jesse Ketchum by the late E. J. Hathaway, *Jesse Ketchum and His Times*, was published in 1929.

The commencement of the Salvation Army in 1882 is an event that can be recalled by many people still living. Long persecuted by the rough and vicious in the community, as well, it is feared, by many who were professed Christians, the "soldiers" and "officers" steadfastly persevered in good works. Preaching a simple Christianity on a military basis, the Salvationists were the pioneers in social service, and their activities among the unfortunate, while recalling something of the spirit of early Methodism, have seldom been equalled by other religious denominations.

The first meeting of the Salvation Army in Toronto was held in McMillan's Hall, corner of Yonge and Gerrard Streets, on June 11, 1882. At this time the organisation was unconnected with that founded by William Booth in England, though officers had previously been dispatched to the United States to inaugurate the Army there. On September 1st activities were rapidly accelerated when Staff Captain Charles Wass arrived in Toronto from England. Soon afterwards the marching and open-air preaching so characteristic of the Salvation Army were inaugurated, and as a result "an outcry of 'new religion' was raised, and for a time the little band of workers had unmistakably stormy weather; they were mercilessly 'guyed' and mobbed by the public on every appearance, and were looked upon with no small disfavour by the majority of religionists. In spite of this the progress here, as elsewhere, was rapid and substantial".[22]

During 1883 the "mother barracks" on Richmond Street was opened—the first in Canada. Concerning the building, its inauguration, and some of the typical activities of Salvationists, a contemporary writer says:

"The Salvation Temple just completed is quite an imposing structure with its castellated bastions, combining in appearance the castle, the barracks and the temple. The frontage is 106 feet, with a depth of 100. It is built of red brick with stone facings. The Temple is constructed in amphitheatrical form and has one gallery at the back. The ground floor rises from the centre, and a passage runs entirely round next the wall. The auditorium will hold

[22]Robertson, ibid., p. 508.

about 2,500 people, and there is not a bad seat in the house; the ventilation is perfect, as are also the acoustic properties.

"The officers conducting the services sit on the north side, with the soldiers and audience all about them. The soldiers for the most part occupy the pit, or dress circle. This latter arrangement is in accordance with the system followed by General Booth in England. The ceiling of the Temple is of varnished wood, while the walls are finished stucco work in plaster. Texts and mottoes will be used as additional ornaments. The entire height of the building, which comprises four stories, is 80 feet to the top of the tower, and 50 feet to the centre and slates. The windows are all stained glass and Scripture mottoes. A pair of iron gates close in the front entrance, over which appears in stone letters the single word 'Hallelujah'. The entire cost will be about $40,000. . . .

"The Temple was formally opened on the arrival of Marshall Ballington Booth, who came this way from Australia (on his return journey to England) to dedicate the building. The 'Council of War' continued from the 1st to the 8th of May, and was the occasion of enthusiastic demonstrations. The daily processions, accompanied by bands of music, were witnessed by immense crowds of people, and at night the vast auditorium of the Temple was crowded to excess. On Sunday, the 2nd, the formal dedication took place, and each succeeding day and evening through the week there was a change of programme, including a Hallelujah Wedding and Infant Dedication. On the night of the latter ceremony a number of officers and soldiers who had been imprisoned for noisy demonstrations appeared in prison costume and related their experience."[21]

Among the interesting smaller congregations which were early established in Toronto was one usually called the African Church, but more correctly the First Calvinistic Baptist Church. As early as July, 1827, meetings under David Pallison were being held in the rooms of No. 9 Masonic Lodge, Colborne Street. In 1834 the congregation organised, and in 1841 the first church edifice was erected on the north-east corner of Queen and Victoria Streets. While consisting mainly of Negroes, the congregation in-

[21]Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 264-6.

cluded a number of white worshippers. A writer of a century ago makes the following reference to this church:

"The coloured inhabitants of Toronto have an African church which is well attended—it is very gratifying to bear testimony to the good conduct of the negroes residing in this city. They have most of them escaped from slavery, they are well protected and kindly used, and appear to evince a sense of gratitude at their treatment, and show that they duly appreciate the inestimable blessing of freedom."[24]

The first Jewish synagogue in Toronto was on the south side of Richmond Street, a short distance east of Victoria. The interior was not greatly different from that of Christian churches, consisting of main floor and galleries. About 125 persons made up the congregation of this synagogue in 1886, and it was known by the name of Holy Blossom. In 1897 the present Holy Blossom Synagogue was erected on Bond Street at a cost of over $40,000, financial aid being contributed by a number of Christians. Writing concerning its construction, John Ross Robertson noted in 1903 that, as "the Jewish population in Toronto includes barely 150 members, the cost would have been an almost unconquerable obstacle without assistance from outside".[25] There were, perhaps, but 150 members of Holy Blossom Synagogue, but Jews numbered 1,425 in Toronto in 1891 and 3,078 in 1901. At that time the only other Jewish synagogues were three small buildings which served chiefly small groups of Austrian, Polish or Russian Jews; but during the last thirty years large numbers of immigrants have greatly increased Toronto's Jewish population.

In 1844 a religious census of the city was taken, and among the interesting facts to be derived therefrom is that Jews numbered only 18, and that those who wished themselves recorded as of no church were but 210. Many denominations no longer in existence figure largely in the following table:

[24]Thomas Rolph: *A Brief Account . . . . of the West Indies and the United States; . . . . together with a Statistical Account of Upper Canada.* 1836, p. 173. Further interesting details concerning the early history of this church may be found in the *Globe*, March 16, 1934.

[25]Robertson, *ibid.*, p. 560.

Church of England	7,921
Church of Scotland	1,860
Roman Catholics	3,678
United Secession Church	398
Independent Presbyterians	426
Congregationalists	629
British Wesleyan Methodists	1,102
Wesleyan Methodist Church in Canada	840
Episcopal Methodists	11
Primitive Methodists	283
Other Methodists	185
Lutherans	8
Jews	18
Disciples of Christ	77
Universalists	35
Apostolic Church	123
Covenanters	35
Baptists	454
Quakers	22
Millerites	55
Unitarians	4
Free Church	5
All Churches	22
Dutch Church	7
Bethelites	2
No Church	210
Total	18,410

Much of interest might be written concerning many of the small sects enumerated above. The Millerites, for example, believed that the world would be consumed by fire in February, 1843, and so certain were they that the end was near that some residents of the rural districts burned up their rail fences or gave away their farms. One Sarah Terwilligar, near Oshawa, "made for herself wings of silk, and on the night of the 14th of February jumped off the porch of her home, expecting to fly heavenward. Falling to the ground some fifteen feet, she was shaken up severely and rendered wholly unfit to attend the fires that were expected to follow the next day".[26]

[26]Thomas Conant: *Upper Canada Sketches*. 1898, p. 92.

Memories of processions of Quakers in early Toronto are recalled by Dr. Scadding:

"Still referring to processions associated in our memory with Court House Square, the recollection of another comes up, which once or twice a year used formerly to pass down King Street on a Sunday. The townspeople were familiar enough with the march of the troops of the Garrison to and from Church to the sound of military music on Sundays. But on the occasions now referred to, the public eye was drawn to a spectacle professedly of an opposite character—to the procession of the 'Children of Peace', so-called.

"These were a local off-shoot of the Society of Friends, the followers of Mr. David Willson, who had his headquarters at Sharon, in Whitchurch, where he had built a 'Temple', a large wooden structure painted white and resembling a high-piled house of cards. Periodically he deemed it proper to make a demonstration in town. His disciples and friends, dressed in their best, mounted their waggons and solemnly passed down Yonge Street, and then on through some frequented thoroughfare of York to a place previously announced, where the prophet would preach. His topic was usually 'Public Affairs: their Total Depravity'. When waxing warm in his discourse, he would sometimes, without interrupting the flow of his words, suddenly throw off his coat and suspend it on a nail or pin in the wall, waving about with freedom, during the residue of his oration, a pair of sturdy arms, arrayed, not indeed in the dainty lawn of a bishop, but in stout, well-bleached American Factory. His address was divided into sections, between which 'hymns of his own composing' were sung by a company of females dressed in white, sitting on one side, accompanied by a band of musical instruments on the other. Considerable crowds assembled on these occasions: and once a panic arose as preaching was going on in the public room of Lawrence's Hotel: the joists of the floor were heard to crack; a rush was made to the door, and several leaped out of the windows.

"The following notice of the 'Children of Peace' occurs in Patrick Swift's *Almanac for 1834*, penned, probably,

with an eye to votes in the neighbourhood of Sharon, or Hope, as the place is here called. 'This society', the *Almanac* reports, 'numbers about 280 members in Hope, east of Newmarket. They have also stated places of preaching at the Old Court House, York, on Yonge Street, and at Markham. Their principal speaker is David Willson, assisted by Murdock McLeod, Samuel Hughes, and others. Their music, vocal and instrumental, is excellent, and their preachers seek no pay from the Governor out of the taxes'."[27]

Toronto has long been called "the city of churches", as well as (somewhat sarcastically, no doubt,) "Toronto the Good". In its Centennial Year the city has no fewer than 390 churches and missions, and the comment which C. C. Taylor made in that connection in 1886 is probably almost as true today:

"In no city in the world are churches more numerous, or the congregations larger in proportion to the population, and it is safe to say that in this respect the church accommodation is larger than in any other city. Taking the average capacity to be one thousand, and the number of churches in Toronto and suburbs at one hundred and twenty, the entire population, if present at one time, could nearly be accommodated; and this cannot be said of any other city."[28]

Apart altogether from religious life the churches of early Canada made a notable contribution to education. The connection between education and religion was early emphasised by every denomination, and the importance at-

[27]Scadding, *op. cit.*, pp. 105-7.

[28]Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 281. A book appeared in 1898 suggesting in no uncertain terms that the Queen City had no right to the appellation "Toronto the Good". Those who wish to know the location of dens of immorality in the "gay nineties", to hear of the evil that characterised portions of the waterfront and the island, and to learn something of the seamy side of life generally, may find a rambling account in C. S. Clark: *Of Toronto the Good: A Social Study. The Queen City of Canada As It Is.* The work appears to have been inspired by the Social Purity Conference in Baltimore and the World Convention of the W.C.T.U. in Toronto, both held in 1897. Whether the writer was a social service investigator or obtained his evidence by personal experience, there is undoubtedly a good deal of truth in his revelations; but some of his general statements—particularly the one "women are largely fools" (which he emphasises)—might be harder to prove!

tached to the union of the two is evident from the fact that facilities for higher education were primarily provided entirely by the various religious denominations. Victoria College, established in Cobourg in 1841 by the Methodists, was the earliest in the province, and King's College, Toronto, under Anglican auspices, a close second. It may be said that in general there has been a weakening in the tie in modern times, a condition to be explained partly by the great development of state education, and partly by the undoubted diminution in intensity of religious feeling among almost all bodies, a distinct tendency towards shallowness of thought being coincident with the education of the masses, the mechanisation of our existence, and the lower moral tone resulting from the modern worship of material things.

CHAPTER XXII

THE "GLORIOUS TWELFTH"

TWELFTH of July celebrations have so long been prominent in Ontario, and in Toronto in particular, that some account of their origin, characteristics, and reception by inhabitants of opposing sympathies will be illustrative not only of Toronto's local history but also of "old times" in this province. Many people still look upon the Orange Walk as the event of the year, while the varied activities connected with the Lodges occupy a large part in the social life of a considerable portion of our population. For nearly a century the Orange Lodge has been so strong in Toronto that the greater part of almost every City Council have been those appearing on the Orange "slate"; in fact, with the exception of but a few each year, the aldermen have commonly been members of the Order. There have been occasions and events in the city's history which suggest the contrary, but the policies of Conservative and Protestant Orangeism have usually been considered, at least by those outside Toronto, to be the public opinion of the city as a whole; though in the early days of the Order it was opposed by Family Compact Tories as well as by Reformers.

It is believed that British regiments on garrison duty brought Orangeism to Canada, but it was not until 1830 that the Orange Association was organised in Brockville under the name of the Grand Lodge of British America. The first celebration in York of which we have any record occurred in 1822. The *Upper Canada Gazette* of July 18th notes that the members of the York Lodge assembled in their room and "at two o'clock marched in procession to church, accompanied by the band of the West York Militia, where the Hon. and Rev. Dr. Strachan gave an elegant and appropriate discourse on the occasion. After divine service they repaired to Mr. Phair's Tavern, where upwards of one hundred members sat down to an elegant dinner prepared for their reception. They remained until a late hour, the greatest harmony prevailing". The toast list suggests the

military nature of the proceedings of that day: while the accompanying songs included *Boyne Water*, *Rule Britannia*, *St. Patrick's Day*, *British Grenadiers*, and *The York Quick-step*, the last-named appropriately sung to the toast of the Upper Canadian Militia.[1] The celebration of 1823 was almost identical with that of the previous year, but the account suggests the additional information that the Lodge Room of the Association was in Phair's Tavern.

When in 1830 Ogle R. Gowan organised the Grand Lodge of British America the first steps were taken to establish a branch in York, and in 1831 the Nassau Lodge, No. 4, was formed. By 1833 York County had about 1,000 Orangemen, but the annual processions appear to have been objectionable to many people; consequently we find that in 1834 the York Association decided to replace the parade by a dinner. The *Patriot* of July the 15th commends the Orangemen for their good intentions in making "this gratifying concession to public opinion". Only about thirty members attended the dinner in the Ontario House, but the lack of numbers was no impediment to their enthusiasm, for seventeen toasts were proposed, including many of that partisan nature which was foreign to the original Orange celebrations but had come to be characteristic of the lodge. The *Patriot* notes that "in the morning some dozen or fifteen silly bodies attempted to pick up a procession, in defiance of the lodge, but as nobody noticed them they began to suspect how foolish they looked, and dropped off one by one till all vanished, nobody knew how or where".[2]

The general attitude of the Family Compact towards Orangeism was that of aristocratic contempt, which was frequently expressed in language that could not be mistaken. In 1835, for example, the *Patriot* noted that "some of the lower orders" walked in procession, with resulting riots in various parts of the city. Consquently "the Police Court has been engaged the whole of the past week in trying cases of assault, riot, etc., growing out of the disturbances".

In June, 1839, Lieutenant-Governor Sir George Arthur addressed a letter to the mayor and aldermen of Toronto

[1] *Upper Canada Gazette*, July 18, 1822.
[2] The *Patriot*, July 15, 1834.

instructing them to use their influence to prevent an Orange procession on July 12th. Mayor Powell replied upholding the celebration of the day, and tendering his resignation from the office of justice of the peace and captain of the militia if there was to be any interference. The chief result of the Lieutenant-Governor's action appears to have been an unusually large procession.

There was for many years a feeling of hatred between the members of the Orange Order and the Reform Party. This was intensified in 1843 when the Baldwin-Lafontaine Ministry introduced a measure suppressing all secret societies other than the Freemasons. The bill, which passed the Assembly easily, was reserved by the Governor and finally disallowed by the British Government, though at that time the Orange Order was suspected in Britain and no army officer was permitted to belong to it.

Meanwhile an Orange demonstration was organised in Toronto to show the supporters of the bill how their proposed legislation was appreciated. The *Examiner*, organ of the Reformers, carried the following account of the disturbance:

"Last night between eleven and twelve o'clock a large body of Orangemen was permitted by the city authorities to disturb the public peace with hideous yells and cries of 'Down with popery', as they followed a cart in which was erected a gallows; from it hung two effigies on which they had inscribed 'Baldwin and Hincks, the traitors', and 'No surrender'. The 'heroes' will, however, be compelled to surrender, and Mr. Baldwin and Mr. Hincks would indeed be traitors to their long-expressed principles did they allow the present session to pass over without bringing forward the Act for the suppression of secret societies, as without that measure it is impossible to obtain security for life and property.

"P.S. The effigies were burned amid the most indecent ribaldry immediately in front of the Hon. W. W. Baldwin's residence. It is well known that the venerable Doctor's health has been for some time in a very precarious state, which renders the outrage doubly atrocious. Our citizens may well rejoice at the opportunity which will soon be afforded them of displacing the present violent partisan

city magistrates by the nomination of men possessing character, property and intelligence",[3]

In 1843 the Party Processions Act was passed in Kingston, prohibiting such demonstrations as Orange parades. The Act was in general unpopular, and, as is usually the result of attempts at suppression, it succeeded only in increasing the numbers of Orangemen, and adding vigour to the organisation. While many political processions were not prevented, there was frequently interference with Orange parades, though juries usually refused to convict persons arrested under these circumstances. Among those who urged the repeal of the law in 1851 was William Lyon Mackenzie, though he had no reason to be particularly fond of the Orange Order. By a vote of 38 to 16 the Act was removed from the statute books, and a law which had been generally disobeyed came to an end. The celebration of 1850 will serve as an example of the lack of respect for the existing law. The *Patriot* of July 13th describes as follows the events of the day:

"According to custom, the approach of this anniversary was hailed by the discharge of firearms of all kinds and sizes, which continued during nearly the whole of Thursday night, a mode of celebrating holidays in Canada which we would be glad to see discontinued. Yesterday morning proved to be fine, and at an early hour our streets were quite enlivened by the number of farmers with their wives, daughters and sisters, bedecked with orange and blue ribbons, who had come in to join the celebration of the day. Seven lodges met soon after midday and formed in procession to the number of from four to five hundred with their banners and badges. A more respectable body of men we have seldom seen.

"After walking through the principal streets they directed their course up Yonge Street and by College Avenue to the grounds of Caer Howell, where they were addressed by the Deputy Grand Master, ■. Dempsey, Esq., on the duties and privileges of Orangemen. The address, we are told, was a very excellent one. The lodges then left the grounds, to meet at their several lodge-rooms in the evening, where they dined together and doubtless concluded the

[3]The *Examiner*, November 6, 1843.

day very much to their own satisfaction. We rejoice to add that everything passed off well, and that at a late hour last night nothing had occurred at all calculated to disturb the general harmony—a fact which is highly creditable to our good city."[4]

In 1852, the year following the repeal of the law against political processions, a parade in which several thousand participated was held in Toronto. Steamboats brought many people from Hamilton, St. Catharines and other towns to join their brethren in Toronto. The procession which formed in front of the Parliament Buildings, near the corner of Front and Simcoe, was nearly two miles long, and was accompanied "by several bands of music, a still greater number of Orange flags, Orange dresses and other insignia. The tunes common to the occasion were played by the bands, and crackers were fired off". The parade ended at the Cricket Grounds, or Caer Howell, located a short distance south of College Street and just west of University Avenue, where a cold luncheon was served to about 2,000 people. After hearing a number of speeches the rural Orangemen made their way homeward, while those of the city dined at their respective lodge-rooms in the various hotels. The *British Colonist* notes that the police were prepared for disturbances, but none took place. This was no doubt due, to a considerable extent at least, to the advice issued from the pulpit of St. Michael's Cathedral urging all Roman Catholics not to interfere in any way with the activities of the Orangemen.

A description of the units in the parade of 1852 will serve as an example of what has been more or less characteristic of the processions from that day to the present:

The Chief Marshall, mounted on a steed, with a scarlet gown, cap and plume.

A brass band.

A band of drums and fifes.

The Union Jack.

Tyler, with drawn sword.

The Grand Master of York County, East and West.

The District of Toronto.

The Grand Tyler, with drawn sword.

[4]The *Patriot*, July 13, 1850.

The Grand Flag.

The Grand Officers.

Rural and visiting lodges, led by the men of Slabtown and St. Catharines.

The City Lodges, led by No. 4.

At the sides of the procession were eight marshalls mounted on grey chargers and dressed in scarlet; these men carried batons and kept the crowd from the parade. Among the bands which were placed at intervals in the procession were those of Toronto, Cooksville, Ancaster, Streetsville, Hamilton and St. Catharines; while 116 standards, flags and banners were carried, in addition to a large number displayed from shop windows along the route of march. Remarkable to relate, the press notes that "neither an angry look nor an angry word, or a drunken and disorderly person, was seen or heard to dishonour the day or to mar its enjoyment".[5]

In 1853 Mayor Bowes arranged for the presence of troops on the 12th of July because "fearful reports were in circulation about the railroad labourers coming into the city to prevent the Orange procession". As early as 4 a.m. the reports of firearms were heard in various parts of Toronto, but they were merely evidence of "warming-up" on the part of the Orangemen. Otherwise the day passed off as usual, except that one newspaper referred to the celebrants as "individuals who by occupation were little more than labourers working for their daily bread", while an alderman described them as "a set of loafers".

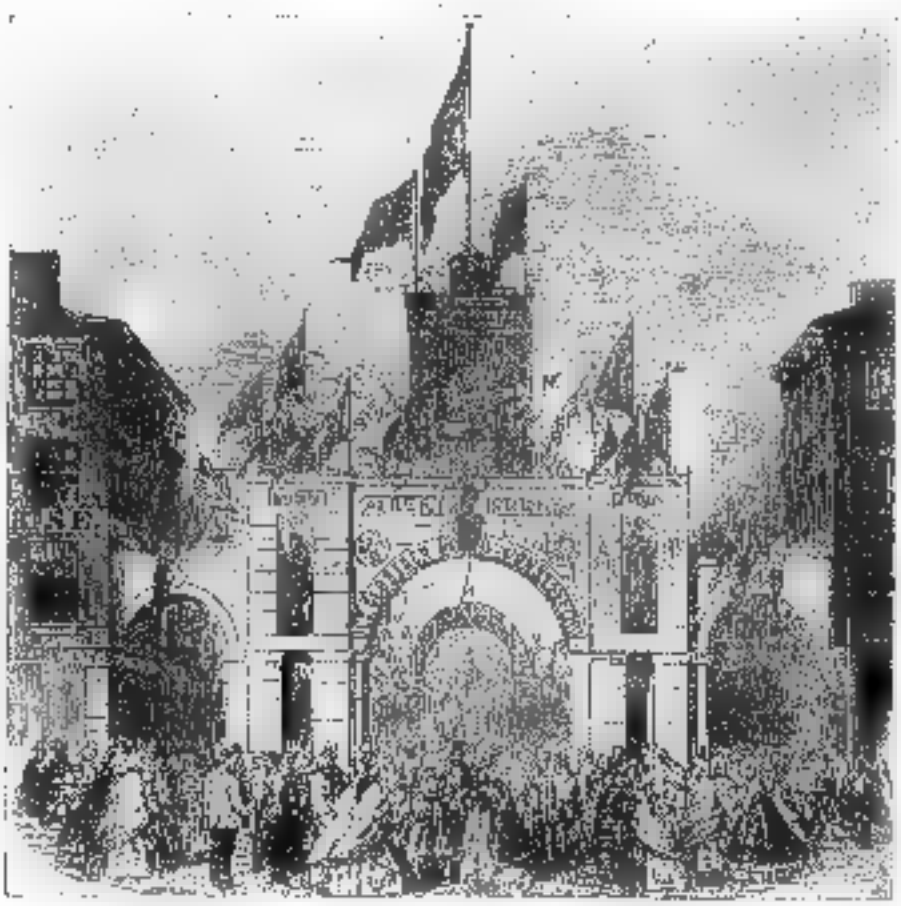
Little of note occurred during the next few years. In 1857 there was "the largest and most splendidly arranged procession we have witnessed in Toronto during thirty-six years". After attending church and parading the streets the lodges dined in St. Lawrence Hall, at that time the centre of Toronto's social life. The *Examiner* noted that "there is one feature in the processions of the 17th of March and the 12th of July which shows the increasing good sense of both Catholic and Protestant in Toronto—each party plays its own tunes, displays its own badges, marches where

[5]Many interesting details concerning the history of the Orange Order may be found in John Ross Robertson's *Landmarks of Toronto*, Vol. VI, pp. 137-204. Quotations in this chapter not otherwise credited are from this record.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

THE ENNISKILLEN ARMS

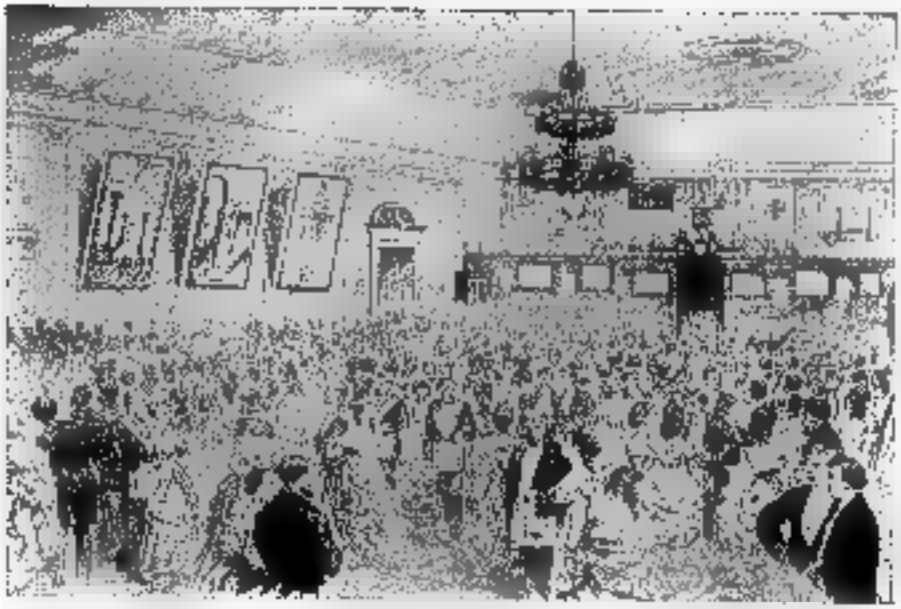
This tavern, located on the north side of Queen Street between University and Simcoe, was long popular among Orangemen, W. C. Mack, its proprietor, being a prominent member of the Order.



Illustrated London News.

THE ORANGEMEN'S ARCH, KING AND CHURCH STREETS, 1860

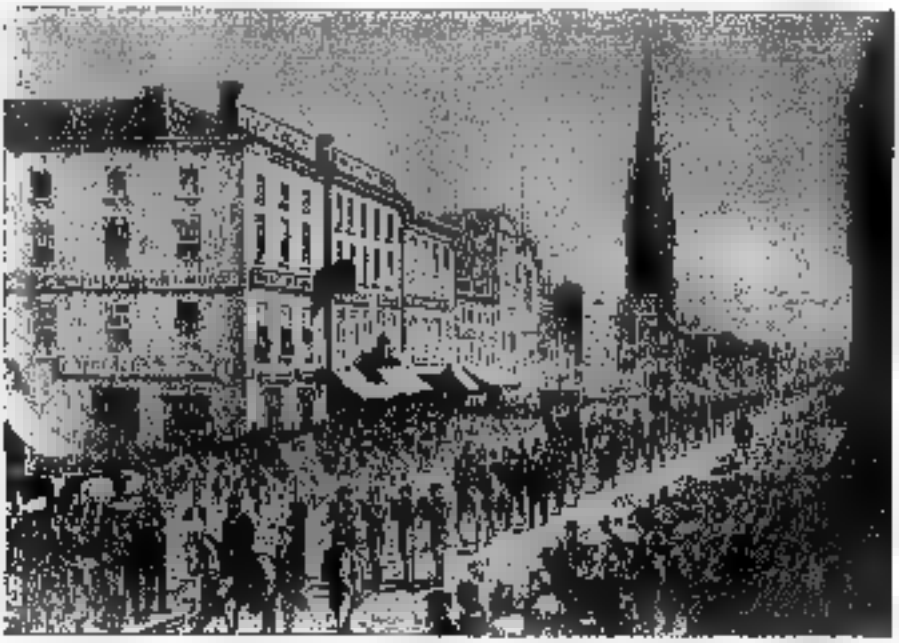
The arch was located on King Street at Church, but the Prince's party avoided it by continuing down Church to Wellington Street.



Canadian Illustrated News. F. M. Bell Smith.

MASONIC CONVERSAZIONE, FEBRUARY 20, 1873

For this event Professor Davis' Band supplied the music, and the party broke up at 3 a.m. The Masonic Hall was the scene of the entertainment, which resembled what was later called a promenade.



Canadian Illustrated News.

THE ORANGE WALK, 1874

Early Orange Parades not infrequently resulted in riots. The procession is here shown on King Street East, with the beautiful spire of St. James' Cathedral in the background.

it thinks fit, says what it likes, none molesting it, and injuring no one".[4]

In 1858 there occurred one of those "bloody battles" which until modern times often resulted from gatherings of a partisan nature—in many rural localities, in fact, from assemblies of any kind. The *Leader* describes the riot:

"As the procession was wending its way along Queen Street, near William Street, a row occurred which at one time threatened to end more seriously than it did. Through some means a quarrel was stirred up between two parties, one of whom was an Orangeman and the other a Roman Catholic. . . . Shots were freely fired, but, though the contents of the pistols took effect in some instances, they did not result fatally. One man named James Brown, gardener to the Mayor, was shot in the back. Another man named King, of the opposite party, was also wounded by a ball which passed through his cheek, carrying away some of his teeth and making a very ugly wound. Though in a very faint state for some time after being picked up, little fears of a fatal result are to be apprehended.

"During the heat of the row a large body of police were called out, with guns loaded ready for action. They were carried off in cabs post-haste to St. Patrick's Market. On arrival there they succeeded, with the help of the Mayor, in dispersing the crowd, and quietness was soon restored. The policemen, however, remained about the place for a considerable time, not deeming it desirable to leave, as knots of men might here and there be seen conversing—not in the most cool manner possible, nor in the most select choice of expression.

"There was another row about Victoria Street, but this was of a more trifling nature, though it is to be regretted that pistols were here also made use of. One man had his hand slightly scarred by the graze of a bullet; and another had the flesh of his left thigh somewhat ruffled by the abrasion of a ball. As is generally the case when pistols are used in such disturbances, a cry was immediately set on foot that two men were killed—shot dead—mortally wounded—or something of that description of a more or less shocking nature. The city was somewhat agog as the

[4]The *Examiner*, July 16, 1857.

rumour spread, and people hastened to the scene of the disaster; but their fears were allayed when they learned that nothing more serious than what we have related alone had occurred.

"Several Lodges dined together in the evening and engaged themselves in song and glee till a late hour at night,—some to an early hour in the morning."

Reminiscent of other times is the same newspaper's report that "the juveniles, as usual, amused themselves by setting off squibbs and firecrackers, sometimes to the no little inconvenience of ladies who paraded the streets with a rather extended display of crinoline".[7]

The visit of the Prince of Wales (later Edward VII) to Canada in 1860 provided an unintentional impetus to Orangeism. The Prince's private secretary, the Duke of Newcastle, was a Roman Catholic, and through his influence the official party frowned upon and avoided all celebrations where Orange or other partisan demonstrations were prominent. Some caustic references were made to this at several subsequent 12th of July celebrations, and the Hon. J. H. Cameron was sent to England to present to the Queen the remonstrances of Canadian Orangemen. The annual "walks" of 1862 and 1863 were more enthusiastically supported than ever before, the parade of the latter year being described as "by far the largest Orange turnout that has ever been witnessed in Canada". Queen's Park was the rendezvous, and by eleven in the morning thousands were on hand to enjoy the "temperance beverages" which enterprising saloon-keepers dispensed from tents hastily erected for the purpose. Brother Robert Wigmore, seven-foot giant from Pickering, officiated as Grand Tyler, and 52 visiting lodges joined Toronto Orangemen in a procession led by Bonnhart's brass band of St. Catharines. Almost every lodge brought some sort of music to enhance the pleasure of the day, and the parade proceeded by Yonge and Queen Streets to the Don Bridge, and thence by King, York and Queen Streets to the Crystal Palace, where addresses and refreshments catered, respectively, to the mind and the body.

Visits to other towns became more common in the sixties,

[7]The *Weekly Leader*, July 14, 1858.

Hamilton, Barrie and St. Catharines being the locale of the Orange parade in 1864, 1867 and 1869. In later years various places of assembly were used for the Twelfth of July celebrations held in Toronto. In 1870 a vacant lot at the south-west corner of Adelaide and Toronto Streets served the purpose; while in 1871 the old "Fair Green" east of Gooderham's Mill was the location, in 1872 Clarence Square and Wellington Street, in 1873 the corner of Beech and Parliament Streets, in 1874 the ground "used by circus companies at Grenville Street and Yonge Street Avenue", and in 1876 "Beaty's Field", at the corner of Parliament and Gerrard Streets. The year 1877 was notable because of the riots in Montreal on the twelfth of July, resulting in the shooting of Thomas Lett Hackett. At subsequent Toronto celebrations at the Exhibition Grounds or at Queen's Park numerous references were made to conditions in Montreal, and protests were recorded.

The parades of later years did not differ greatly from those which preceded them, for the celebrations do not admit of much variation except in their accompaniments. The 1889 "Walk" was record-breaking in extent, a fact due largely to the discussion aroused among Protestants by the Jesuits' Estates controversy. Among the speakers was Ogle R. Gowan, M.P.P., founder of the Canadian Orange Association, the Gowan family being from the start among the most prominent members of the organisation. It was rumoured on this occasion that Orangemen had planned to attack St. Michael's Cathedral, but although a few Roman Catholics were on guard all night, no disturbance occurred. After the celebration the various lodges dined in their respective rooms, or in one or another of the numerous hotels and taverns which then dotted Toronto, many of which were operated by Orangemen. In 1895 the Manitoba school question was agitating the Orange lodges, and occupied much of the time devoted to addresses and resolutions.

In the days of the horse railway it could hardly be expected that the public transportation services could be kept on schedule in streets through which the parade passed, nor does it appear that any attempt was made to do so. But when electric cars were inaugurated in 1892 the attitude of the Toronto Railway Company underwent a change, and

there were occasional attempts to operate cars from time to time as the parade progressed. In 1894, for example, a motorman continued to run his car from Walton to Elm Street on Yonge, in spite of the fact that the procession was in progress and that spectators objected to any interference with their view. Finally an onlooker climbed on to the car and persuaded the motorman in no gentle manner that it would be to his advantage to stop.

It was in 1907, however, that the major battle over the comparative rights of processions and trolley cars took place. R. J. Fleming, Manager of the Railway Company, insisted upon the right of the general public to uninterrupted transport facilities, particularly at the noon hour at Yonge and Queen Streets. Negotiations between the Company and the lodges appeared to have been successfully concluded, for the usual and comfortable rendezvous—Queen's Park—was abandoned, and the corners of Jarvis and Gerrard and Jarvis and Wilton were substituted. The old route of march down Yonge and west on Queen was changed to Jarvis Street, and westward by Adelaide, Bay, King and Dufferin to the Exhibition Grounds. It was arranged that cars were to run through gaps in the procession, while representatives of the Company and of the lodges were to be stationed at the chief intersections to see that the agreement was carried out. But a circular was issued by the Company notifying motormen that no parade should be allowed to interfere with the time schedule of the cars.

This unexpected development aroused the hostility of Orangemen, as well as that of a considerable body of other citizens, and the arrest of a few disturbers at the intersection of Queen and Jarvis Streets succeeded only in precipitating further trouble elsewhere. The efforts of officials of the Company, of police, prominent Orangemen, and all others, were of little avail in providing a car service along the route of march, and the parade proceeded to its destination without any appreciable interruption. A police automobile opened the way for some west-bound cars, until at Strachan Avenue a bystander jabbed a jack-knife into one of the tires. At the King Street subway bricks and stones were scattered across the tracks by the crowd, and only after a stiff fight did the police clear the street. Finally

it became impossible to make way for any street cars, and manager Fleming ordered all power shut off, so that for an hour and a half the city was without any service. The confusion resulting from this condition need not be described; but the denunciation which the press and public poured upon the Company, the Orangemen, the police, and everyone in any way concerned, had at least a result, for in all subsequent processions of any kind the control of both traffic and parade was vested in the police exclusively, with satisfaction to all concerned.

In general it may be said that religious antagonism between certain adherents of the Roman Catholic and Protestant bodies characterised most occasions upon which they came in contact. In the eighteen-eighties—and later—a Roman Catholic moonlight excursion almost invariably drew to the harbour a group of their enemies, the Orangemen, and the return of the ship was frequently greeted with showers of stones; and, it is hardly necessary to add, the Roman Catholics did not fail to return the compliment when the occasion offered. So much damage was done to excursion ships by these raids that it became difficult to charter a boat, and outings of another nature had sometimes to be substituted.

Many people love uniforms, insignia, titles and public prominence, and all the world enjoys a procession. The Orangemen's Walk certainly caters to the public fancy in these respects, and, whatever may be one's opinion concerning parties, lodges, and other sectional organisations, certainly no one is injured by their outward manifestations if they interfere with the rights of citizens no more seriously than does the "Glorious Twelfth".

CHAPTER XXIII

Memories of Old St. Lawrence Hall

St. Lawrence Hall, for over twenty years the centre of Toronto's social life, was erected in 1850-51 to provide a place of assembly. The great fire of 1849 had destroyed most of the public buildings on King Street, and some such hall was a prime necessity in a growing city. The central portion of the building was the property of the corporation, while the wings were privately owned. The hall itself had a capacity of less than 1,000 persons, but many more were frequently crowded into it. A contemporary description notes that "the principal object of the talented designer of this edifice, W. Thomas, Esq., was to ensure its complete usefulness as well as ornamentality; for, while the hall is used for public purposes, in its rear runs the St. Lawrence Market, a range of arcade 200 feet in length by 39 feet in breadth, with neat stores on each side, at the end of which is another frontage, south, consisting of general stores".

The front of the hall proper "is wholly of cut stone, of the Roman Corinthian order, from the example of Jupiter Stator, the centre being tetrastyle portico of three-quarter columns, with sculptured tympanum of the pediment, surmounted with a rich attic. The carved work throughout the enrichments is of a rich and varied character. . . . The finishing of the interior is in good style, with dado and rich cornice; the ceiling is boldly covered with rich panelled centre and emblematical enrichments".[1] The building was crowned by a cupola forming a circular open temple of the Corinthian order, and therein was a large alarm bell of 2,130 pounds. The total cost of the structure was slightly over $28,000.

[1]See [G. P. Ure]: *The Handbook of Toronto*. 1858. pp. 238-40, for an interesting description of St. Lawrence Hall. Among other items of information we learn that "the ceiling of this hall has recently been decorated with some of the most grotesque-looking figures perhaps ever witnessed,—yet when the large and magnificent chandelier is lighted up, and when the room is filled by such an assembly as that which graced Jenny Lind's concerts, it has a brilliant and most imposing effect".

There was no public ceremony to inaugurate this notable hall. In fact it was first used some months prior to its completion, when, on August 8, 1850, some 200 prominent citizens of Buffalo visited Toronto by invitation of the City Council. After an elaborate procession and public reception the visitors were entertained at dinner in the North American Hotel, after which a Grand Ball was held in the partially completed St. Lawrence Hall, beautifully decorated for the occasion. At midnight the party proceeded by way of a canvas passage to the old City Hall and, after a banquet there, the dance was resumed with enthusiasm. St. Lawrence Hall had, therefore, a notable inauguration.[3]

The first use of the hall after its completion was on April 1, 1851. On the first three evenings were held public lectures on the subject of slavery, George Thompson, M.P., of England, speaking on April 1st, and Frederick Douglas, the noted negro abolitionist, on April 2nd and 3rd. Henceforth the attractions at St. Lawrence Hall were as varied as they were numerous: soirées, balls, promenades and levees; concerts, operas, musicales and festivals; lectures, panoramas, cycloramas and tableaux; meetings of Firemen, Orangemen, Oddfellows, Mechanics, and the National Societies; dinners, breakfasts and suppers; bazaars, exhibitions and presentations; election meetings, protest assemblages and charitable gatherings; and performances of itinerant magicians, minstrels, midgets and monstrosities. Here was surely enough variety to appeal to the learned savant, the socially prominent, the tired business man,—in fact to the great mass of citizens who compose a city.

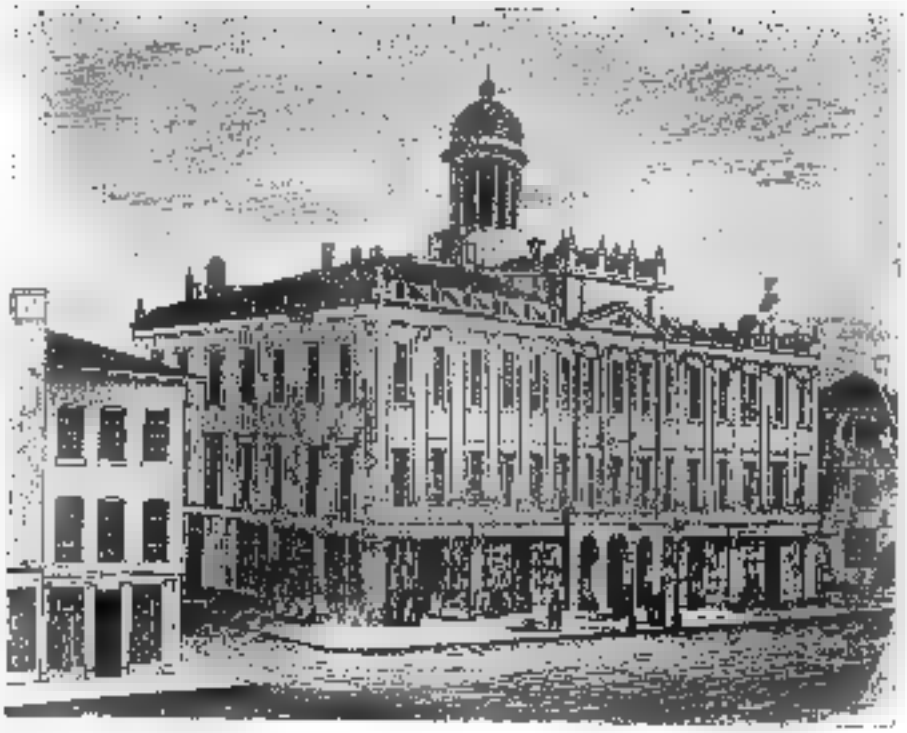
Many of the events are indicative of other times and other conditions. The National Societies of St. George, St. Andrew and St. Patrick were at the height of their popularity in a day when much of the country was still in the midst of conditions of pioneer life, and when so many held treasured memories of the Old Land. The Mechanics' Institute was then in a flourishing condition, and furnished educational and recreational facilities now provided by schools, libraries and sporting clubs. The firemen's organ-

[3]The historical information in this chapter is based almost entirely upon innumerable contemporary descriptions appearing in the press, the individual notation of which would not only be difficult but of little value.

lsations recall a time when fire-fighting was a public duty—not merely a department of civic government; while many of the popular entertainments were of a type which belongs to the past. But the differences are, after all, superficial, and the social life which flourished eighty years ago was basically the same as it is today.

The lectures given from time to time at St. Lawrence Hall were in many instances arranged in courses under the auspices of the Toronto Mechanics' Institute; a few were similarly conducted by the Ontario Literary Society. Many of the speakers were professors at the University. The subjects of the discourses included "The Education of Children", "Electro-Biology", "Insects, their Structure and Functions", "Sabbath Observance", "The Ancient Hebrews as Promoters of the Arts and Sciences", "Spiritualism", "Homeopathy", and "Phrenology". A lecture upon "The Church of Rome, Fallible or Infallible" recalls a dispute which long raged bitterly in the field of controversial theology. In July, 1855, a noted statesman, Thomas D'Arcy McGee, gave two lectures—"Ireland as I found it in 1855", and "Emigration as a Source of National Wealth". A considerable number of lecturers spoke upon "Slavery", a topic which was in the forefront owing to controversy which eventually led to the American Civil War. Great enthusiasm was aroused, for example, by Elihu Burritt, "the learned blacksmith who could be silent in nineteen different languages", whose remarks upon "A Plan of Brotherly Copartnership of the North and South for the Peaceable Extinction of Slavery" were greeted with warm applause. Another seasonable subject was "Woman and her Work", Mrs. Lucy Stone lecturing twice in March, 1855, upon "Women's Rights".

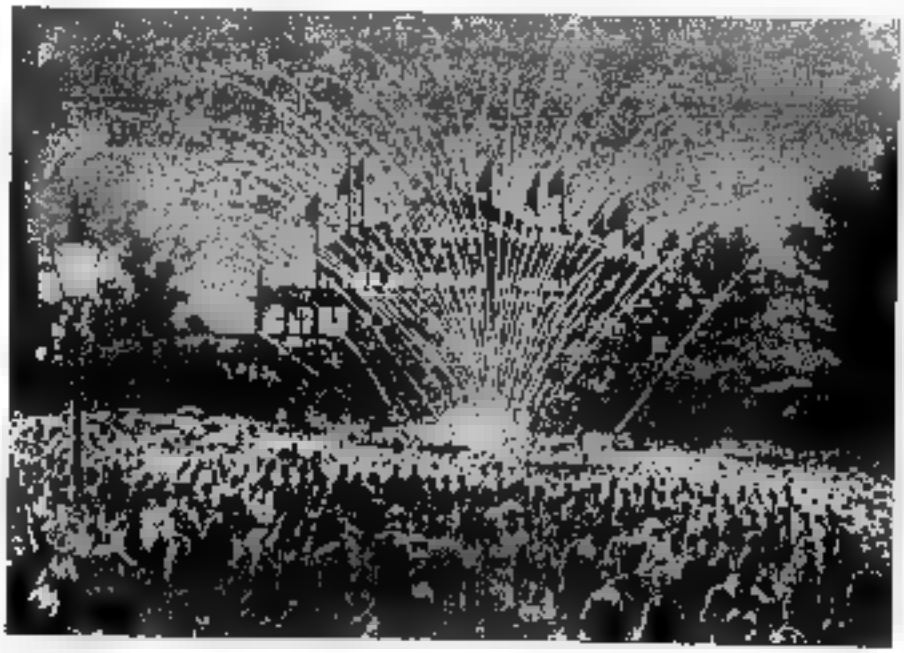
A popular adaptation of the lecture was the panorama or cyclorama, a large number of which were given in St. Lawrence Hall. Many of them were what would now be called travelogues, and were descriptive of Ireland, the Holy Land, the Great Lakes, the Thames, and kindred subjects; while others portrayed literary masterpieces such as *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and *The Pilgrim's Progress*, the latter holding the interest of excellent audiences for three weeks in the autumn of 1857. Reminiscent of the days of



Canadian Illustrated News.

ST. LAWRENCE HALL IN 1863

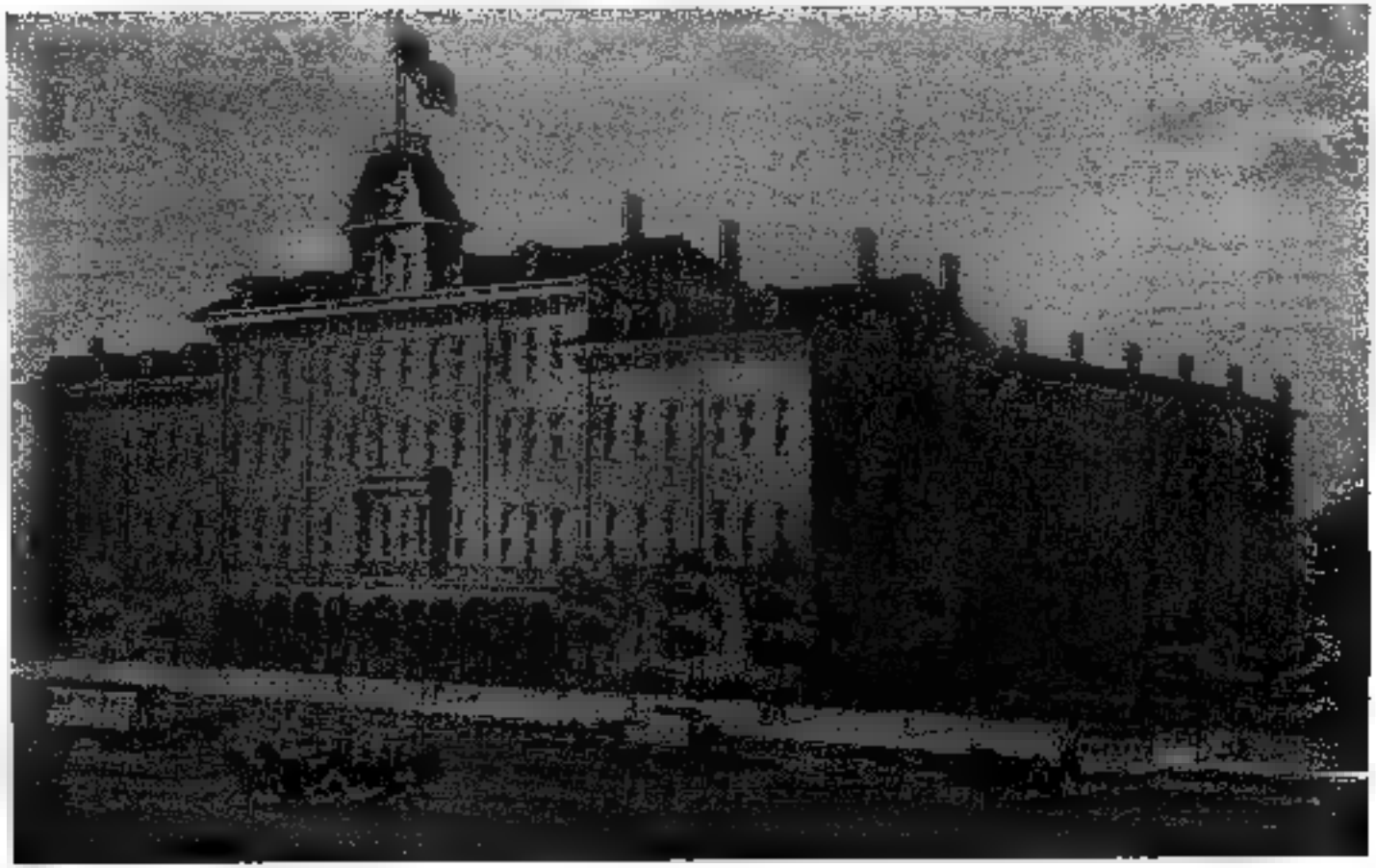
This notable building was erected in 1850.



Canadian Illustrated News.

FIREWORKS IN THE HORTICULTURAL (ALLAN) GARDENS, CIVIC HOLIDAY, 1881

The Horticultural Pavilion was one of the buildings which succeeded St. Lawrence Hall as a centre of social life.



Timperlake's *Illustrated Toronto.*

THE QUEEN'S HOTEL IN THE SEVENTIES

The "Old Queen's" was Toronto's best for nearly half a century

the Indian Mutiny and the Crimean War are the numerous panoramic lectures which were delivered upon these subjects; while a similar representation of the American Civil War was shown for nearly three weeks in 1862. "King Solomon's Temple" was the subject of an entertainment in 1864, and other pictorial representations included La Prince's Panopticon Exhibition, Dr. Kane's Arctic Voyages, Brewer's Grand Mirror Panorama, P. T. Barnum's Crystal Palace Illustrated, and Howarth and Rathwell's Tableaux of the Holy Land.

Public meetings were frequently held in St. Lawrence Hall. On July 8, 1851, the Anti-Clergy Reserve Association met there under the presidency of the Hon. Adam Fergusson, founder of the Scottish settlement at Fergus. When the meeting was called to order it was found that plenty of defenders of Reserves were in attendance, and consequently the motion denouncing the system and demanding its immediate abolition met with great opposition. Finally an amendment carried, and the assemblage broke up in great confusion. Another political meeting upon a controversial subject which agitated the people of that day was held in March, 1852. Under the presidency of the Mayor the assembly was called to order to protest against the recent adoption of Free Trade as an English fiscal policy. Many of those present were of the opposite opinion, however, and the speakers aroused a warm debate. Among those who spoke were the Hon. William Cayley, George P. Ridout, M.P.P., Ogle R. Gowan and William Henry Boulton.

A meeting of a more local nature occurred on November 13, 1854. Mayor G. W. Allan presided, and the object was "to adopt means to set a limit to our enormous taxation, and especially in view of the Esplanade expenditure". The waterfront development of that day was rendered more necessary owing to the construction of the Grand Trunk Railway; and though it was a small affair in comparison with modern improvements, yet a considerable expenditure was essential to buy properties and control harbour facilities which might otherwise have fallen under the control of the Railway.

On January 8, 1855, a capacity audience assembled to devise means to raise funds in aid of the widows and

orphans of those who had given their lives during the Eastern (Crimean) War, and to assist the wounded and disabled. The Hon. J. H. Cameron acted as chairman, almost all of the notable public men of Toronto and vicinity were in attendance, and ten of them addressed the assemblage. Another meeting had as its purpose the raising of a memorial to the Duke of Wellington, but nothing was ever done. In May, 1855, the fourth anniversary meeting of the Anti-Slavery Society of Canada was held in the Hall, and, as usual, was largely attended. At meetings of societies of this nature arrangements were frequently made to hold bazaars, musicales and concerts to further the aims of the benevolent persons who composed their membership.

While ballroom dancing has always been a popular amusement there were many people eighty years ago who strenuously objected to it; consequently balls were frequently replaced by soirées, promenades and—later—conversaziones. Some of these entertainments combined dancing with more staid amusements, while on other occasions the dance was entirely supplanted. On January 8, 1852, a "promenade concert" was held in aid of negro fugitive slaves from the United States. The affair appears to have been in charge of women, among whom Mrs. Arnold, Mrs. Henning and Miss Macaulay were most prominent. The press reported that "the Rev. S. R. Ward (coloured) delivered during the evening an address suitable to the occasion". The general course of the remainder of the evening may be gauged from the same account, which states that "coffee and other refreshments were served from 7 to 8 o'clock in the supper room, and during this time the splendid band of the 71st Regiment played in the hall". In May, 1856, Mrs. John Beverley Robinson, long well-known in the musical life of Toronto, gave a "soirée musicale" in St. Lawrence Hall in aid of the City Industrial Farm, and the affair was a great success.

Most balls and soirées were, however, held under the auspices of the National Societies, the Fire Companies, the Regiments, or the chief lodges—Orangemen, Masons and Oddfellows. On February 22, 1856, a "Grand Orange Soirée" was given with the object of raising funds to provide a new Orange Hall and library in Toronto. A large

number were present, and the Toronto *Leader* notes that, "taking all things into consideration, the meeting was the best of the kind ever held in the St. Lawrence Hall". Another interesting soirée was that which took place on December 12, 1854, to commemorate the first anniversary of the Young Men's Christian Association; while on December 31, 1857, the Loyal Orange Cadet Lodge, No. 7, crowded the Hall to dance the Old Year out and the New Year in. Among the firemen's organisations which held balls in the Hall were the Rescue, Deluge, Hook-and-Ladder, and Hose Companies.

Among the more notable balls may be mentioned that given by the citizens on September 24, 1862, in honour of the Governor-General, Lord Monck, and Lady Monck. The committee in charge consisted of the Hon. J. B. Robinson, M.P.P., the Hon. John Ross, John Crawford, M.P.P., George Michie, Alderman J. E. Smith, John Bell, William Henderson, Sheriff Jarvis, John Cameron, J. ■. Merrick, Lewis Moffatt and George Anthony Barber. Included in the Governor-General's party were his two daughters and Earl Mulgrave and his daughter, Lady Laura Phipps. Major-General Napier, Major Dillon, and most of the officers of the Garrison were present, while other prominent guests were the Hon. John Sandfield Macdonald and T. D'Arcy McGee. Over 350 people were in attendance, and the press reported that "the ball will long be remembered in Toronto as among the best the city has ever seen".

Another celebrated ball was held on the evening of October 15, 1851, in honour of the commencement of the construction of the Northern Railway. Her Excellency the Countess of Elgin, wife of the Governor-General, cut the first sod earlier in the day, and guests to the number of four hundred were present at the ball, among them the Hon. Francis Hincks and the Hon. John Ross.

Toronto was once accustomed to have a Mayor's Ball. In 1857 Mayor Hutchinson, assisted by the patronesses—Mrs. J. B. Robinson, Mrs. Crooks and Mrs. Philpotts (for the Mayor was a bachelor), provided an evening's dancing that was an immense success. He was complimented in the press by the comment: "We speak but the universal opinion

when we say that the Mayor's ball was the most successful ever given in Toronto."

The term "festival" was somewhat loosely used to denote a varied entertainment which generally included supper and dancing. In 1853, for example, a "festival ball" was held on May 24th to commemorate the Queen's Birthday. This celebration was under the patronage of the National Societies of St. Patrick, St. Andrew and St. George, and the sun was streaming through the windows of the hall before the dance concluded.

The Early Closing Association, consisting of most of the merchants of the city, held a festival on January 11, 1853. The Mayor acted as chairman, and five men delivered addresses, after which those in attendance were no doubt well able to appreciate the supper and the dance which concluded the entertainment. Another festival of a similar nature was that held on January 29, 1852, when the Toronto and St. Lawrence Division of the Sons of Temperance congregated in large numbers in St. Lawrence Hall; while a militia festival under the presidency of Colonel, the Baron de Rottenburg was well attended on December 3, 1857, and added a considerable amount to the funds of the Military Asylum at Quebec. On January 25, 1859, a festival consisting of a supper and ball was given by the Burns Club to celebrate the centennial of Robert Burns.

Among the public dinners held in St. Lawrence Hall one of the most important was that given by the Reformers on February 23, 1852, in honour of the Hon. Malcolm Cameron. Over 150 prominent members of the party attended, and eight columns of newspaper space were devoted to the proceedings. Mr. Charles Lindsey, son-in-law and biographer of William Lyon Mackenzie, was among those present. A similar complimentary banquet was tendered to Thomas D'Arcy McGee, M.P.P., in 1859. Complimentary breakfasts were not unusual at that time, one being given to the Rev. Mr. Duff, well-known missionary, on April 12, 1854; a more famous missionary, the Rev. Joseph Evans, D.D., was similarly honoured on December 17, 1858, just prior to the journey of Evans and his colleagues to the wilds of British Columbia, then under Hudson's Bay Company control.

Upon some occasions presentations were made at these

complimentary banquets. An event of considerable interest occurred on October 31, 1856, when the corporation of the city assembled at St. Lawrence Hall to do honour to Captain and Brevet-Major Frederick Wells, 1st Royal Regiment of Foot, who had just returned from the Crimea with a very distinguished record. He was presented with a sword of honour and a complimentary address. A few weeks later a ball was also held in honour of Major Wells and A. R. Dunn, V.C., 11th Hussars, who had displayed conspicuous gallantry in the same campaign. Perhaps a short digression will be pardoned to enable some further reference to this Toronto-born hero of the charges of Balaclava, the record of which is among the saddest but proudest memories of the British army. Dr. Henry Scadding tells much of interest in his account of Lieut. Dunn and his family, long important in the life of the city:

"On the south side of the expansion of Queen Street, in front of Petersfield and a little beyond Peter Street, (which, as we have previously noticed, had its name from Peter Russell), was the abode of Mr. Dunn, long Receiver-General of Upper Canada. It was (and is) a retired family house, almost hidden from the general view by a grove of ornamental trees. A quiet-looking gate led into a straight drive up to the house, out of Queen Street. Of Mr. Dunn we have already discoursed, and of Mrs. Dunn, one of the graceful lady-chiefs in the high life of York in the olden time. In the house at which we now pause was born their famous son, Alexander Roberts Dunn, in 1833; who not only had the honour of sharing in the charge of the Light Brigade at Balaclava in 1854, now so renowned in history and song, but who, of all the six hundred there, won the highest mead of glory.

"Six feet three inches in stature, a most powerful and most skilful swordsman and a stranger to fear, Lieut. Dunn, instead of consulting his own safety in the midst of that frightful and untoward *mêlée*, deliberately interposed for the protection of his comrades in arms. Old troops of the Eleventh Hussars long told with kindling eyes how the young Lieutenant, seeing Sergeant Bentley of his own regiment attacked from behind by two or three Russian lancers, rushed upon them single-handed, and cut them down; how

he saved the life of Sergeant Bond; how Private Levett owed his safety to the same friendly arm when assailed by Russian Hussars. Kinglake, the historian of the Crimean War, records that the Victoria Cross placed at the disposal of the Eleventh Hussars was unanimously awarded by them to Lieut. Dunn, the only cavalry officer who obtained the distinction.

"To the enthusiasm inspired by his brilliant reputation was mainly due the speedy formation in Canada of the Hundredth Regiment, the Prince of Wales' Royal Canadian Regiment, in 1857. Of this regiment, chiefly raised through his instrumentality, Mr. Dunn was gazetted the first major; and on the retirement of the Baron de Rottenburg from its command, he succeeded as its Lieutenant-Colonel.

"In 1864 he was gazetted full Colonel; at the time he had barely completed his thirty-first year. Impatient of inactivity, he caused himself to be transferred to a command in India, where he speedily attracted the notice of General Napier, afterwards Lord Napier of Magdala; and he accompanied that officer in the expedition against King Theodore of Abyssinia. While halting at Senafé in that country, he was accidentally killed by the sudden explosion of his rifle while out shooting deer."[1]

Presentations of another nature were made in St. Lawrence Hall from time to time, when the students of Upper Canada College, the Grammar School, and other public or private schools received awards in the Hall as a result of proficiency in their examinations.

While receptions to individuals were not uncommon in St. Lawrence Hall, there were very few official levees held there. When Sir Edmund Head came to Toronto as Governor-General in 1855, however, he held his first levee in the hall on November 19th, and the newspapers carried a complete list of the gentlemen who paid their respects to His Excellency.

Bazaars to raise funds for religious, educational and charitable purposes were held from time to time, and frequently included a soirée or concert. In December, 1853, the erection of a church at the corner of Mutual and Queen Streets was furthered by a bazaar and soirée; while in

[1]Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old*, 1873, pp. 342-3.

December, 1861, a bazaar in aid of the establishment of a Female Industrial School was liberally patronised, and was followed a few weeks later by a banquet in behalf of the same institution.

Educational exhibitions were to be found in St. Lawrence Hall on numerous occasions. The most frequent were those of the Toronto Horticultural Society, which usually held three exhibitions a year. In 1855 these took place in May, July and September. In April, 1854, pottery and earthenware received some attention when an Exhibition of Ceramic Art occupied the hall for three days. In 1861 there was presented for two weeks Thiobon's "Mechanical and Pictorial Royal Exhibition of Arts". In 1862 a large number of interested spectators were attracted by an exhibition of the handiwork of the New England glass-blowers, who occupied the Hall during the last three days of May. In striking contrast to these educational displays was one of a distinctly novel character—"The Exhibition of Industrious Fleas"—which, needless to say, brought large crowds of people to St. Lawrence Hall during the week of September 5, 1859. This particular show must have been an old-timer, for an advertisement announcing its appearance in Toronto occurs in the *Courier of Upper Canada* of October 13, 1835.

Another entertainment of a semi-educational nature was that presented in March, 1858, by "Kawshawgance and troupe", illustrating the manners and customs of the Rocky Mountain Indians; while a performance by A. McKeown of Hamilton entitled "Twa Hours in the Land o' Cakes" was given twice in the winter of 1856-7. Mr. Maitland's "Scottish Entertainment" may be presumed to have attracted much the same audience in March, 1857.

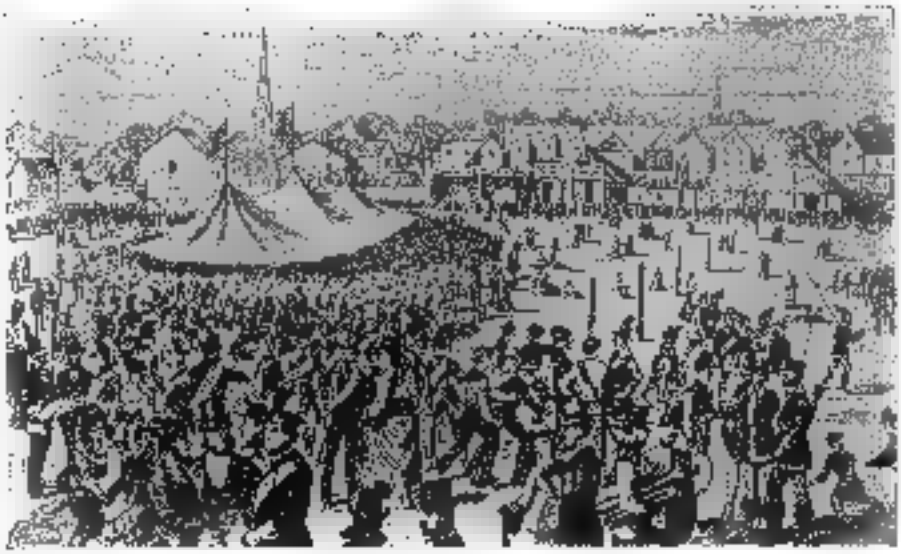
Among performances somewhat less intellectual in appeal were those of magicians, midgets, monstrosities and minstrels who visited St. Lawrence Hall on numerous occasions. Macallister, "the great magician", Signor Jerome Blitz, "the great Moravian Wizard", Professor Jacobs, "the World Renowned Wizard", and Professor Kergan, advertised as "the Great Wizard King and Ventriloquist", were among those who drew a good-sized audience whenever they appeared. The Aztec Lilliputians, Maxima and

Bartola, were on exhibition during the week of August 4, 1851; and "General" Tom Thumb held four of his periodic "receptions" in October, 1861. Minstrel shows had a considerable following in Toronto, and among those who played at St. Lawrence Hall were Christy's, Sharpley's, Stanley's, Birch and Donniker's, and Wood's.

If any one type of entertainment might be taken as typical of old St. Lawrence Hall perhaps it was the concerts and musicales which were so frequently held. As still holds true today, it appears to have been considered seventy-five years ago that foreigners excelled in musical ability; and Germans and Italians were more often in the spotlight than other nationalities. Bands were more frequently seen in parade and at balls than in concert activities. Regimental bands were very popular at that time, but there was also a Toronto Brass Band, for the benefit of which a concert and soirée was held on December 20, 1860. An interesting departure in a day of comparative seclusion of women must have been the Madden family brass band, "composed entirely of females", which gave an entertainment on two nights in October, 1854.

Not infrequently concerts were held to raise funds for benevolent and charitable purposes. In June, 1851, the Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society arranged an entertainment in aid of destitute negro fugitives who had taken refuge in Canada. Typical of a number of charitable efforts was that of the St. George's Society, which gave, on December 10, 1857, a concert in aid of "the prevailing distress among emigrant Englishmen". A fashionable benefit concert in 1855 was given by Mr. Haycraft, and the proceeds were devoted to "the widows and orphans of the heroes of Sebastopol". Among those who assisted upon this occasion were Mrs. John Beverley Robinson and Messrs. Haycraft, Griebel and Martin Lazare.

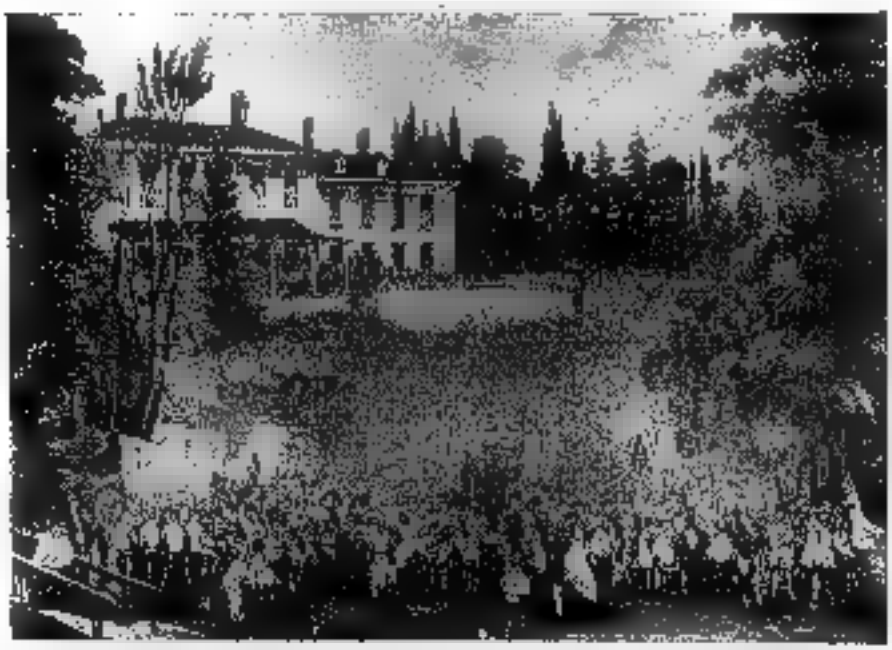
The majority of the musicales displayed the talents of foreign artists, but there were many in which British musicians were featured, and others where the talent was entirely local. In 1851 the Queen's Birthday was celebrated by a concert under the direction of Principal Barron of Upper Canada College, and those who contributed towards the entertainment appear to have been largely, if



Canadian Illustrated News.

The Foresters' Fête, 1874

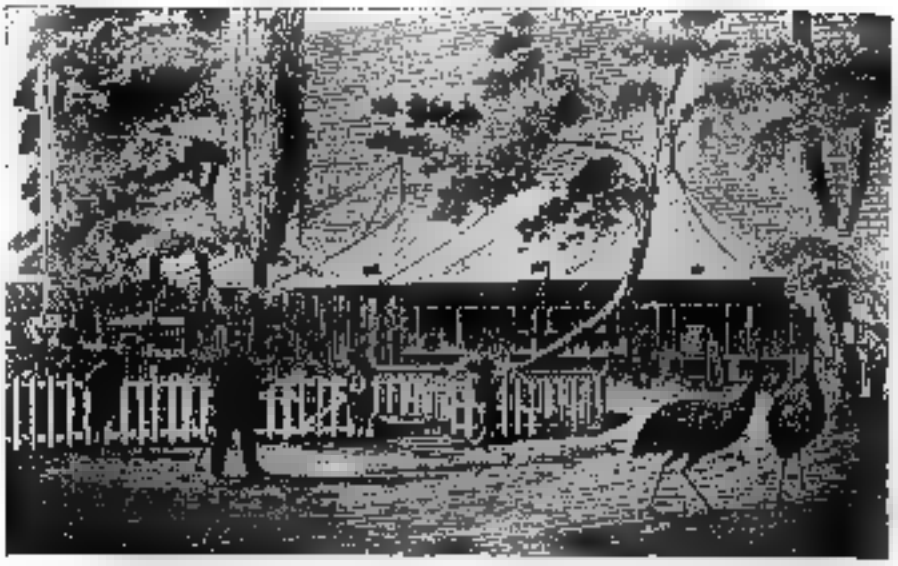
The second annual *fête* of the Foresters took place in the Cricket Grounds on July 29-31, 1874. Owing to the inquisitiveness of the inevitable small boy the grand display of fireworks took place unexpectedly and *en masse* several hours early!



John Ross Robertson Collection. Lucius O'Brien.

Queen's Birthday Celebration, Government House, 1854

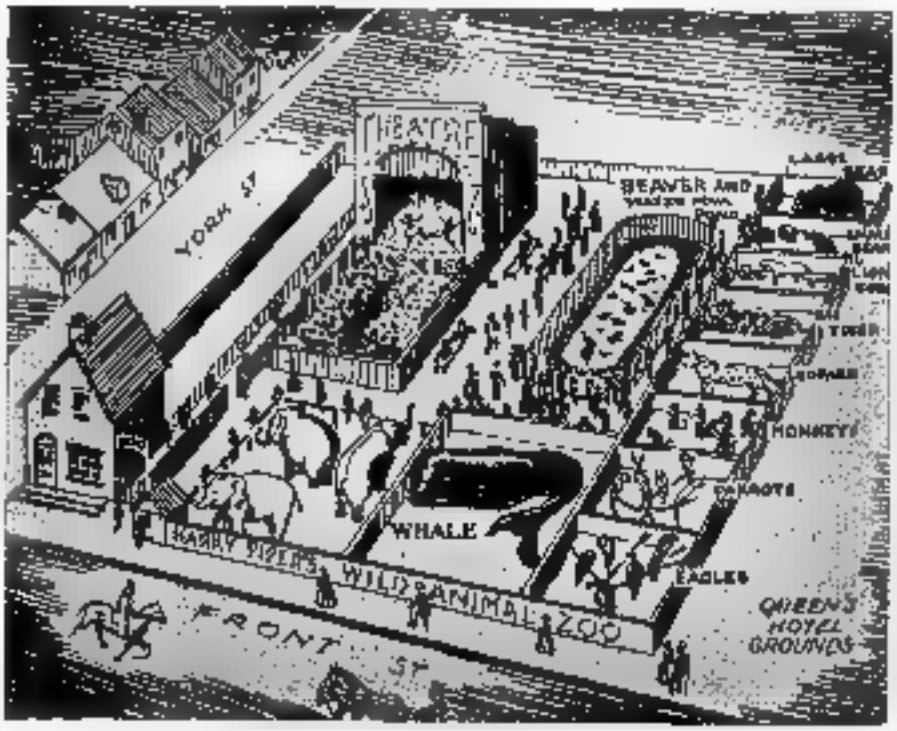
As the Crimean War was in progress at the time even the Turks were cheered!



Canadian Illustrated News. Arthur Elliott.

In the Zoo, Toronto, 1881

This was Harry Piper's Zoo, which commenced about 1872. Among other locations it was for a time in the Crystal Palace.



Reproduced by Courtesy of the *Evening Telegram* and the Canadian Pacific Railway.

Piper's Zoo in the Eighties

The layout of the Zoo when it was on the site of the Royal York Hotel is here shown.

not entirely, students of the school. The concert was held on the evening of the 23rd of May, and as the clock struck twelve a curtain at the north end of the hall was drawn, displaying an illuminated crown and the letters V.R. above the words "God Save the Queen". The whole assemblage joined in the National Anthem, after which a dance concluded the evening's entertainment.

"An agreeable entertainment by native Indians" was given in December, 1856, when Mr. Ma-zaw-ke-yaw-se-gay and Mr. and Mrs. Mah-koonce appeared on two occasions. The lady was described on the programme as a "granddaughter of the famous, brave and warlike, yet generous and hospitable Captain Brant". In July, 1857, Emma Stanley, "vocalist and imitator", in her "Seven Ages of Woman and Polymelos", gave eight entertainments which drew crowded houses. In September of the same year the European and Anacreontic Society gave three excellent concerts, Mrs. Macready, dramatic reader, followed with three evenings, and Mr. George Henry Russell's concert took place on the 29th of the month.

Typical of the enthusiasm aroused by Handel's oratorios was the first public performance of *The Messiah* on December 17, 1857. John Carter, organist and choirmaster of St. James', was the conductor, and the instrumentalists included Herr Griebel and Messrs. Noverre, Manle, Schmidt, Lazare and E. A. Hastings. Among the vocalists were Jacob Wright, S. Thompson, G. B. Wyllie, F. W. Barron, Charles Grasett and James Baxter. The concert was considered a wonderful achievement, and the audience included Governor-General Sir Edmund Head. The performance was repeated in 1858, and in June of the same year Handel's *Judas Maccabeus* was given before a very large audience. The patrons of these concerts included almost all of the notable residents of the city. The band and chorus in the production contained some 200 performers, including twenty violins and a proportionate number of other instruments. A few of those who took part in this excellent performance were guest soloists, but the others were all citizens of Toronto. A new organ had been installed for the occasion, and so successful was the presentation that it was repeated twice during the month.

Apart from these oratorios of Handel it would appear that the most socially exclusive audiences attended the performances of foreign artists, a large number of whom visited Toronto. It is easy to visualise the appearance of King Street near the entrance of St. Lawrence Hall upon these occasions: the elaborate carriages with their well-groomed horses and coachmen, each one bringing its quota of beautiful ladies and handsome men in evening dress; the somewhat less aristocratic occupants of hired cabs, and their less pretentious drivers, (though the city hackmen showed their *esprit de corps* by holding a ball under the patronage of His Worship the Mayor in 1867); and the uniformed doorkeepers, attendants and ushers busily but smoothly performing their duties with that polished etiquette and courtly ceremonial characteristic of the times. In July, 1851, Mlle. Teresa Parodi and Mlle. Amalia Patti gave a concert which was the first of its type in St. Lawrence Hall. Three months later, on October 21st, Jenny Lind, "the Swedish Nightingale", made her first appearance in Toronto, and attracted a capacity audience of nearly 1,000 people, all of whom paid at least $3 admission; and so many were disappointed in obtaining tickets that the concert was repeated the following evening.

From contemporary records of the impression which she made upon her audience it would seem that Jenny Lind's appearance in Toronto was the outstanding musical event of a generation. A lady who was present at her concert wrote most enthusiastically of the famous cantatrice and her singing:

"She is in my opinion quite an angelic creature. Her voice is exquisite. Every note clear, sweet and flute-like. Her Echo and Bird-songs are too fascinating. They are almost supernaturally sweet in some parts. She is not handsome, but the unaffected simplicity of her manner and the truthful expression of her countenance render her very attractive, and one cannot help respecting and even loving the lowly Swedish maiden who, unshaken in her high resolves by the temptations of the world, has devoted unceasingly her splendid talent to the best and noblest purposes, and, having raised her parents to comfort and affluence, has, it is said, given nearly a million of money

to the establishment of free schools through her native land so that the poorest fisherman's child may obtain an education in Sweden. . . . Her charities and her pure piety will be long remembered after the sweet voice has ceased to be heard on earth."[4]

In 1852 another celebrated cantatrice, Catharine Hayes, gave two most successful concerts on May 24th and 26th. She was assisted by Herr Griebel, violinist, Menzies, baritone, Kyle, the flautist, and Lavenu on the piano; while a month later the Germania Musical Society, assisted by Alfred Jaell, pianist, gave a musicale in St. Lawrence Hall. In November, 1853, Ole Bull, Amalia Patti and Maurice Strakosch drew a very large audience to a concert which was announced as Ole Bull's farewell appearance; the other two artists, assisted by Teresa Parodi, Signor Giovanni and Leo Lardi, gave two operatic concerts in July, 1855, and the same performers were heard from time to time in later years. In 1860, however, Amalia Patti's sister, Adelina, who for forty years was to be known as one of the world's foremost operatic singers, visited Toronto along with Amalia and her husband, Herr Strakosch, who was Adelina's instructor and conductor. While describing the concert as a great success, and Adelina's singing as productive of vociferous applause, a Toronto newspaper stated that it "would like to ask Herr Strakosch why, since Jenny Lind visited America, we get no new ballads in the concert room? *Within a Mile of Edinboro' Town* and *Home, Sweet Home* are very well, but ten years of perpetual repetition is rather too much. The charming Patti would raise a furore with some of the new English ballads judiciously selected". Among other renowned soloists to appear at St. Lawrence Hall were Thalberg, pianist, Mme. Eliza Biscaccianti, and Mlle. Piccolomini, "the charming Italian singer".

The heyday of St. Lawrence Hall was the first ten years of its existence. After 1862 it was not as extensively used, though until the early seventies numerous entertainments were held there. By 1872 the meetings in the old hall had become infrequent owing to the erection of other

[4]Mary Jarvis to Fanny Jarvis, October 29, 1851. See Alden Meredith: *Mary's Rosedale and Gossip of Little York*, 1928, p. 206.

buildings and the extension of the boundaries of the city westward and northward, which made the location less convenient and attractive as a centre of social life. The varied performances which for a quarter of a century had characterised it were held elsewhere, and the famous hall gradually passed out of general use. The Albert Hall, Queen and Yonge Streets, was the chief successor for miscellaneous entertainments, and Shaftesbury Hall, in the Y.M.C.A. Building at Queen and James Streets, was the best lecture hall in the city ■ the late seventies. The Grand Opera House and the Royal Opera House provided stages and auditoria specially constructed for dramatic and operatic entertainment, and they remained unrivalled in this field until Massey Hall was opened in the early nineties. Musicales and balls for the socially *élite* were sometimes held in the Music Hall in the old Mechanics' Institute Building, Adelaide and Church Streets, and in the Horticultural Pavilion in the Allan Gardens. St. Lawrence Hall itself had dropped into the category of less important assembly rooms, along with the Agricultural Hall, the Masonic Hall, St. Andrew's Hall and the Canadian Institute.

The old building was developed as a market centre in the early years of the new century; and the famous hall itself was considerably used as an armouries by the York Rangers and other regiments, particularly during the Great War. In 1911 several thousand dollars was spent in its renovation, but, apart from a few meetings, its use was limited to the soldiery and, in recent years, as a hostel for unemployed—rather different from the activities which centred there three-quarters of a century ago. And so, like many another early Toronto building, St. Lawrence Hall, its glories departed, has now little but proud memories of the times when the socially and intellectually prominent continually passed through its portals.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE PAGEANT OF SOCIAL LIFE

IN Toronto's early years the presence of government officials, officers of the army and navy, and other "gentlemen" gave a higher tone to social life than was usually to be found anywhere else except at Kingston and Niagara. The amusements of that day depended largely upon individual effort, or upon arrangements made by small groups of social equals. Life in York was much like that of an English town of the period. Alexander Macdonell, Sheriff of the Home District, resided in the town in 1799, and describes in his diary how the members of the official class spent their time.[1] Office duties usually ended at 2 p.m., and dinner was served at 3 o'clock. From Joseph Willcocks' diary we learn that an ordinary dinner included "a salmon, a fillet of veal, a pair of roast fowl and a bread pudding"; while on Christmas Day, 1800, a good old English dinner of "soup, roast beef, boiled pork, a turkey, plumb pudding and minced pies" was served at the Willcocks home.[2] Class distinctions were very rigid in early days, and the fashionable society of York was restricted to a comparatively small section of the population. The military and civilians alike were fond of horse-racing and field sports, fishing and sailing, football and cricket in summer, and of skating and carrioling in winter; while at all seasons dancing, chess, whist, wine and conversation served to while away the time.

Mrs. Simcoe gives some account of these activities in her diary. While at Niagara she wrote: "We play at whist every evening. Colonel Simcoe is so occupied during the day with business that it is a relaxation. I have not lost one rubber since the 28th of November. We usually play four every evening."[3] Two weeks later she notes: "Mrs.

[1] Macdonell's journal is printed in Middleton and Landon's *The Province of Ontario*. 1927, Vol. II.

[2] The quotations are, respectively, from the entries of October 6, 1800, and December 25, 1800. The diary is printed in Middleton and Landon, *ibid.*

[3] *Diary of Mrs. John Graves Simcoe*, December 31, 1792.

Macaulay gave me an account of a subscription ball she was at, which is to be held in the town of Niagara every fortnight during the winter. There were fourteen couples, a great display of gauze, feathers and velvet, the room lighted by wax candles, and there was a supper as well as tea."[4] In 1796 she refers to a ball at her house where "we danced eighteen couple and sat down to supper seventy-six".[5] It may be assumed that a similar social life flourished in York, especially after the seat of government was removed thither in 1796-97. Military bands supplied the music at these official social functions, and at all fashionable balls or "assemblies" in the garrison towns full evening or military dress was worn.

Some of the higher officials of the government had extensive estates on the outskirts of York, where they carried on farming and experimented in the growth of cherries, melons and peaches, in addition to many typically English vegetables and flowers which their gardeners produced. Their stables were noted for spirited horses, suitable for the pleasures of carrioling, the race-track and the hunt. A few of the wealthier inhabitants had yachts and were able to enjoy sailing on the Bay. Even in Indian days the peninsula (now the Island) was a resort for the purpose of regaining health; and, among the early citizens of York, a favourite ride or walk.

The gentlemen of the town also engaged in field sports—hunting, fowling, hawking and fishing. Many a canoe might be seen on the Bay in the evening, its occupants intent upon the exciting sport of spearing fish by jack-light. In the winter of 1801 William Jarvis held a fox hunt on the ice of the Bay, and when the fox was unbagged, "the chase was followed by a number of gentlemen on horse-back, and a concourse of the *beau monde* of both sexes in carriole and sleigh".[6]

Riding and carrioling were prominent in York during Simcoe's *régime*. A letter written by Peter Russell to John McGill in December, 1796, expresses the hope "that the ladies may be able to enjoy the charming carrioling which

[4]*Ibid.*, January 15, 1793.
[5]*Ibid.*, June 4, 1796.
[6]*Upper Canada Gazette*, February 14, 1801.

you must have on your Bay, and up the Yonge Street Road, and to the Humber, and up the Don to Castle Frank, where an early dinner must be picturesque and delightful".[7] There were picnics on the peninsula and along the Don and Humber, and dances for the social set at Castle Frank, Russell Abbey, or in the Government Buildings.

From time to time notices appear in the *Gazette* concerning the York Assemblies, or dances. The first of these announcements is in the issue of December 8, 1798, and asks "the gentlemen of the town and the garrison" to meet at Miles' Hotel to make arrangements for the winter and pay their subscription.[8] It may be presumed that similar social events were held during previous winters, when York had no newspaper in which the announcement might be inserted.

The earliest of these events of which we have an intimate account took place at Frank's Hotel in 1814. The original manuscript of the arrangements informs us that "at a meeting of the gentlemen of York, subscribers to the assemblies, Stephen Jarvis and George Ridout, Esquires, were appointed managers for the season, the sum to be paid by each subscriber to be three pounds, Halifax currency. . . . First dance on St. Andrew's night, dancing to begin at half-past eight o'clock". The dresses worn by the ladies are called "chaste and elegant"; while a private letter gives us the interesting information that "one lady of great loveliness" wore black lace over an underskirt of crimson, with an artificial rose in her waist and hair.[9] A few prominent merchants usually joined the government officials and the officers of the garrison in these dances.

Occasionally there would be a public holiday in York, and a special demonstration of loyalty sometimes occurred upon the receipt of war news from England. On August 1, 1798, was fought the Battle of the Nile, but it was over five months later, on January 3, 1799, that the news reached York. A celebration was immediately planned, however, and took place the following day. It is said that William Willcocks was the only inhabitant who did not light up his

[7]Quoted in Henry Scadding: *Four Decades of York*. 1884. p. 23.
[8]*Upper Canada Gazette*, December 8, 1798.
[9]See John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*. 1894-1914. Vol. I, p. 498.

home in honour of the occasion, so a mob led by one Thomas Smith smashed the windows of his house.

On June 4th the King's birthday was always celebrated. The *Gazette* of June 8, 1799, notes that the Queen's Rangers fired three volleys, the militia assembled on the beach, and a Royal Salute of twenty-one guns was fired by the Royal Artillery; after which, "at night the Government Buildings were superbly illuminated, at which place His Honour the President gave a splendid ball and supper".[10] Another notable event occurred in 1803, when the Duke of Kent visited the little town, staying at Oakhill, the residence of General Aeneas Shaw, [redacted] whose daughter Sir Isaac Brock was later engaged. The Duke was entertained in the log cabin which preceded General Shaw's frame house.

A social custom of the period was duelling, though death as a result was infrequent. The most notorious of York duels occurred on January 3, 1800, and though it was purposely passed over with little comment by the official government organ, the *Gazette and Oracle*, the *Canada Constellation* of Niagara, in announcing the death of Attorney-General John White, spared neither the participants nor society in general:

"Died at York, on the 3rd instant, John White, Esq., Attorney-General of this Province. His death was occasioned by a wound he received in [redacted] duel fought the day before with John Small, Esq., Clerk of the Executive Council, by whom he was challenged. We have not been able to obtain the particulars of the cause of the dispute; but, be the origin what it may, we have to lament the toleration and prevalency of a custom falsely deemed honourable, or the criterion of true courage, innocency or guilt, a custom to gratify the passion of revenge in a single person, to the privation of the country and a family of an ornament of society, and support: an outrage on humanity that is too often procured by the meanly malicious, who have preferment in office or friendship [redacted] view, without merit to gain it, and stupidly lacquey from family to family, or from person to person, some wonderful suspicion, the suggestions of a soft head and evil heart; and it [redacted] truly unfortunate for Society that the evil they bring on others should pass

[10] *Upper Canada Gazette*, June 8, 1799.

by their heads to light on those the world could illy spare. We are unwilling to attribute to either the Attorney-General or Mr. Small any improprieties of their own, or to say on whom the blame lies; but of this we feel assured, that an explanation might easily have been brought about by persons near to them, and a valuable life preserved to us. The loss is great; as a professional gentleman the Attorney-General was eminent, as a friend, sincere; and in whatever relation he stood was highly esteemed; an honest and upright man, a friend to the poor, and dies universally lamented; and we here cannot refuse to mention, at the particular request of some who have experienced his goodness, that he has refused taking fees, and discharged suits at law by recommending to the parties, and assisting them with friendly advice, to an amicable adjustment of their differences: and this is the man whom we have lost!"[11]

On the 20th of January Small was tried before Mr. Justice Alcock and a jury, but the verdict was "Not Guilty". Mr. White's remains lie in St. James' Cemetery, whence they were removed in 1871 when labourers discovered the original grave.

After the War of 1812 the social life of the town gradually became more complex. In the eighteen-twenties, though the town was still a village in population, there occurred small agricultural fairs, and meetings and celebrations of the National Societies, the Orangemen, and other lodges. In the same period the first fire company was organised, while the visits of circuses, theatrical companies, and other itinerant exhibitions became quite common.

It was nearly half a century after the arrival of the first settlers before commercialised theatrical exhibitions were to be found in Upper Canada. Writing in 1817 Robert Gourlay found that "the country is too young for regular theatric entertainments and those delicacies and refinements of luxury which are the usual attendants of wealth. Dissipation, with her fascinating train of expenses and vices, has made but little progress on the shores of the lakes".[12] Among the earliest dramatic efforts were occasional plays

[11]Niagara *Canada Constellation*, January 11, 1800.

[12]Robert Gourlay: *A Statistical Account of Upper Canada*. 1822. Vol. I, p. 250.

produced by the officers of the garrisons at York, Kingston and Niagara; in these the female parts were usually taken by men. As a general rule only comedies were attempted, Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer* being among the number. Mr. (later Sir) Allan MacNab was one of a number of amateur performers in York, and he acquitted himself so well that he was seriously advised to become a professional actor.

Among other early inhabitants of York who were greatly interested in amateur dramatics were the members of the Baldwin and Sullivan families. During the Christmas holidays of 1824-5 a rather elaborate drama called *The Revenge* was presented in the Baldwin home, Spadina House, parts of the production having been written for the occasion by Robert Baldwin, later an important figure in political life. The parts were taken by "the juvenile part of the family", and the entertainment included Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer*, and an afterpiece of a type popular at the time—*Bombastes Furioso*.[13]

The first theatrical performances by professionals were introduced by American companies in the early eighteen-twenties—possibly as early as 1820. Two plays were usually produced for one evening's entertainment, a rather serious melodramatic performance being followed by a boisterous comedy, with perhaps a little vaudeville during the intermission. As was true also of many other pioneer activities, the first theatrical entertainments in Upper Canada usually took place in taverns. The first theatre in York was the ballroom of Frank's Hotel, located in the rear of the establishment, which was on the north-west corner of Market Lane (Colborne Street) and West Market Square. There travelling companies of actors presented such plays as *Pizarro; Barbarossa*, or *The Siege of Algiers; Ali Baba*, or *The Forty Thieves; The Lady of the Lake;* and *The Miller and His Men*. A small stage, few dramatic effects, and little or no scenery were characteristic of this as of all other early theatres in Upper Canada.

Concerning York's first theatre Dr. Scadding gives some

[13]See J. E. Middleton: *The Municipality of Toronto, A History*, 1923, Vol. I, pp. 158-60, where a lengthy account of the entertainment is quoted from the Powell Papers in the Toronto Public Library.

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VIEW OF YORK FROM GOODERHAM'S WINDMILL, 1833

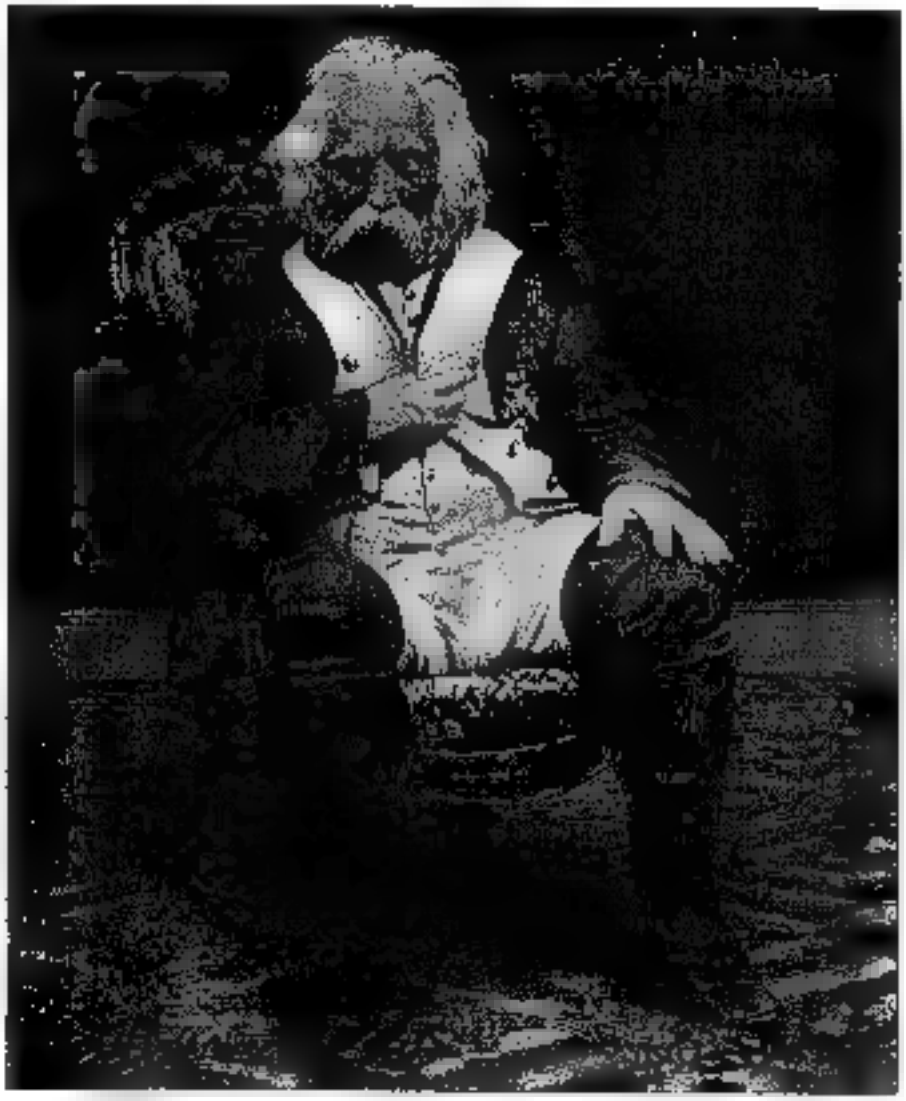
John Ross Robertson Collection. F. V. Poole.

FRANK'S HOTEL, NEAR THE MARKET

The first commercialised theatrical performances in Toronto were at Frank's.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

THE TAM O' SHANTER INN, QUEEN AND BROADVIEW, 1860



John Ross Robertson Collection. John Fraser.

JOHN NICKINSON OF THE ROYAL LYCEUM THEATRE

He is seen here as Haversack in *The Old Guard*.

details of interest. The hotel was a white frame building, and when the ballroom was fitted up for dramatic purposes it was approached by a stairway from the outside:

"Here companies performed under the management, at one time, of Mr. Archold; at another, of Mr. Talbot; at another, of Mr. Vaughan. The last-named manager, while professionally at York, lost a son by drowning in the Bay. We well remember the poignant distress of the father at the grave, and that his head was bound round on the occasion with a white bandage or napkin. Mrs. Talbot was a great favourite. She performed the part of Cora in *Pizarro*, and that of Little Pickle, in a comedy of that name, if our memory serves us. . . . . The body-guard of the Dey of Algiers, we remember, consisted of two men, who always came in with military precision just after the hero, and placed themselves in a formal manner at fixed distances behind him, like two sentries. They were, in fact, soldiers from the garrison, we think. All this appeared very effective.

"The dramatic appliances and accessories at Frank's were of the humblest kind. The dimensions of the stage must have been very limited; the ceiling of the whole room, we know, was low. As for orchestra—in those days the principal instrumental artist of the town was Mr. Maxwell, who, well-remembered for his quiet manner, for the shade over one eye in which was some defect, and for his homely skill on the violin, was generally to be seen and heard, often alone, but sometimes with an associate or two, here, as at all other entertainments of importance, public or private. Nevertheless, at that period, to an unsophisticated yet active imagination innocent of acquaintance with more respectable arrangements, everything seemed charming; each scene, as the bell rang and the baize drew up, was invested with a magical glamour, similar in kind, if not equal in degree, to that which, in the days of our grandfathers, ere yet the modern passion for real knowledge had been awakened, fascinated the young Londoner at Drury Lane."[14]

Phair's Tavern on the west side of Market Square had assembly rooms similar to those at Frank's, and the following advertisement describes in considerable detail the

[14]Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old*. 1873. pp. 110-11.

performance given by Talbot's Theatrical Troupe, aided by the York Band, in October, 1824:

"Theatre York—This evening, October 7th, will be presented at Mr. Phair's assembly rooms Otway's celebrated tragedy of *Venice Preserved*, or *A Plot Discovered*—

Piere	Mr. Archold.
Jaffre	Mr. Talbot.
Priuli	Mr. Gilbert.
Duke	Mr. Trowbridge.
Badamar	Mr. Davis.
Renault	Mr. Gilbert.
Conspirators.	
Belvedera	Mrs. Talbot.

After the tragedy the following songs:

Comic Song—Cherry Cheek.	
Patty	Mr. Gilbert.
Song	Mr. Davis.
Comic Song	Mr. Talbot.

The whole to conclude with a laughable farce of *Nature and Philosophy*.

Brother Philip	Mr. Archold.
Ronaldo	Mr. Gilbert.
Couin, a youth who has never seen woman	Mrs. Talbot.
Eliza	Miss Allan.
Gertrude	Mrs. Archold.

"On Friday evening will be presented the much-admired comedy of *Animal Magnetism*, with the laughable farce of *The Irishman in London*, together with a variety of comic songs, glees, etc., etc., as will appear in the bills.

"N.B.—Mr. Archold, ever anxious to merit the esteem of his generous patrons, has, in addition to the entertainments hitherto afforded, engaged the York Band, which will attend each evening during his stay in York. Tickets to be had at the *U. C. Gazette* Office, at the bar of Mr. Phair's Tavern, and at the Steam Boat Hotel. Boxes 3s. 9d. Back seats 2s. 6d. currency. Children half price. Two tickets

will admit a gentleman and two ladies. Doors open at six o'clock and performance at seven precisely."[15]

Two years later a similar travelling company advertised its performances to take place in the ballroom at the rear of Frank's Hotel. The press contained a news item about this company:

"Mr. & Mrs. Judah, with a *Corps Dramatique*, have arrived in town, and on Thursday and Friday evenings gave entertainments at Frank's, where they have fitted up a theatre. The estimation in which Mr. and Mrs. Judah were held in Montreal, and the liberal support they have met with in Kingston, will, we hope, entitle them to the patronage of the ladies and gentlemen of York. Mrs. Carres' singing is of itself an inducement to visit the theatre, to the lovers of rational amusement, where they have no doubt they will find Mr. and Mrs. Judah and company at home, happy and well prepared to receive them."[16]

The advertisement of this company read:

"Theatre—At Frank's Ball Room Mr. Judah respectfully informs the ladies and gentlemen of York and its vicinity that on this evening (Saturday), October 21st, 1826, will be performed, for the first time in York, Shakespeare's much-admired comedy of Catherine and Petruchio, or *Taming of the Shrew*, with the laughable farce of *Fortune's Frolic*, or *A Ploughman Turned Lord*. N.B.—For particulars see bills."[17]

York's next theatre, a frame building on the north side of Colborne Street, west of the Market, was a workshop the upper storey of which was altered in 1829 to suit the purpose of dramatic entertainment. A local amateur club produced several plays there. This theatre was long remembered by many people as the place where Charles French murdered a man named Nolan in the autumn of 1829. French was an apprentice in William Lyon Mackenzie's printing office, and the Reform leader tried his best to secure a reprieve for him, but without success. The murder and subsequent execution quickly wrote *finis* to the activities of the Colborne Street theatre.

[15] *Upper Canada Gazette*, October 7, 1824.
[16] *U. E. Loyalist*, October 21, 1826.
[17] *Ibid.*

A few years later, in 1834, the old Wesleyan Chapel, on the site of the present head office of the Canadian Bank of Commerce, was converted into a place of amusement which for a time was known as the Theatre Royal. *A Panorama of the Burning of Moscow* was the first entertainment presented in this theatre, which was operated by Waugh Brothers, proprietors of a confectionery store on King Street. Contemporary with the Theatre Royal was another place of amusement, a barn-like building on the north side of Front Street, east of Keating's British Coffee House. This frame hall had no gallery, but accommodated some two or three hundred people. Candles provided the illumination, and the scenic effects were very crude, but the performances, and particularly the acting of Mr. and Mrs. Thorne, were frequently very good.

It is, of course, impossible to gauge the value of any entertainment from the producers' announcements; nor can a press report of it always be accepted as unbiased criticism. The fact that most of the players were from the United States prejudiced the chances of a fair reception at the hands of a considerable number of people, among whom the editor of the *British Colonist* appears to have been one of the most pronounced in his views. With obvious dislike he records a visit to the second Theatre Royal in 1839, when "a party of strolling players from Yankee-land" were performing. He says that "the performance commenced with what was styled in the bills 'The much-admired farce of *Nature and Philosophy*', on the youth who never saw a woman. . . . Both the farce and the actors of it are altogether too contemptible for criticism". A Scotch song was "brutally murdered" by Mrs. Lennox. This was followed "by an attempt to act the opera of *The Maid of Cashmere*, and it was but an attempt. Miss Ince danced tolerably well, and that is all that can be said in favour of the performance. By this time our patience was quite exhausted; we left, and immediately set to write this notice, lest by delay we might so far forget what we had witnessed as to do injustice afterwards to any of the company by detracting from their just merits as players. . . . There is no reason why such a miserable catchpenny as that at present in operation should

be tolerated. The municipal authorities should interfere and abate the nuisance".[18]

In spite of such scathing criticism, however, it is probable that this company was no worse than the average of the day; and no doubt many unprejudiced patrons enjoyed the entertainment provided.

The first commercialised amusement to become available to all except the most remote settlers was the circus. Appearing first in the towns, they were soon stopping at taverns in every settled part of Upper Canada. The organisations were almost exclusively of American origin, and were advertised in the exaggerated style characteristic of all types of commercialised entertainment.

As early as 1827 York had a resident circus under the management of Besnard and Black. This was held in the barn of De Forest's Hotel on King Street, east of Sherbourne. There was no menagerie connected with it, the entertainment consisting of "riding and feats of horsemanship, trapeze and horizontal bar performances, and tricks of juggling". Mrs. Besnard was the favourite of the circus-goers of that period, and her "tossing of balls and knives was one of the principal features of the show".[19] From De Forest's the Besnard circus ring was moved to George Garside's Hotel on the west side of New (Jarvis) Street, near Duke; thence it was removed to Barney Roddy's Tavern on the west side of Church, just below King; and it finally was located on the south side of Wellington Street, a short distance west of Church. Here, enclosed by a high board fence, the circus was long operated by Besnard and was a well-patronised place of amusement.

The earliest stopping-place in York for itinerant menageries was a large open space on the west side of Yonge Street north of Lot (Queen) Street. The Sun Tavern (Elliott's) was located at the northwest corner of the intersection, and to the northward of that building numerous menageries pitched their tents in the eighteen-twenties. In the days of waggon transport the travelling circus was a wonderful spectacle all along the route, and a short stop on

[18]The *British Colonist*, September 4, 1839. The second Theatre Royal was near the north-east corner of King and York Streets.

[19]Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 479.

the outskirts of a community was sufficient to refurbish the parade with considerable pageantry, which was the more appreciated in a day when a surfeit of entertainment had not rendered the populace *blasé* and ultra-sophisticated.

In later years the old Fair Green near the Don became the favourite location for travelling shows, and P. T. Barnum's announcement of his "Grand Colossal Museum and Menagerie" of 1852 is typical of the "ballyhoo" which everyone has seen on barns and fences for over a century. We will attempt to preserve as fas as possible the original form of the advertisement:

"P. T. BARNUM'S

GRAND COLOSSAL MUSEUM AND MENAGERIE.

The largest travelling EXHIBITION in the World, being a combination of all the most popular and unexceptionable amusements of the age—enlarged and improved for the season of 1852.

A TEAM OF 10 ELEPHANTS

Will draw the Great Car of Juggernaut.

A BABY ELEPHANT

only one year old and but 3½ feet high, will carry upon his back, around the interior of the immense Pavilion, the Lilliputian General Tom Thumb. The magnificent *cortège* comprises 110 horses and 90 men. The Pavilion of Exhibition has been enlarged until it is capable of accommodating 15,000 spectators at once. The collection of living Wild Beasts includes the most splendid specimens ever exhibited in America. Among many others will be found

SIX BEAUTIFUL LIONS,

Fresh from their native forests.

A SACRED BURMESE BULL,

from the Island of Ceylon, worshipped there by the Pagan Natives, and recently taken from an Idolatrous Temple.

A monster WHITE OR POLAR BEAR! of prodigious size and ferocity.

A magnificent ROYAL TIGRESS—the largest one ever captured alive.

AN INFANTILE CAMEL—only six months of age, the first one ever born in America.

The DROVE OF ELEPHANTS were captured in the jungle of Central Ceylon by Messrs. S. ■. June and Geo. Nutter, assisted by 260 natives, after ■ pursuit of three months and four days in the jungles. They were finally entrapped and secured in an Indian Kraal or Trap, of enormous dimensions and prodigious strength, where they were subdued. The calf elephant accompanies its dam, and was weaned on its passage from India.

A NATIVE CEYLON CHIEF, of high caste in his own country, has charge of the elephants, having accompanied them from Ceylon."

But for fear these attractions should not prove sufficient, it was advertised in addition to the aforementioned wonders that "the real, genuine, original

GEN. TOM THUMB

is attached to this exhibition, and will appear, in all his performances, as given before the principal crowned heads of Europe, including Songs, Dances, Grecian Statues, and his admired personations of Napoleon and Frederick the Great. The Little General is twenty years of age, weighs only fifteen pounds, and is but twenty-eight inches high."

Then, besides all the foregoing attractions, there was

"MR. NELLIS,

the man without arms", who executed his extraordinary feats of loading and firing a pistol with his toes; cut profile likenesses; shot at a mark with a bow and arrow; played upon the accordion and violoncello, etc. And in addition to all these marvels a fine military band performed the most popular airs of the day as the procession entered town, and also during the hours of exhibition.

Finally, the charge for admission was "only 25 cents to the whole of this immense establishment, including General Tom Thumb, the entire collection of wild animals, wax statuary, Mr. Pierce's performances in the dens, the baby elephant, Mr. Nellis' performances, etc., no extra charge under any pretence whatever, let the reports be what they may. Doors open from 1 to 4, and from 7 to 9 o'clock, p.m."[20]

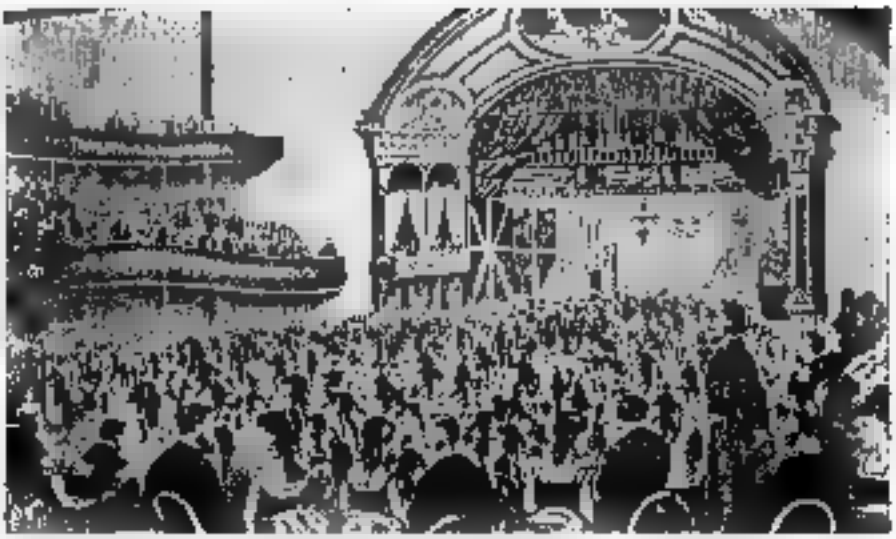
Dancing has long been pre-eminent among amusements, and the assemblies and balls of the society set of the capital

[20] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, pp. 813-14.

have always been characterised by brilliancy. Among the most notable of such events was that which occurred on April 22, 1842, the second day of Governor-General Sir Charles Bagot's visit to Toronto. The occasion was celebrated by a Grand Ball in Government House in honour of the distinguished visitor. A large Committee of Management, of which G. P. Ridout was Secretary, T. D. Harris Treasurer, and W. H. Boulton Master of Ceremonies, was in charge of the event, tickets for which were 30s. ($6.00) each. A press account of the ball noted that "towards 9 o'clock the fashionable world stirred into busy motion, and the rolling of wheels was fast and furious as carriages in quick succession deposited their lovely freight at the entrance door of the Government House. Passing through the ante-room, which was ornamented with the choicest green-house plants, the visitors passed on to the spacious ballroom, where the Lady Mayoress, who did the honours of the Ball, received the respects of the company, who were presented as they arrived by the Master of Ceremonies, W. H. Boulton, Esq."

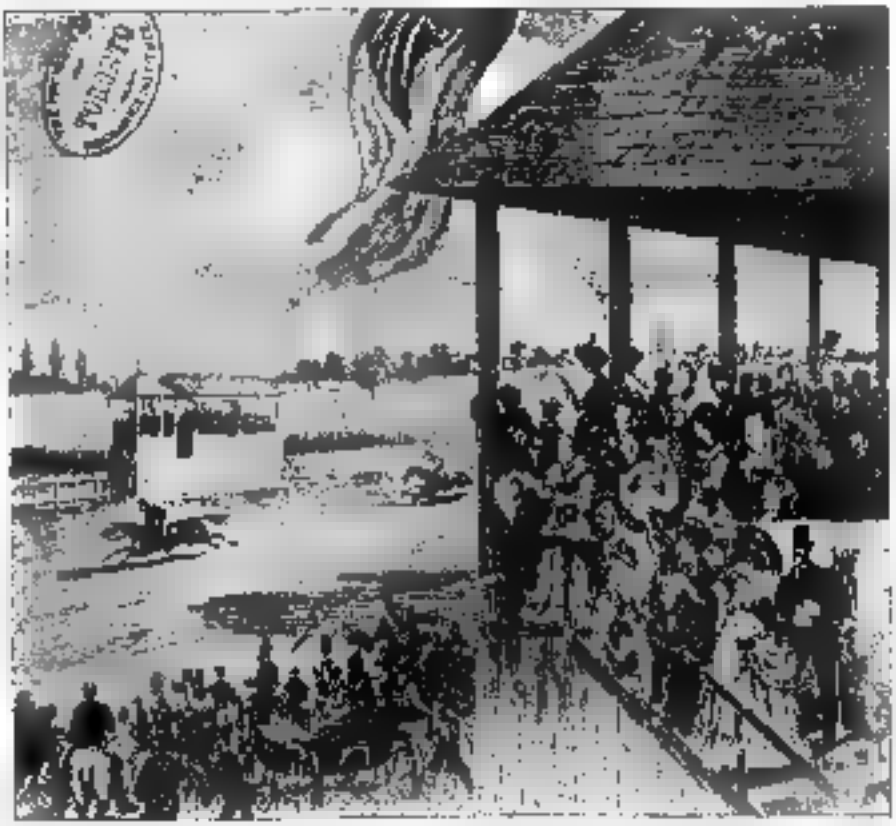
The arrangements for dancing were quite elaborate. In one room, "prettily ornamented to resemble a Turkish tent", was stationed the Quadrille Band of the 43rd Light Infantry; in another were the Band and Bugles of the 93rd or Sutherland Highlanders. The Turkish room contained "repose-inviting couches" around the walls, and in the centre "a most luxurious looking ottoman—long festoons of verdant wreaths hung in graceful sweeps, and, lighted by one handsome chandelier, the room was the beau-ideal of a temple prepared for Love and Beauty. The Ballroom was brilliantly lighted, and was decorated with gorgeous banners of the National Societies. On the walls were mirrors which "reflected many a lovely face radiant with hope"; and parallel with the Ballroom was the long picture gallery, an attractive promenade. The grand drawing-room was "superbly furnished with Turkey carpets, richly wrought *bergeres* and ottomans, and a harp and piano gave promise that vocal music would add its zest to the pleasures of the evening. Everywhere one went, taste and opulence displayed themselves in the arrangements."

At ten o'clock "the clang of steel without" announced the



Canadian Illustrated News. W. C. Canning.

ANNUAL BALL OF THE ROYAL YACHT CLUB AT THE GRAND OPERA HOUSE, 1874



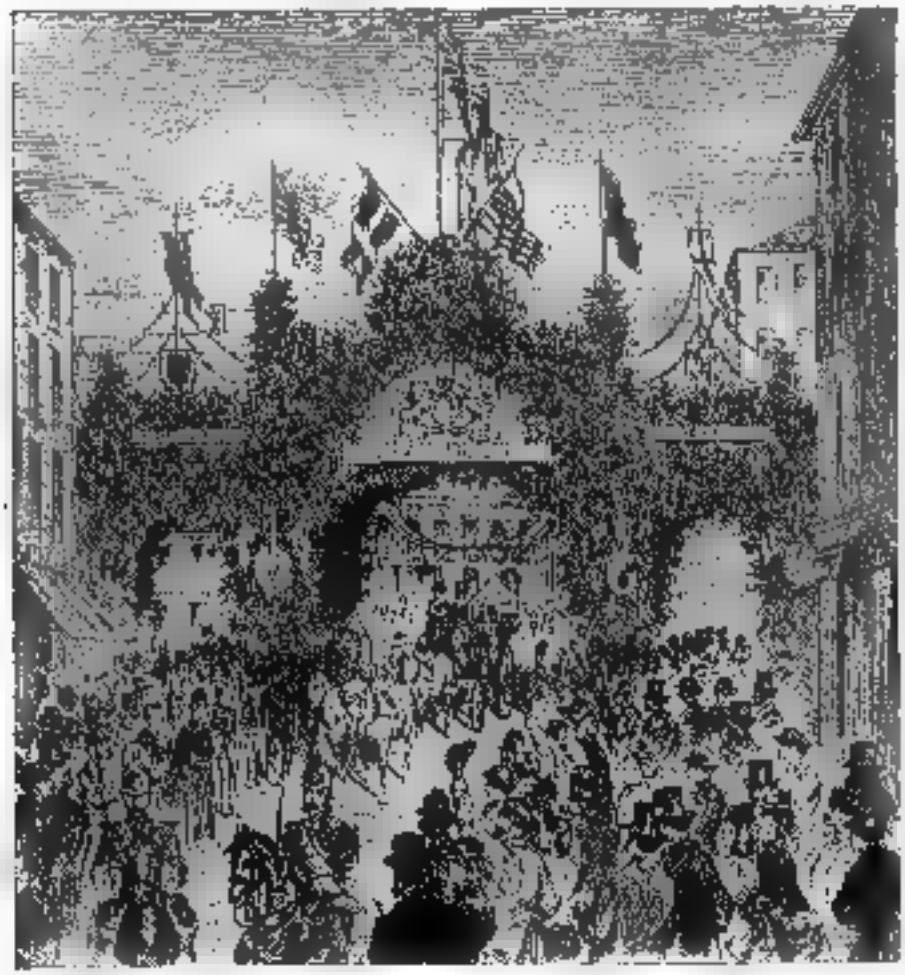
Canadian Illustrated News.

THE TORONTO HUNT CLUB STEEPLE CHASE RACES, 1870

Even the stamp at the upper left is historical, for it recalls that the Toronto Public Library inherited the books of the old Mechanics' Institute.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

THE BUTCHERS' ARMS TAVERN, MILL LANE, 1850



Canadian Illustrated News. M. Mathews.

RECEPTION TO LORD AND LADY DUFFERIN, 1872

The triumphal arch at the corner of King and Yonge.

arrival of His Excellency, and, as the bands played the National Anthem, the Governor-General and his glittering staff entered, were received by the Lady Mayoress, and the ball commenced. Three quadruple sets of quadrilles inaugurated the program, and the scene was "as brilliant as beautiful women could render it".

The "whirling waltz" and the "inspiring galoppe" alternated with the graver quadrille during the evening. Those who did not dance visited the picture gallery, played cards, or merely watched the colourful scene, listening, perchance, to "the syren warblings which poured forth their melody in the drawing-room". At intervals the ladies visited the refreshment room and were regaled by tea, coffee and ices; while their more robust partners "rejoiced in the sterner luxuries of Roman punch and wine negus".

At one o'clock His Excellency led the Lady Mayoress to supper, which was served in four rooms upstairs; many, it is said, were forced to wait until "second table". Everything that could please the palate was served—"even the fragrant and grateful pine apple, opportunely brought from more southern skies"; champagne of superior flavour was poured forth in abundance, and (needless to say) goblet after goblet was drained in honour of the occasion. The guest of honour left after supper, but dancing continued until "the cock's shrill clarion" bid the gay revel cease; "and just as the orient sky was becoming tinged with the golden hues of morning" the last of the dancers were homeward bound. It was no exaggeration to say that "a more splendid and successful result never crowned the labours of a committee,—the judicious tact and complete finish of the thing, through all its appointments, reflect the greatest credit upon the taste and spirit of the gentlemen under whose able management the arrangements were matured and carried out."

Unfortunately we have no record of the ladies' gowns, but it is stated that among the five hundred guests one might see "fifteen varieties of uniform", of which that of the Governor-General, "a magnificent silver and blue dress", and the uniforms of his Aides-de-Camp, which "dazzled the eye with the sheen of scarlet and gold, their coats being actually covered with the richest bullion lace", were out-

standing for splendour and beauty. Take it for all in all, the occasion "will long continue a vivid beacon and 'the light of other days'."[31]

An early fancy dress ball of great interest is fully described by Dr. Scadding:

"It was in the assembly-room at Frank's, dismantled of its theatrical furniture, that a celebrated fancy ball was given on the last day of the year 1827, conjointly by Mr. Galt, Commissioner of the Canada Company, and Lady Mary Willis, wife of Mr. Justice Willis. On that occasion the general interests of the Company were to some extent studied in the ornamentation of the room, its floor being decorated with an immense representation, in chalks or water-colour, of the arms of the association. The supporters of the shield were of colossal dimensions: two lions rampant, bearing flags turning opposite ways: below, on the riband, in characters proportionably large, was the motto of the Company, *Non mutat genus solum*. The sides and ceiling of the room, with the passage leading from the front door to it, were covered throughout with branchlets of the hemlock-spruce: nestling in the greenery of this perfect bower were innumerable little coloured lamps, each containing a floating light.

"Here, for once, the potent, grave and reverend signiors of York, along with their sons and daughters, indulged in a little insanity. Lady Mary Willis appeared as Mary, Queen of Scots; the Judge himself, during a part of the evening, was in the costume of a gay old lady, the Countess of Desmond, aged one hundred years; Miss Willis, the clever amateur equestrienne, was Folly, with cap and bells; Dr. W. W. Baldwin was a Roman senator; his two sons, William and St. George, were the Dioscuri, Fratres Helenae, lucida Sidera; his nephew, Augustus Sullivan, was Puss-in-Boots; Dr. Grant Powell was Dr. Pangloss; Mr. Kerr, a real Otchipway chief, at the time a member of the Legislature, made a magnificent Kentucky backwoodsman, named and entitled Captain Jebediah Skinner. Mr. Gregg, of the Commissariat, was Othello. The Kentuckian (Kerr) pro-

[31]The quotations are from the most interesting account of the event appearing in the *Toronto Commercial Herald*, as reprinted a few days later by the *Examiner* of April 27, 1842.

fessing to be struck with the many fine points of the Moor, as regarded from his point of view, persisted, throughout the evening, in exhibiting an inclination to purchase—an idea naturally much resented by Othello. Col. Givins, his son Adolphus, Raymond Rèby, and others, were Indian chiefs of different tribes, who more than once indulged in the war-dance. Mr. Buchanan, son of the British Consul at New York, was Darnley; Mr. Thomson, of the Canada Company's office, was Rizzio; Mr. G. A. Barber was a wounded sailor recently from Navarino (that untoward event had lately taken place); his arm was in a sling; he had suffered in reality a multilation of the right hand by an explosion of gun-powder on the preceding 5th of November."[22]

People frequently travelled long distances to be present at the social gatherings of the *élite*. Mrs. Anna Jameson wrote on May 20, 1837: "Last night a ball at the government-house, to which people came from a distance of fifty—a hundred—two hundred miles—which is nothing to signify here. There were very pretty girls, and very nice dancing". The wealthier classes usually insisted on the best of music at their assemblies, and if the Paul Whiteman or Vincent Lopez of the day was not available the deficiency was quickly noticed; Mrs. Jameson, for example, referring to the same ball, observed that "we had all too much reason to lament the loss of the band of the 66th Regiment, which left us a few weeks ago—to my sorrow".[23]

It was not easy to be up-to-the-minute in dance steps when square and fancy dancing was in vogue. Quadrilles and schottisches were usual at the fashionable balls at Government House on such occasions as the opening of legislature; while dancing schools endeavoured in addition to insure proficiency in "Zodiac's New Pantomime, Scotch Sling, Children's Hornpipes, the 6th and 4th Hanoverian Waltzes, De la Cour Minuet walked in six corners, and Country Dances".[24]

There were numerous benevolent people in York, and their activities did much to alleviate the suffering and distress of immigrants. At the annual meeting of the

[22]Scadding: *Toronto of Old*, pp. 111-12.
[23]Anna Jameson: *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada*. 1838. Vol. I, p. 292.
[24]Kingston *Upper Canada Herald*, August 2, 1825.

Stranger's Friend Society held at De Forest's Hotel on November 30, 1822, it was reported that over £110 had been expended in relief of the destitute and sick. It was recognised that "the great expense attending the passage of emigrants and their families up the St. Lawrence frequently exhausts their means, depresses their spirits, and, added to the great fatigue of the journey and the exposure of the weather, produces sickness among them ere they reach York"; and to these, and others who needed provisions until their crops were harvested, the aid of the Society was most welcome. James Fitzgibbon, the secretary, reported that 7,898 rations had been distributed and 215 families relieved during the year.[25] In 1829 the same organisation was known as the Society for the Relief of the Sick and Destitute; while three years later the York Emigrant Committee, appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor, was assisting the Society in facilitating the settlement or employment of the large numbers who were then entering Upper Canada.

The first charitable bazaar in York occurred on September 2, 1832, in the commissariat storehouse near the foot of John Street. The interior of the building was gaily decorated with flags for the event, which was to provide funds for the relief of distress caused by the recent great cholera epidemic. The bazaar was under the patronage of Lady Colborne, and a piece of music called *Raven Plume* was written for the occasion by James M. Cawdell, dedicated to Miss Mary Powell, and sung by J. E. Goodson. A contemporary publication noted that "all the fashionable and well-disposed attended; the band of the gallant 79th played; at each table stood a lady; and in a very short time all the articles were sold to gentlemen who will keep as the apple of their eye the things made and presented by such hands. The sum collected was three hundred and eleven pounds."[26]

The fashionable caterer for such social events was an Italian, Franco Rossi, the first "scientific confectioner" in York. Dr. Scadding describes his shop as "ever fragrant and ambrosial. In his specialties he was a superior workman. From him were procured the fashionable bridecakes

[25] *Upper Canada Gazette*, December 12, 1822.
[26] *Sibbald's Canadian Magazine*, January, 1893.

of the day; as also the noyeau, parfait-amour, and other *liqueurs* set out for visitors on New Year's Day. Rossi was the first to import hither good objects of art: fine copies of the Laocoon, the Apollo Belvidere, the Perseus of Canova, with other classical groups and figures sculptured in Florentine alabaster, were disseminated by him in the community".[27]

Rossi's emporium of the artistic and delicious was located on the south side of King Street to the east of Bay Street, and is the *affiche* visited in 1832 by Thomas Hamilton, who was thereby reminded of Grange's—presumably a fashionable resort in London:

"In passing through the streets I was rather surprised to observe an *affiche* intimating that ice-creams were to be had within. The weather being hot I entered, and found the master of the establishment to be an Italian. I never ate better ices at Grange's."[28]

A place of entertainment of another variety was Hamilton's White Swan Inn, on Front Street East. An early Natural History Museum drew numerous persons to the hostelry, and Dr. Scadding outlines its rise and fall:

"The corner we approach after passing the Market Square was occupied by an inn with a sign-board sustained on a high post inserted at the outer edge of the footpath, in country roadside fashion. This was Hamilton's, or the White Swan. It was here, we believe, or in an adjoining house, that a travelling citizen of the United States, in possession of a collection of stuffed birds and similar objects, endeavoured at an early period to establish a kind of Natural History Museum. To the collection here was once rashly added figures in wax of General Jackson and some other United States notabilities, all in grand costume. Several of these were one night abstracted from the Museum by some over-patriotic youths, and suspended by the neck from the limbs of one of the large trees that overlooked the harbour."[29]

Of a similar nature was a travelling museum which

[27]Scadding, *Toronto of Old*, pp. 94-5.

[28]Thomas Hamilton: *Men and Manners in America*, 1833. Vol. II, p. 335.

[29]Scadding: *Toronto of Old*, p. 49. Charles Fothergill once received a grant of land in support of a projected museum in York.

visited York in 1826, stopping for a few days at Frank's Hotel:

"New Museum—Just arrived from the Southard, a new, curious and pleasing collection of wax figures, large as life, consisting of some of the most extraordinary characters the world has produced for centuries; among which are Duncan Bradley, the Yorkshire Giant, eight feet seven inches high, and well proportioned; Mr. Daniel Lambert, who weighed 739 lbs., 10 feet four inches round the body, three feet one inch round the leg, etc., who lately died in London. Also natural and artificial curiosities, paintings, electricity, etc., etc. Good music on different organs, tambourine, etc. N.B.—The above may be seen at C. Frank's in York, on the Market Square, every day from nine o'clock a.m. till nine p.m. during its stay in town. Admittance is 3d. Small children half price. York, August 19th, 1826."[56]

Somewhat more pretentious than these forerunners of the Royal Ontario Museum were the works produced by the York Artists and Amateur Association, described as follows by Dr. Scadding in his outline of the beginnings of artistic endeavour in the town:

"Looking up Parliament Street we are reminded that a few yards westward from where Duke Street enters it lived at an early period Mr. Richard Coates, an estimable and ingenious man, whose name is associated in our memory with the early dawn of the fine arts in York. Mr. Coates, in a self-taught way, executed, not unsuccessfully, portraits in oil of some of our ancient worthies. Among things of a general or historical character, he painted also for David Willson, the founder of the Children of Peace, the symbolical decorations of the interior of the Temple at Sharon. He cultivated music likewise, vocal and instrumental; he built an organ of some pretensions in his own house, on which he performed; he built another for David Willson, at Sharon. Mr. Coates constructed besides, in the yard of his house, an elegantly-finished little pleasure yacht of about nine tons burden.

"This passing reference to infant Art in York recalls again the name of Mr. John Craig, who has before been mentioned in our account of the interior of one of the many

[56] *U. E. Loyalist*, August 19, 1826.

successive St. Jameses. Although Mr. Craig did not himself profess to go beyond his sphere as a decorative and heraldic painter, the spirit that animated him really tended to foster in the community a taste for art in a wider sense.

"Mr. Charles Daly, also, as a skilful teacher of drawing in water-colours and introducer of superior specimens, did much to encourage art at an early date. In 1834 we find Mr. Daly promoting an Exhibition of Paintings by the York Artists and Amateur Association, and acting as Honorary Secretary when the Exhibition for the year took place. Mr. James Hamilton, a teller in the bank, produced, too, some noticeable landscapes in oil.

"As an auxiliary in the cause, and one regardful of the wants of artists at an early period, we name, likewise, Mr. Alexander Hamilton; who, in addition to supplying materials in the form of pigments and prepared colours, contributed to the tasteful setting off of the productions of pencil and brush by furnishing them with frames artistically carved and gilt.

"Out of the small beginnings and rudiments of art at York, one artist of a genuine stamp was, in the lapse of a few years, developed—Mr. Paul Kane; who, after studying in the schools of Europe, returned to Canada and made the illustration of Indian character and life his specialty. By talent exhibited in this class of pictorial delineation he acquired a distinguished reputation throughout the North American continent; and by his volume of beautifully illustrated travels, published in London, and entitled *Wanderings of an Artist Among the Indians of North America*, he obtained for himself a recognised place in the literature of British Art."[31]

Paul Kane spent his boyhood in York, and, though at much later periods it was possible to catch pike, bass and an odd maskinonge off the wharves, the days he recalled when he had seen "as many as 100 light-jacks gliding about the Bay of Toronto"[32] were not to be repeated, for fish-spearing from birch canoes was characteristic only of the pioneer period. In the eighteen-thirties Kane was following

[31]Scadding: *Toronto of Old*, pp. 202-3.

[32]Paul Kane: *Wanderings of an Artist among the Indians of North America*, 1859. p. [illegible].

the business of "Coach, Sign and House Painter" at 158 King Street. His father was a soldier who kept store on the west side of Yonge Street between King and Adelaide. His sign, "Kane, Spirit Store", was for some years familiar in that locality.

The private diversions of citizens varied with their wealth, inclinations and capabilities. Formal calls (leaving cards, of course,) were as fashionable then as in more recent times. It was a time when many people participated in the aristocratic sport of riding horseback, while picnics, boating, sleighing and skating were enjoyed in season. Among the socially select Family Compact set "there were dinners given by Sir John Colborne and other prominent people. There were 'Readings', 'Musicales', and private theatricals at Hazelburn, S. P. Jarvis' house; and at the close of the season the more elaborate and unique event of the Fancy Dress Ball given by the Sheriff and Mrs. Jarvis at Rosedale".[53] In less exclusive circles there were less elaborate "parties", but at the lower end of the social order, among the poverty-stricken, there was but little to divert the mind from life's cares except the crude and demoralising pleasures of tavern and saloon and their usual accompaniments—brawling, cock- and dog-fighting, gambling and prostitution.

Travellers visiting Toronto at this time—just after the creation of the city—were not favourably impressed with the facilities for social intercourse and cultural advancement. In 1837 Mrs. Anna Jameson found that there was a commercial news-room, but that this was "absolutely the only place of assembly or amusement, except the taverns and low drinking-houses. An attempt has been made to found a Mechanics' Institute and a literary club; but as yet they create little interest, and are very [illegible] supported".[54] Four years later Sir Richard Bonnycastle was in Toronto and learned that there had been "various attempts to get up respectable races, to establish a theatre and a winter assembly for dancing", but without much success; he also states that a national Literary and Philosophical Society was organised with difficulty, but lasted only about a year.[55]

[53]A. Meredith: *Mary's Rosedale and Gossip of Little York*. pp. 155-6.
[54]Jameson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 273-4.
[55]Sir Richard Bonnycastle: *The Canadas in 1841*. 1842. Vol. I, p. 168.

While learned societies received but scant support, the advancement of music was no greater. In 1837 Mrs. Jameson found that Archdeacon Strachan was collecting subscriptions to provide a £1,000 organ for St. James' Church in Toronto, and that "an intelligent musician" had trained a good choir; but she learned that the conductor had received so little encouragement "that he is at this moment preparing to go to the United States".[10]

"Respectable races" had, in spite of Sir Richard Bonnycastle's comment, been held in York from very early times, though the Turf Club dates only from 1837. The gentlemen of the town and garrison formed steeplechase and other semi-private racing clubs, and had a race-course, previous to the War of 1812, at the commencement of the peninsula leading to what is now the island. This was a straight track, and its location was chosen largely because the peninsula was a popular resort for those who enjoyed the pleasures of walking, riding and driving; particularly did the military engage in these pursuits so characteristic of English watering-places. The importance attached both to the race-course and the other facilities for pleasure on the peninsula may be seen from the attempt to build by private subscription in 1822-23 two bridges over the Great and Little Don. Though these causeways were partially constructed, there was not money enough to complete them until 1835, and then only with the aid of a subsidy from the military chest, made available through the interest of Lieutenant-Governor Sir John Colborne. Their opening was an occasion of gratulation no less than that in modern Ontario when a stretch of paved highway is officially inaugurated; but in this instance the old-world pomp and ceremonial was reminiscent of a lord mayor's installation.

In September, 1837, there were three days of racing at Runnymede, "Mr. Scarlett's Simcoe Chase Course", in the Humber Valley. This meet probably inaugurated formal racing in Toronto, the Upper Canada Turf Club having just previously been organised as a result of interest aroused in military races on the Garrison Common. In the early forties another track was in operation on the Boulton property in the rear of The Grange, to be followed by Malt-

[10]Jameson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 274.

land's track east of the Don, and Gates' near the corner of Danforth and Broadview. Several other race-courses were constructed in the late fifties, and from time to time in after years.

Tandem and carriole clubs were other organisations dependent upon horses, the membership of these societies being largely restricted to officers. The Toronto Tandem Club was organised in the winter of 1839-40, and the activities included weekly drives in sleighs and cutters to the Peacock Inn or some other favourite resort, where gay dinners not infrequently drew forth poetical effusions from the more gifted members. Concerning winter sleighing parties Mrs. Anna Jameson wrote:

"I stood at my window today, watching the sleighs as they glided past. They are of all shapes and sizes. A few of the carriage sleighs are well-appointed and handsome. The market sleighs are often two or three boards nailed together in form of a wooden box upon runners; some straw and a buffalo skin serve for the seat; barrels of flour and baskets of eggs fill up the empty space. Others are like cars, and others called cutters are mounted upon high runners like sleigh phaetons. These are sported by the young men and officers of the garrison, and require no inconsiderable skill in driving, as I am assured that they overturn in the snow not above once in a quarter of an hour, and no harm and much mirth ensues. But the wood sleighs are my delight; a large platform of boards is raised upon runners, with a few upright poles held together at top by a rope; the logs of oak, pine and maple are then heaped up to the height of six or seven feet. On the summit lie a couple of deer frozen stiff, their huge antlers projecting in a most picturesque fashion, and on these, again, a man is seated with a blanket round him, his furred cap drawn down upon his ears, and his scarlet woollen comforter forming a fine bit of colour. He guides with a pole his two patient oxen, the clouds of vapor curling from their nostrils into the keen frosty air."[37]

During the same period many another sport saw its inception in Toronto. Though the first Curling Club was

[37] Anna Jameson: *Sketches in Canada and Rambles among the Red Men.* 1839. 1852 Edition, p. 7.

not organised until the winter of 1836-37, the Scottish inhabitants of the district were playing "the roarin' game" on the Don River at least as early as 1829, and matches between the curlers of Toronto and those of Scarborough Township were being held in the thirties. In later years it was customary for devotees of the besom and stane to keep the snow off sections of ice between the wharves in the Bay; while other groups were curling on Grenadier Pond and the Humber River. Annual bonspiels which drew curlers from all parts of the province were long notable events; but of famous teams none could approach the Toronto Red Jackets, who won seventy-five successive matches against picked teams before suffering their first defeat.

Cricket developed in York in the early thirties as a result of the enthusiasm of G. A. Barber, one of the first masters at Upper Canada College. In 1834 the Toronto cricketers defeated Guelph in a match played at Hamilton, each team having to make an all-day journey to and from the match. In September, 1840, a remarkable hoax on someone's part led to the unexpected arrival in Toronto of a team of New York cricketers. The ensuing match was, however, the forerunner of others with several American cities. Many of those who played cricket were also enthusiastic lawn bowlers, the green being located near the Caer Howell grounds just west of University Avenue.

Baseball, developing in the United States in the late forties, reached Canada some ten or fifteen years later. Just as, in the opinion of many, cricket and lacrosse were "gentlemen's games" ("A cricketer", says the *Patriot*, "as a matter of course detests democracy"),[33] so baseball, like football, was early relegated to the "rude mechanicals". In the seventies and eighties, however, baseball became more and more popular, though the element of professionalism which gradually entered the sport was objectionable to many.

Lacrosse, however, was not an important pioneer sport. The Indian game, called *baggatiway*, was played with a deerskin ball filled with hair, and the goal posts were frequently a mile apart. Adapted for Canadian athletes in Montreal at the middle of the century, the game was first

[33]The *Patriot*, July 16, 1856.

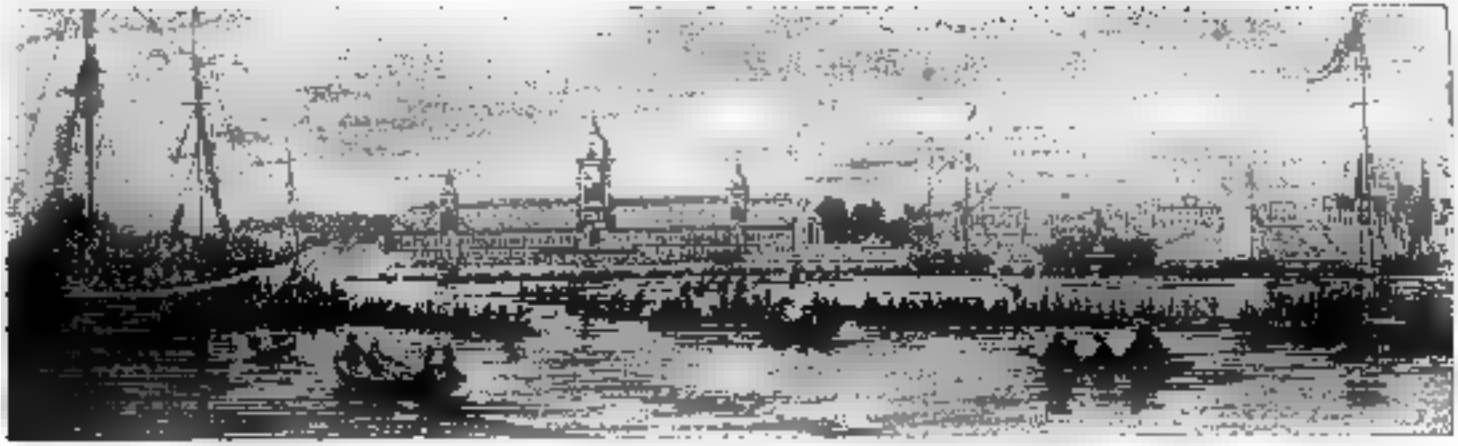
played in Toronto in the sixties. Hockey, the winter counterpart of lacrosse, developed from "shinny" many years later.

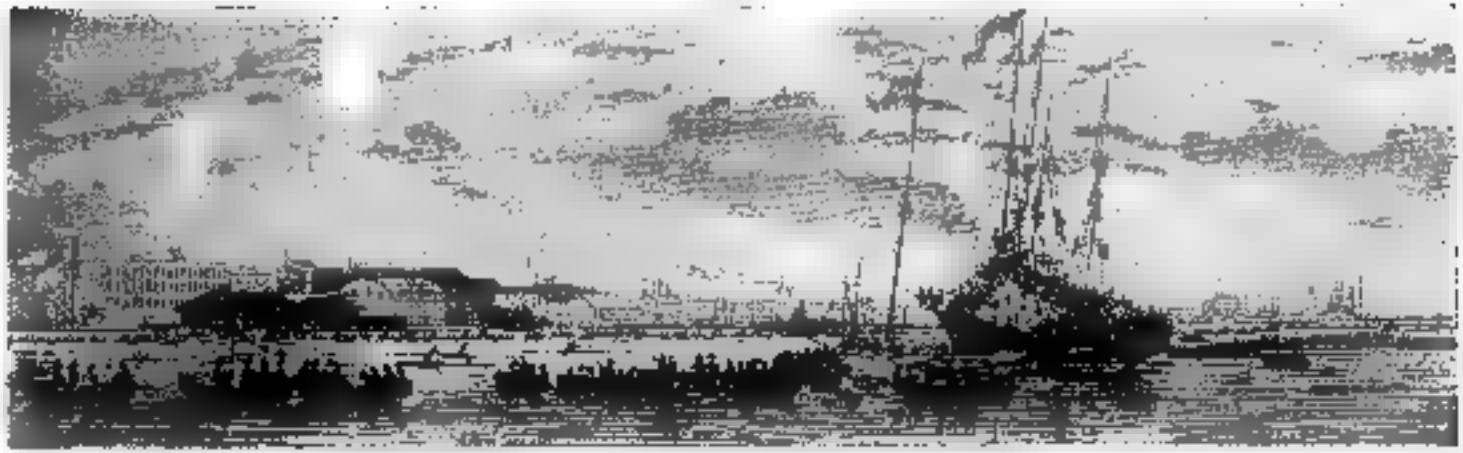
From the earliest years of the town the officers of the Garrison enjoyed sailing on the Bay, and as time passed, the birch canoe and bateau, early used in spearing fish by jack-light, were superseded by sailing yachts. In the thirties and forties sailing races, in which yachtsmen from Cobourg, Hamilton and other towns participated, were occasionally held, most of the boats being owned by retired naval officers or other gentlemen. In later years the regattas along the waterfront were of a more elaborate nature, and were accompanied by fashionable balls and other select social activities.

Rowing was early popular in Toronto, but even as late as 1870 there were no oarsmen in America who could compete with the best English scullers. Born in 1855, Ned Hanlan, son of a hotel-keeper on the Island, was rowing in the early 70's, champion of Ontario in 1876, and defeated all-comers everywhere until 1884, when his supremacy was ended. He usually won with ease, sometimes, like the modern Bob Pearce, making his opponents look foolish.[80] The Tinning brothers, Richard, John and Thomas, attained as oarsmen something more than local fame about twenty years earlier. In 1858 they were members of a crew which defeated Chicago for "the championship of the Lakes" and a purse of $2,000.

The city of Toronto of the late eighteen-forties was just commencing to lose the characteristics of a town. Public amusements at that time were still comparatively few. The members of the Mechanics' Institute might read books or papers by gas light at their club rooms, and William Wakefield's auction room was a favourite evening resort for many because of the entertainment and humour provided. Stock companies in primitive theatres were attractive to some people, while itinerant circuses and other shows visited the town from time to time. L. J. Privat's horse-boat transported picnic parties to the Island (then a peninsula), but, apart from Privat's Hotel, on the site of the present Eastern

[80] An outline of Hanlan's chief contests may be found in Middleton, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 311-12.





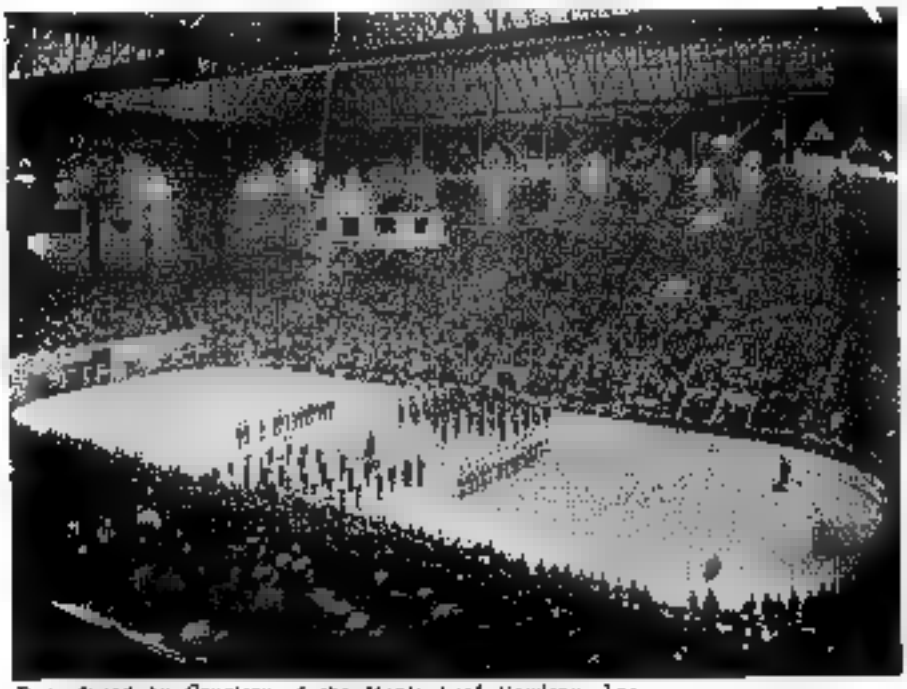
Canadian Illustrated News. THE INTERNATIONAL REGATTA ON TORONTO BAY, 1873 F. M. Bell Smith.

Though most of the events were won by Americans it was nevertheless considered a most successful regatta. The old Union Station may be seen in the background of the upper sketch.

Reproduced by Courtesy of T. A. Reed, Esq.

CRICKET MATCH AT TORONTO, SEPTEMBER 2ND AND 3RD, 1872

The Cricket Grounds were situated just south of College Street, west of University Avenue. This match was between "twelve of the Gentlemen of England and twenty-two of the Toronto Club".



Reproduced by Courtesy of the Maple Leaf Gardens, Inc.

"THE FASTEST IN THE WORLD"
PROFESSIONAL HOCKEY—CHICAGO BLACK HAWKS VS. TORONTO MAPLE LEAFS

13,500 fans at the Maple Leaf Gardens, Toronto, November 12, 1931. Modern professional sports provide "thrills" equal to Spanish bull fights—and in other respects, too, they have much in common.

Gap, the island contained only two or three fishermen's huts at the West Point. C. C. Taylor recalled that a favourite place for a swim was off Rees' Wharf, nearly opposite the Parliament Buildings, and at other quiet spots along the shore of the Bay:

"Here, on a fine summer's morning, many of the leading merchants and clerks from King Street might be seen indulging in the healthy exercise. The only restriction was as to time, there being none as to dress. No person was allowed to bathe after seven o'clock, before which time it was perfectly legal. By those of us who had been accustomed to 'disport beneath the crested wave' on the Atlantic Coast, *in puris naturalibus*, the privilege was highly appreciated and enjoyed.

"One morning the writer chose a spot in front of the Commissariat Depot, which was always guarded by a sentry, who, with fixed bayonet, 'walked his lonely round' in front of his box. These sentries appeared to be authorised to enforce the rule as to time. Not knowing it was past seven o'clock I had quite prepared for a dip when the sentry advanced a few paces and, in a very decided tone, said if I went into the water he 'would do his duty'. Not liking the look of the cold steel, and thinking that in this case discretion was the better part of valour, I quickly dressed and, apologising for having mistaken the hour, beat a retreat."[40]

As early as 1812, it may be explained, the Magistrates forbade bathing in front of the town between sunrise and sunset. Another favourite "swimmin' hole" was that section of the beach south of Sir Richard Bonnycastle's residence, near the south-west corner of Front and Peter Streets. The boys of Upper Canada College were frequently to be found swimming there in the eighteen-forties. When the Bay was unsuitable because of cold weather those who wished might patronise the Royal Baths of Angus Blue. This popular resort was located on King Street, west of Lamb's Hotel, and extended to the rear of a small frame building where the keeper lived. The *Examiner* in 1844 contained the announcement that "the baths (opposite Stone's Hotel), King Street, for ladies and gentlemen, are now open. Hot and cold baths can be had at all hours from

[40]C. C. Taylor: *Toronto Called Back*, 1926, p. 77.

6 a.m. to 10 p.m. Entrance for ladies on King Street. Entrance for gentlemen on the lane leading to the Racquet court."[41] Baths were not, however, the commonplace institution which they have become since the great development of plumbing accessories, for the first bathtub in Canada is said to have been that installed in a Toronto home in 1844.

At all seasons, but especially on Saturday nights, when those most closely associated could conveniently be present, fires could be depended upon to provide some excitement, particularly for the volunteer Fire Brigade, and for the carters racing with puncheons of water to secure the prizes for early arrival. Perhaps, too, one might have his likeness taken by Eli Palmer, Daguerrean Artist, successor to Mr. and Mrs. Cook, portrait-painters of the late eighteen-thirties, and of the silhouette-cutters who travelled about making profile likenesses in paper. (The name, by the way, originated in Paris, the economy of detail in this type of portrait suggesting to frivolous Parisians an unpopular parsimonious Minister of Finance, Etienne de Silhouette). The ladies of the period passed a great deal of time pleasantly perusing the styles in the current *Godey's Lady's Book,* or imitating the latest "fashion dolls" from Europe or the United States—the Butterick patterns of that day. And if all else failed, a person might at least watch the arrival of passengers and mail at Weller's Stage Coach Office, at the intersection of Front, Wellington and Church Streets; the arrival of the English mail once a fortnight was an outstanding event for many citizens.

The general attitude towards the theatre in the early forties was not unlike that of the editor of the *Examiner*:

"We are glad to learn that Messrs. Dean & Co. of Rochester are about to establish a respectable theatre in this city. We have of late been so completely over-run with pseudo-professors of every description that the public are very naturally becoming disgusted with public exhibitions. Since, however, performers of a higher order have chosen to come among us, we trust their efforts will be greeted with the cordiality which they merit, and their endeavours to introduce the legitimate drama to Toronto be not only ap-

[41]The advertisement is quoted in Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 444.

preciated but rewarded by a liberal patronage. From having seen them play at Hamilton we are enabled conscientiously to declare that their performances are highly creditable, and calculated to gratify every true lover of the drama."[43]

The buildings which served the stage during the early years of the city were at first little improved over those of the eighteen-thirties. Derring's was a barn-like building at the corner of Scott and Wellington Streets, near the Ontario House; another, on William Street above Queen, had originally been a barn; while a third was the old coach-house on King Street West near Government House. Theatrical companies staged in these rather crude buildings such plays as *The Golden Farmer, The Happy Cobbler, The Brigands, The Swiss Cottage* and *Contentment vs. Riches.* In 1848, however, the Royal Lyceum, Toronto's ninth (or tenth) theatre, was the first to be erected for the purpose. This building was located on the south side of King Street, between Bay and York, and was the city's most popular theatre until it was burned in the early seventies. Until 1853 it was "a queer little theatre. There were (for boxes) little holes in the wall fringed with pink curtains, but so arranged that their occupants faced the audience instead of the stage".[44] John Nickinson, long a notable figure in Toronto's theatrical life, became manager at that time, however, and rearranged the interior. Using gas to provide the illumination, this excellent actor and producer was responsible for several seasons of fine plays at the Royal Lyceum. A contemporary publication gives an interesting, if not particularly flattering account of the theatre and Nickinson's company of 1858. The Royal Lyceum, "although small and, since the hard times commenced, has not met with the encouragement its management merited, is an exceedingly pleasant resort". The manager, Mr. Nickinson, was himself "a first-rate actor", and he was ably assisted by others "equally good in their line", notably Mr. Petrie, Mr. Marlowe, Mr. Lee, Mrs. Marlowe and Miss Frost. The "general run of pieces" were well presented by

[43]The *Examiner*, September 7, 1842.

[44]See Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 483-9, for a full account of the Royal Lyceum.

this stock company, and we are glad to learn that "the performances are always characterised by morality and good breeding".[44]

The restricted area of the Toronto of the forties is apparent when it is remembered that apart from Church and Yonge Streets, there were practically no buildings north of Queen Street. The important suburbs of Brockton, Parkdale, Seaton Village, Riverside and Leslieville did not exist at that time, and Yorkville had but a few scattered houses, of which the best was Mr. Bloor's. An old resident gives an interesting account of pleasant walks in the vicinity of the city, though his enjoyment was somewhat tempered by memories of the flora of the Old Land:

"Our first tour of exploration in the outskirts was along Carlton Street from Yonge, then a clay road without houses or sidewalks. Having got as far as the present Homewood Avenue, we found a small gate-house, and on entering the wicket discovered a natural pathway through a thick pine grove. Proceeding north we reached the house now occupied by Homer Dixon, Esq., and finding further progress that way, or egress, impossible, retraced our steps.

"Our next adventure was along Bloor Street, east to the present cemetery fence, and thence backwards again; and these for a time constituted our only recreation grounds, except the College Avenue.

"In taking a morning or an afternoon walk, there was the absence of many pleasing objects so familiar in former everyday life. The 'wee crimson-tippit' flowers that covered the pasture fields like a carpet; the banks of primroses, buttercups and violets, abounding by every roadside; the double line of hawthorns whose blossoms perfumed the air with their delicious fragrance, and the honeysuckle and wallflowers in every lane; the meadows, thick with May flowers,—all were missed during this first summer in Toronto. For the hedgerows we found the unsightly snake fence, and for the evergreens of holly, laurel, and ivy, the everlasting, monotonous pines, good for use but not very ornamental.

"The study of this class of flora no doubt might be in-

[44] *Descriptive Catalogue of the Provincial Exhibition, 1858.* Second edition, 1858, p. 79.

teresting to those who studied the subject from a utilitarian point of view, and the smaller species might have been discovered by an adventurous descent down the ravine to where the River Don flowed in its native beauty; and some ferns and beautiful wild flowers might have been discovered, very interesting to students in botany; but to the casual observer these beautiful objects were at that time conspicuous by their absence.

"Along Church Street, any summer's afternoon, especially in a swamp at the south-east corner of the present beautiful Normal School grounds, could be heard the music of a frogs' concert, accompanied at a short distance with the tintinabulation of the bells on the necks of the cows which roamed through the browny-green pastures and amongst the thick bush which prevailed east of Church and north of Queen Street. These sounds were further augmented by the cackling of flocks of geese, which, in their amphibious character, had their choice of both native elements. The song of the lark, the thrush, the blackbird and goldfinch, so familiar before, was no more heard; the buzz of the bumblebee and the whirr of the numerous insects that abounded in the bush being the only substitute."[45]

In a more cheerful strain W. H. Pearson recalled[46] that in his boyhood days he "gathered strawberries on the site of the Roman Catholic Cathedral, and beechnuts on what is now the Normal School Square, and shot a wild pigeon near the corner of Gould Street. In the forties and well on in the fifties, during the summer months, immense flocks of pigeons in their migration flew over the outskirts and sometimes the city itself, and everybody who had a gun took advantage of the opportunity to shoot them. I have seen quite a number of men and boys firing at them near Mr. Allan's property on what is now Shuter Street, since there was then no prohibition against discharging firearms in the

[45]Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 50-51.

[46]W. H. Pearson: *Recollections and Records of Toronto of Old*. 1914, pp. 51-2. The shooting of mosquito hawks on the streets of York and near the bay is said by Lieutenant E. T. Coke in his *The Subaltern's Furlough* (1833) to be "the chief diversion of young men", though one hesitates to accept this exaggerated generalisation; and Major T. W. Magrath describes the excellent woodcock-shooting available during the summer months. (See *Authentic Letters from Upper Canada*. 1833.)

city. One of the amusements of the day was shooting nighthawks, and the foot of Church Street was quite a popular place for this sport."

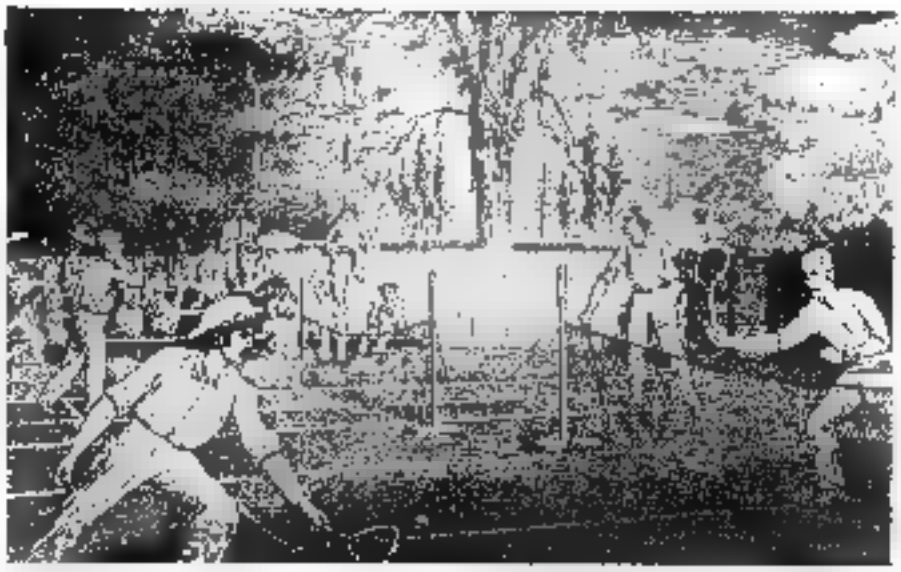
Both women and men were fond of visiting their friends and associates, and such calls, especially on New Year's Day, were frequently of a very formal nature. Sunday was the favourite day for calling,—after church was over, of course. Of interest concerning church services is C. C. Taylor's description:

"On Sundays, generally, three carriages could be seen at St. James' Cathedral, and, as a good deal of rivalry existed between the owners of two out of three, in the style of the appointments, the coachmen's livery, and horses and harness, their appearance on driving from church was a standing topic at almost every dinner table, the dresses of the ladies coming in for a full share of the criticism, of course of a good-natured character.

"On enquiry we found, rather to our surprise, that there were two churches having organs, something we had not expected to find: one was in the old Cathedral and the other in the Richmond Street Wesleyan Church. On being introduced to Rev. Messrs. Cooney and Harvard by letters, the former took us with pride to see the new church on Richmond Street. It then stood on an almost vacant lot, there being no buildings between it and Bay Street. On entering he pointed with a good deal of satisfaction to the fine organ, which stood behind the pulpit at the time. We attended divine service on the following Sunday, when Mr. Cooney preached, and were much interested. The musical portion of the service was very pleasing and effective. A well-known alderman of the city at the present time was leader of the tenors, and the writer has a distinct recollection of his flexible voice as he glided from tenor to counter-tenor, and occasionally appeared imperceptibly to run into a falsetto, which added much to the harmony and contributed very greatly to the general effect.

"We were equally pleased in the old Cathedral. The beautifully composed and impressively delivered sermons of the Rev. Mr. Grasett were such as should never be forgotten, while the music was of a high order."[47]

[47]Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 48 and 56.



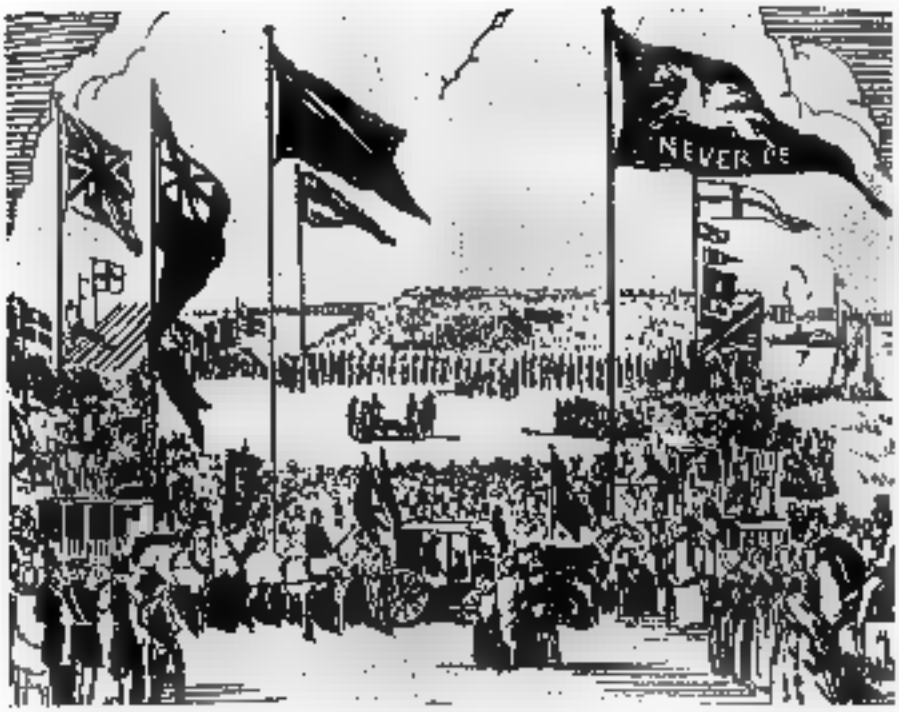
Canadian Illustrated News. A. Dickson Patterson.

TOURNAMENT AT THE TORONTO LAWN TENNIS CLUB, FRONT STREET, 1881

Canadian Illustrated News.

AT THE BEACH IN THE SEVENTIES

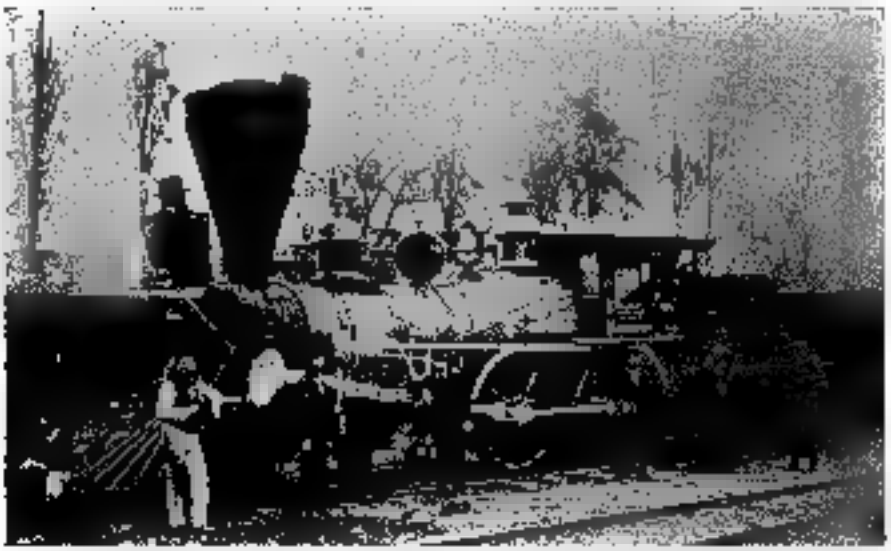
There were no bathing beauties in those days!



Reproduced by Courtesy of T. A. Reed, Esq., and the Canadian Pacific Railway.

THE AMPHITHEATRE, OCTOBER 15, 1851

The illustration shows Lady Elgin turning the first sod of the Ontario, Simcoe and Huron Union Railroad, on the Bay Front near Simcoe Street.



THE TORONTO, FIRST LOCOMOTIVE BUILT IN CANADA, 1853

It was constructed in Good's Foundry, Yonge Street near Queen, opposite the present Eaton store.

Characteristic of the days of great changes, and just as popular today, were ceremonial celebrations inaugurating buildings, railroads and bridges. We have an account, for example, of the laying of the corner-stone of York's new Town Hall in April, 1824 :

"On Saturday, the 24th instant, his Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, attended by his staff, was met by the Honourable the Members of the Executive Council, the Judges of the Court of King's Bench, and the Gentlemen of the Bar, with the Magistrates and principal inhabitants of York, in procession, for the purpose of laying the foundation stone of the new Jail and Court House about to be erected in this Town. A sovereign and half sovereign of gold, and several coins of silver and copper, of the present reign, together with some newspapers and other memorials of the present day, were deposited in a cavity of the stone, over which a plate of copper, bearing an appropriate inscription, was placed; and after his Excellency had given the first blow with a hammer handed to him for the purpose, the ceremony concluded with several hearty cheers from all who were present. If the question were of any real importance, we might have the curiosity to inquire why the deposit was made in the south-east, rather than in the north-east corner of the building."[48]

A quarter century later occurred the inauguration of Ontario's first steam railway—the Ontario, Simcoe and Huron Union, from Toronto to Machell's Corners (Aurora). It was first attempted to finance the Company by an elaborate lottery, but more orthodox means were finally employed. One who lived in Toronto at the time outlines the activities at the turning of the first sod:

"On October 15th, 1851, the first sod of the Northern Railway was turned by Lady Elgin, assisted by Mayor Bowes, nearly opposite the Parliament Buildings. Mayor Bowes was in full official costume—cocked hat and sword, knee breeches, silk stockings, and shoes with steel buckles. The earth dug by her ladyship with a beautiful silver spade was taken by His Worship a short distance in an oak wheelbarrow, the whole ceremony creating great interest.

"Mr. F. C. Capreol had so far seen his much-ridiculed

[48]The *Canadian Review*, July, 1824.

scheme carried into effect. No longer laughed at and spoken of as 'Mad Capreol', as the writer has often heard him called, he had shown great method in his madness. Having been a fellow-passenger with him when crossing on his visit to England to raise the necessary capital—at first by a kind of lottery scheme, and afterwards in the legitimate way—I saw his determination to carry on his plans, and the clear prospect he had of the future of the undertaking."[49]

The mention of a lottery recalls their prominence in early times. The *Toronto Herald* of December 30, 1841, contains the following item:

"We invite attention to Mr. McConkey's advertisement of a Lottery for plum cakes, sweetmeats, etc., the Tickets for which we hope will be readily disposed of. The principal prize is a mighty cake of some 120 weight, the largest, we suppose, ever made in 'these diggings', and it is well deserving of a visit of inspection."

Among eight other lotteries advertised in the same issue of the *Herald*[50] are the Sylvester Lottery, the Virginia Monongolia Lottery, the Virginia Leesburg Lottery and the State of New Jersey Lottery,— all of them American. The extensive advertising which they were able to pay for shows how deep-seated was the gambling spirit and also how profitable such enterprises were—in spite of the fact that the prizes ranged up to $40,000.

Militia parade day, on June 4th, birthday of George III, was never the crude holiday in Toronto that was usually characteristic of the event in other parts of the province. A dignified parade of the garrison and militia, including a *feu de joie* and possibly an inspection on the old Fair Green by the Governor, and a grand ball in the evening, provided a celebration of a type not usually found elsewhere in Upper Canada. The *feu de joie* was performed in the following manner: Each man of the company fired in succession, the fire running continuously and quickly down the front rank from right to left and up the rear rank from left to right. This is done three times, and, on the completion of each burst of fire, a portion of a national air is played by the band.

[49]Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 99. [50]The *Toronto Herald*, December 30, 1841.

The honour of establishing a holiday on Queen Victoria's birthday is said to belong to Toronto citizens. It was first suggested in 1847, when political and social unrest in Europe was endangering many thrones, but a celebration did not occur until May 24th of the following year. Soon afterwards many other towns followed Toronto's example, and a legal holiday was created. The events of the day have long been associated chiefly with fireworks for the amusement of the children, but in earlier times they usually included activities of a military nature. A notable celebration occurred on May 24, 1854, while the Crimean War was in progress. Escorted by Colonel Denison's troop of Provincial Cavalry, a procession composed of officials, the fire brigade, the National Societies, and other citizens passed from the City Hall along King Street to Government House, a number of elaborate triumphal arches having been erected *en route*. A public meeting at which the Mayor presided adopted an address to the Queen. Over 5,000 people were present on this occasion, and cheers for Victoria, the Emperor of the French, and the Turks were given amid the greatest enthusiasm.

Some years earlier an interesting holiday celebration occurred in Toronto. This rather unique affair took place on April 2, 1840, in honour of Queen Victoria's marriage on February 10th. A peculiar account of the event says that "one ox roasted whole . . . . was brought into the centre of the Market Square in Procession. . . . Every person, Man, Woman and Child who intended to partake of this banquet was requested to come cleanly attired, each with a 'Knife, Fork and Plate'. The City was beautifully illuminated from 8 o'clock to 11. There was also a display of Fire Works and Balloons".[51]

William Helliwell, who was present at the celebration, recalled in 1896 many details of the event; though, unless there were two such occasions, he confuses the time by referring to it as in honour of Victoria's Coronation, which occurred on June 28th, 1838. In describing the arrangements for the festival he says:

"To carry out the celebration several tables were placed in the Market square or court. The butchers' stalls were

[51] The *Mirror*, April 3, 1840.

vacated, decorated with evergreens, and converted into booths where tea, coffee, etc., were served to the citizens. The tables were loaded with all kinds of eatables—beef, mutton pudding, pies, etc., contributed by the people, the most notable gift being a huge plum pudding furnished by Charles Daly, who was then Clerk of the Council. This pudding weighed over 100 pounds, was two days in boiling, and turned out satisfactory.

"There was also an entire ox roasted, the cooking being done in the basement of Judge Sherwood's house, which stood then where the Board of Trade building now stands on the corner of Yonge and Front Streets. On Coronation Day the ox was well cooked and placed on a sledge, which was drawn by four horses, gaily decorated, and driven by a prominent citizen noted for his loyalty—Mr. James Browne, the wharfinger. On arriving at the Front Street entrance of the market the four gates were simultaneously opened, and two military bands, stationed on the balconies overlooking the square, struck up *The Roast Beef of Old England*, when the expectant crowd marched in, and the good things provided were served by Messrs. George Percival Ridout, Thomas D. Harris, and other gentlemen of the town.

"Everyone contributed his mite. The hardware stores lent knives, forks and spoons; the crockery stores, plates and dishes. Beer was supplied by Messrs. Helliwell, and it is creditable that, although everyone was free to eat and drink as he pleased, there was no abuse of the privilege. In the evening there were fireworks and a general illumination, and every window in the town and its suburbs had a light of some kind. The festivities were kept up to an early hour of the morning, a day of rejoicing without accident that will be remembered by many of our citizens who are still to the fore."[33]

"Illuminations" were long popular as a means of celebration. Originally consisting of candles in every window in town, the festival was gradually developed by the use of fireworks, which in time became the most prominent part of the celebration—and they have never lost their popu-

[33]William Helliwell's reminiscences are to be found in Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 1038.

larity. Early in January, 1842, the information reached Toronto of the birth of an heir-apparent to the throne some seven weeks before. The 4th of January was the day appointed, though the *Examiner* states that many citizens were against the idea of an illumination, preferring instead that the money be spent upon "an Asylum for the houseless poor". The illumination, however, was carried in public meeting "by the Orange bullies", and the celebration took place. The *Examiner*, while claiming that of those desiring the illumination, "nine-tenths were influenced by a desire to have a little amusement on the occasion, to get drunk and go through the city breaking windows and creating disturbances",—yet felt constrained to admit that the rejoicings were conducted "in a manner highly creditable to the city. The illuminations were most brilliant, and quite equal to those on the occasion of the Royal nuptials. . . . King Street was so crowded with people that it was almost impossible for the sleighs to pass. Everything was conducted in a perfect good humour, and we are not aware that any accident occurred."[53]

Whenever royalty or the highest officials of the country honoured communities with a visit, the occasion was always a memorable one. The progress through Canada in 1860 of the Prince of Wales, later Edward VII, was punctuated by a series of enthusiastic receptions and balls wherever he went, marred only by a few partisan demonstrations arising out of the strong religious prejudices of the times. Triumphal arches were everywhere erected, and the inhabitants lost no opportunity to show the popular prince everything of interest along his route. His visit to Toronto was the occasion of the most notable celebration the city had seen. C. C. Taylor, who was present, gives a good summary of the magnificent reception:

"The Prince disembarked at the western extremity of the Esplanade. Here a splendid pavilion was erected facing the city; the hangings were of crimson, blue and white, and the building was adorned with green leaves and festoons of flowers. The whole was surmounted by a Royal crown, on all sides protected by flags.

"The greatest charm was the entrance arch, which

[53]The *Examiner*, January 5, 1842.

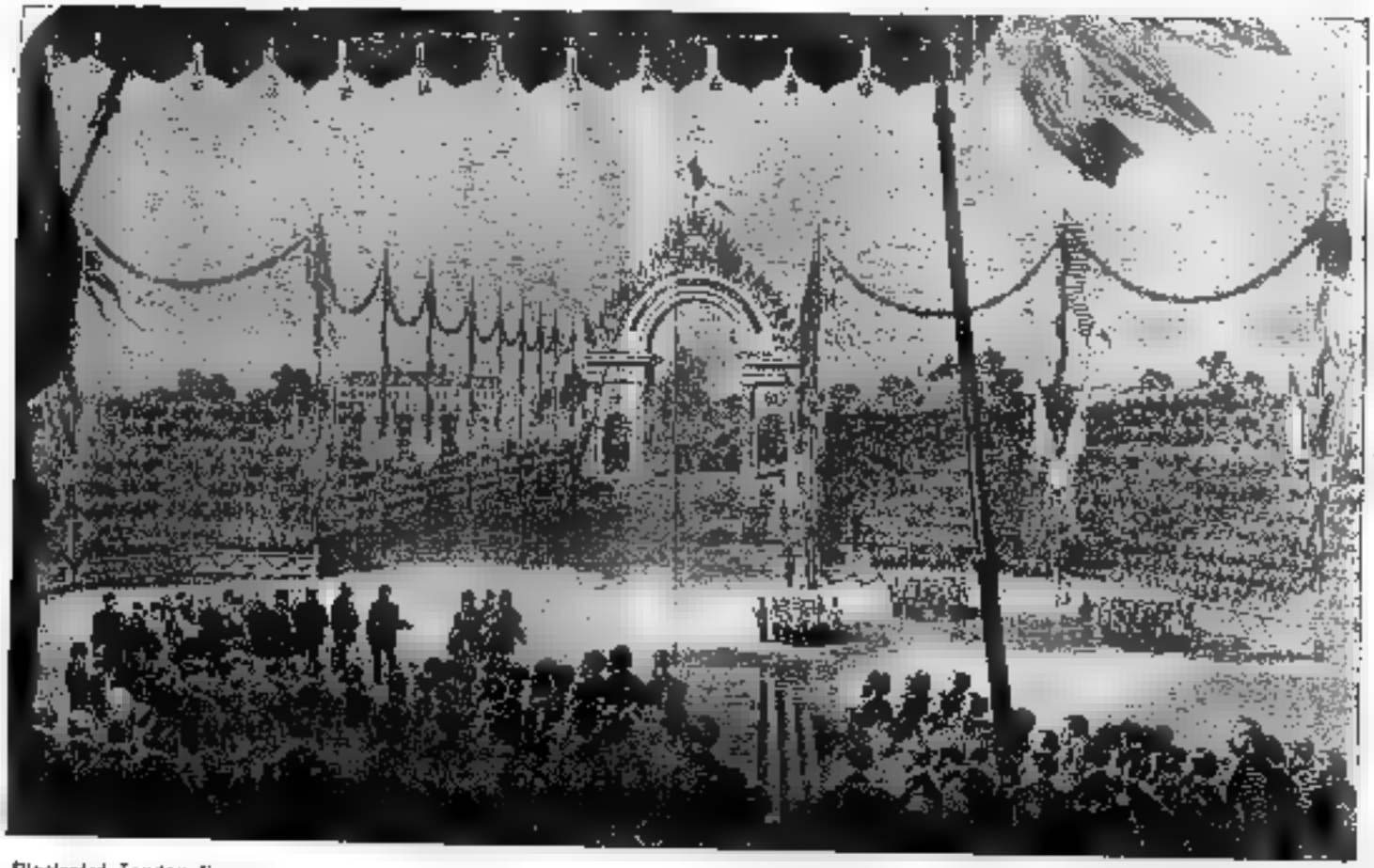
spanned the street and was really magnificent. It was of the Grecian order, but exceedingly rich in ornament, and stood sixty feet high. The pillars were massive, palmated at the top. The interior of the arch was adorned with beautiful fresco paintings, and the whole surmounted with a shield bearing the Royal Arms and a Royal crown supported on each side by a fine display of flags. A semicircular platform was erected, with tier upon tier of seats, and was ornamented with shields and banners, and more than 10,000 people were in position on it.

"In the open space was a troop of cavalry, and in the centre was a great level platform, with the dais and throne under a gorgeous canopy. Here the Prince was received by the Mayor, Corporation, Judges, Members of Parliament, Officers of the Army and Volunteers, etc. After the reading of the address the National Anthem was sung by 5,000 children, under the leadership of Mr. John Carter, the Cathedral organist.

"It is impossible to do justice to the imposing spectacle presented when the vast assembly stood up and united in one tremendous burst of cheering which lasted several minutes, the ladies waving their handkerchiefs, and men nearly killing themselves with shouting the loyal hurrahs, while several bands played the National Anthem. The Prince was intensely affected at this glorious welcome, which was so hearty and magnificent.

"A procession of militia, firemen and national societies filed past, drooping banners and cheering vociferously. The Prince's carriage followed the procession through the principal streets, cheered by the people, while flowers were strewed before him. Night having come on by this time, the city was most brilliantly illuminated, and the whole formed a spectacle which for magnificence was never surpassed in Canada. The Prince and suite were entertained during their stay at Government House.

"On Sunday the party attended divine service in St. James' Cathedral, and were met at the door by Bishop Strachan, Rector Grasett, and other clergymen. The sermon was preached by the Bishop from the text, 'Give the King Thy judgment, O God, and Thy righteousness unto the King's son'. The demeanour of the Prince during the



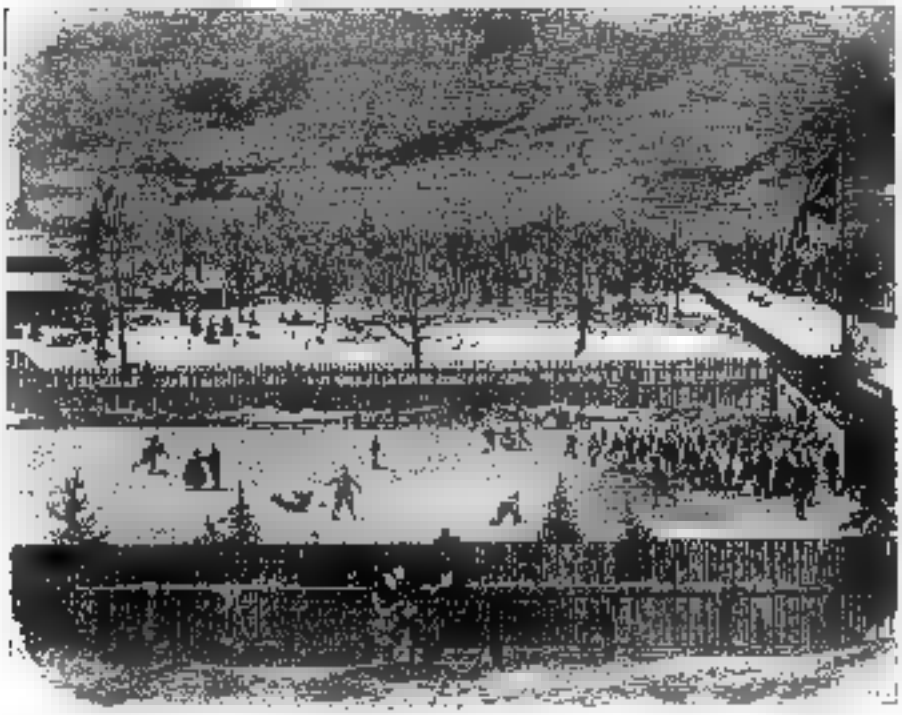
Illustrated London News.

RECEPTION OF H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES BY THE INHABITANTS OF TORONTO, C.W., 1860

Canadian Illustrated News.

INAUGURATION OF THE ODDFELLOWS' HALL, NOVEMBER 9, 1870

The Hall was in a new block of buildings at Yonge and Albert Streets.



Canadian Illustrated News, April 4, 1863.

THE VICTORIA SKATING RINK, MARCH 7, 1863

The location was the south-west corner of Gerrard and Sherbourne Streets. The Horticultural (Allan) Gardens, and forest land beyond, may be seen to the northward. Prizes were awarded on this occasion.

service was what might have been expected. He joined heartily in the responses, and his entire manner might be copied by some church-going young men with decided advantage.

"The Orangemen had erected a splendid arch at the intersection of Church and King Streets, with a large painting of King William III in a conspicuous position. Instead, however, of the party driving under the arch along King Street, the carriage went down Church to Wellington, and so to the Government House. It transpired that this was done by the positive order of the Duke of Newcastle.

"During the week the Prince visited all the principal objects of interest, and planted a tree in the Horticultural Gardens, at the same time opening the rustic arbour then recently erected. He also planted an English silver oak in the Queen's Park, which stands to the east of the guns, and laid the foundation stone of the statue to the Queen, surrounded by civic, provincial and other dignitaries; and in addition to all he turned the first sod of the Toronto, Grey and Bruce Railway.

"He attended a public ball given in his honour in the Crystal Palace, wearing the uniform of a colonel of the British Army, unattached, and led off the dance by taking the hand of the accomplished wife of Mayor Wilson, one of the present Justices of Ontario. The ball was a brilliant scene, and wound up the entertainments given in honour of the Prince in Toronto."[14]

One incident which was not on the official program showed the disappointment of Orangemen because their demonstrations were in vain:

"The only untoward event which occurred during the Prince's stay was a foolish escapade by a few young hotheads who assembled on Colborne Street and burnt in effigy the Duke of Newcastle and Sir Edmund Head. The objects of the demonstration having set their faces against the exuberant Orange decorations at Kingston and Belle-

[14]Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 156-9. An excellent account of the Prince's visit to Toronto appeared in the London *Times* of September 25 and 27, 1860, and much of it is quoted in Middleton, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 274-8. The Horticultural (Allan) Gardens, in which the Prince planted a tree, were developed as a result of the munificence of the Hon. G. W. Allan, who donated the land to the city in 1859.

ville, the effigy-burners resorted to this method of expressing their dissatisfaction."[55]

Eighteen years earlier the Governor-General, Sir Charles Bagot, received a welcome in Toronto that was redolent of the pageantry of other times, and which for splendour and magnificence has never been excelled. The procession in his honour was organised as follows:

Two Police Constables—Mounted
(With their Staves)
Band
Marshall of the day—Mounted
Fire Companies
(In order of precedence)
St. Andrew's Society
(With Banners)
St. Patrick's Society
(With Banners)
St. George's Society
(With Banners)
The Mechanics' Institute
Two Police Constables—Mounted
(With their Staves)
The Corporation
(In Carriages)
The Bishop—The Mayor
The Governor
The Chief Justice
Judges and College Council
The Sheriff—The Warden
Members of the Learned Professions
(In Carriages or Mounted)
Other Inhabitants generally
The High Bailiff—Mounted
(With his Baton)

"As soon as the Government Steamer heaves in sight the town Bells will be rung to give notice of the approach of His Excellency, and the procession will then be immediately formed in front of the City Hall."[56]

On the second day of his visit a levee was held, and

[55] *History of Toronto and the County of York*. 1885. Vol. I, p. 270.
[56] *The Examiner*, April 20, 1842.

various associations and bodies, including Indians and a group of Toronto's negro citizens, presented addresses and were welcomed by His Excellency. In the evening a Grand Ball was held in Government House. St. George's Day, the third of the Governor's visit, was particularly colourful owing to the ceremony of the laying of the corner-stone of King's College. An elaborate procession was formed on "the pretty lawn of Upper Canada College". The Principal, Dr. McCaul, addressed His Excellency "in a well-written Latin speech", and fortunately Sir Charles was able to reply "in a happy and eloquent manner" in the same language. Marshall Gurnett then "uncoiled a dense and never-ending column" of Dragoons, pupils of the Grammar School and Upper Canada College with their teachers and attendants, the Medical Profession, Barristers, Clergy (in full Canonicals), the College Masters in their Academic garb, the Council and Visitors ("mostly in legal costume with Bedels, Verger, and the Esquire Bedel"); after all of whom came the Governor-General, supported on either hand by the Lord Bishop and the Chief Justice, "both in full dress, the latter clothed in Judicial ermine". Lest you should think this was the end, however, it must be recorded that "a countless host, Staff, Officers Military and Naval, Members of Parliament, Mayor and Corporation, Judge, Sheriff, Warden, Societies of St. George, St. Patrick and St. Andrew, Masonic Lodges, Fire and Hook-and-Ladder companies, and another detachment of Dragoons" brought up the rear as the *cortège* passed up Graves (Simcoe) and Lot (Queen) Streets to the "long and beautiful Avenue of the University", which at that time merited the following description:

"A fine hawthorn hedge, a great rarity in this Province, skirts the bounds. Between it and the spacious gravel walk is a deep shrubbery on both sides, planted with the choicest trees—the gentle waving acacia, the graceful horse-chestnut, the flowering catalpa, the variegated locust, the dark green balsam, and the elegant cypress."

Innumerable banners, the martial music of regimental bands, the picturesque variety of costume, the dazzling brilliancy of officers and high officials contrasted with the grave and classic robes of the professors, churchmen and lawyers—all combined to form over a mile of pageantry

perhaps unequalled before or since that day. And at the grounds to which the procession led were gathered all the rank, beauty and fashion of Toronto, there to see His Excellency lay the corner-stone of King's College. Cheers from 15,000 throats preceded the return of the great parade to the Upper Canada College grounds, and the masters of that institution later entertained the Governor-General and a select party "at a very elegant collation set out in the College Hall".[57]

In the same year Charles Dickens paid a short visit to Toronto, and an equally brief account of his stay in the city is recorded in the press:

"Mr. and Mrs. Dickens left this city on Friday in the steamer *City of Toronto*, Captain Dick, for Kingston. The very short stay made by 'Boz' prevented any *public* demonstration of respect, but all the leading persons in the city left their cards at his hotel, the Honourable the Chief Justice entertained him at dinner, and a large party was invited in the evening to meet the distinguished strangers."[58]

Meanwhile, at the middle of the century, the chief places of public resort for no small section of the population appear to have been the 152 taverns and 206 beer shops which dotted the city in 1850—the inhabitants then numbering about 30,000. Many men "loaded up" every Saturday night (if not oftener), and spent the week-end drunk. One of the more pretentious establishments—the Apollo Saloon and Concert Room on King Street—staged nightly a cheap burlesque show comprising two men who impersonated a negro and an Irishman; and a contemporary publication assures its readers that "the place is well worthy of a visit". For a modest charge—a York shilling (12½c.)—patrons were entitled to "a smoke or a drink" as well as the performance.[59] Another restaurant-saloon, the Terrapin, located near the site of the present King Edward Hotel, is advertised as "the largest and most magnificent restaurant west of New York". Carlisle and McConkey were the pro-

[57] *Ibid.*, April 27, 1842. The interesting description of University Avenue is from Thomas Rolph: *A Brief Account . . . . of the West Indies and the United States . . . . ; together with a Statistical Account of Upper Canada*, 1836, pp. 178-9.

[58] *Examiner*, May 11, 1842.

[59] *Descriptive Catalogue of the Provincial Exhibition, 1858*, p. 79.

prietors, and it is announced that "green turtle soup and steaks" may be had daily.[60] Apart from these two establishments the saloons of the city in the eighteen-fifties were in general little more than miserable dens of dissipation, vulgarity and fighting.

In other respects, however, Toronto was beginning to assume characteristics of city life more attractive and conducive of better citizenship. In April, 1851, the St. Lawrence Hall was opened, and for twenty years provided, particularly for the middle and upper classes, a place of public assembly. In addition to balls, soirées, festivals and dinners connected with lodges, regiments, the National Societies and similar organisations, there were frequent public lectures, panoramas, concerts and musicales, in which appeared the best local and foreign talent; while itinerant companies occasionally provided in this hall the less exclusive amusements generally associated with minstrels, magicians, and similar entertainers.

An event of special interest occurred in St. Lawrence Hall prior to its completion. On August 8, 1850, some two hundred prominent men and women of Buffalo visited Toronto on the invitation of the City Council. The *Chief Justice Robinson*, one of the palatial steamers of the day, was chartered for the occasion and met the guests at Lewiston. In spite of rain the city was elaborately decorated, and a salute of cannon and a procession of welcome in the manner characteristic of the times made the Buffalonians feel at home. A band, the national societies of St. George, St. Andrew and St. Patrick, and the various fire companies in their regalia, escorted the visitors to the North American Hotel where dinner was served; and in the evening a Grand Ball was held in the partially completed St. Lawrence Hall. Evergreens, flowers and flags decorated the ballroom, which was "brilliantly lighted with gas laid for the occasion"; while a canvas passage led 500 feet to the old City Hall, where a midnight supper was served. The Governor-General and Lady Elgin, the Speakers of both Houses of the Legislature, and the Mayors of the two cities were among the prominent guests. The toasts were many, including the Queen, the President of the United States,

[60] Alfred Sylvester: *Guide to Toronto*, 1858, p. 102.

General Washington and the Duke of Wellington, who was still living at that time. Mr. Justice Sill of the Supreme Court of New York was one of the speakers, but perhaps he was difficult to hear, for we learn that the remarks of Mayor Gurnett passed unheard owing to "the popping of champagne corks and the excitement created by so large an assembly busily engaged in showing their appreciation of the good things of this life".[61] The accommodation being insufficient, many partook of the banquet while standing, and afterwards dancing was resumed with spirit.

The great event had a somewhat bitter aftermath, however. A military review on the following morning was followed by a garden party given by Lord Elgin at his residence, Elmsley House, near the corner of College and Yonge Streets, [redacted] which no members of the City Council were present because they were not invited. At the next meeting of that body a strong protest was embodied in a lengthy resolution of which the sum and substance was that such an action on the part of the Governor-General could not be considered as anything but "a wanton and intended insult or [redacted] gross neglect towards them as a body and towards those whom they represent". Though some portions of the press were inclined to treat the matter as a good joke on "their worships", yet it was [redacted] most unpleasant occurrence in an otherwise well-planned and nobly executed gesture of goodwill towards the citizens of Buffalo. But the Governor's *fête* was none the less enjoyable to those present, and we learn[62] that "as the night advanced, gas illuminations in elegant devices and covering two sides of the villa were lit up and threw a brilliant light over the grounds. Fire-

[61] See Middleton, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 245-6, and the *Globe*, August 10, 1850.

[62] This quotation is from the *Globe* of August 10, 1850, which contains a description running to three columns of fine print. Lord Elgin's attitude no doubt resulted from the somewhat cool reception which he had been accorded by the City Council of Toronto on October 9, 1849, when he had but recently signed the Rebellion Losses Bill. Perhaps [redacted] political sagacity would have been more appreciated in the United States, for one of the fair ladies of Buffalo was sufficiently attracted by him to suggest in somewhat gushing language that, if he would only enter American politics and take the stump for the Presidency, she was confident he would sweep every state of the Union! For further interesting material concerning these events see Samuel Thompson: *Reminiscences of a Canadian Pioneer*, 1884, pp. 268-73 and 344-8.

works followed soon after, and still later one of the bands was withdrawn from the lawn and placed at the services of the dancers. . . . Few persons present will fail to remember with pleasure for many years to come Lord Elgin's *Fête* to the Citizens of Buffalo."

Many of the more celebrated events which took place in the St. Lawrence Hall are described in the previous chapter, but some account will be given here of entertainments of a distinctly lighter nature.[43] Among the travelling organisations which visited the Hall in the fifties and sixties was that featuring "General" Tom Thumb. On one occasion the advertisement stated that he was accompanied by "his beautiful little wife, the fascinating Queen of Beauty, and Commodore Nutt, the $30,000 Nutt, (so called because he received that amount from P. T. Barnum for three years' service), and Elfin Minnie Warren, the smallest lady of her age ever seen—all four weighing but 100 pounds". As an extra attraction it is announced that Tom Thumb's wife "will wear the identical wedding costume as worn at Grace Church on February 10, 1863, when $60 was offered for a ticket to the wedding; here the same thing can be seen for a trifle". Before the show commenced there was—as has long been customary with circuses and minstrel shows—a street parade.

Previous to the days of motion pictures there were numerous attempts to give graphical representations of popular subjects, usually with an accompanying lecture, or with music on the tambourine or some sort of "musical machine". There were figures in wax as well as illustrations of other kinds. Large numbers of pictures illustrative of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* comprised one entertainment, while others consisted of panoramas of Biblical themes, the Holy Land, and kindred subjects.

Another performance, "sure to inculcate a high moral tendency and to warn every young man, and older one, too, who has commenced to tamper with the intoxicating glass", was Verey's Zographicon, consisting of a lecture accompanied by 150 views from *The Pilgrim's Progress* and Arthur's *Ten Nights in a Bar Room*. The allegorical repre-

[43]The attractions outlined in the next few paragraphs were advertised on various occasions in the eighteen-sixties.

sentations and striking scenes were given "full and very often touching and vivid explanations", and were of a character "calculated to give an elevated tone to the morals of the community".

It was early considered—and it still holds true—that concerts, lectures and shows were more attractive to patrons if they were advertised as from London or New York. Friend's *Panorama of the British Isles* was heralded as "direct from St. James' Hall, London, England", and the work is described as "a moving panorama painted by Mr. Friend himself on over 50,000 feet of canvas". The exhibitor is referred to as "the celebrated artist, vocalist, musician and entertainer", who "will sing melodies, accompanying himself on different instruments, including a Grand Euphonium Piano". Performers and lectures of this kind may be assumed to have been neither better nor worse than those of today; the best of them must have contributed greatly to the education and enjoyment of those who attended.

It has always been characteristic of showmanship to advertise productions in a most bombastic and exaggerated manner. To this was added in the pioneer period, and later, an evident intention of attracting people to performances by announcing them in huge, almost unpronounceable words; possibly this was a recommendation in a day when education was not so generally diffused. We find, for example, the Papyrotamia, or gallery of paper cuttings, which was shown in Meighan's Ball Room, York, in 1827; and in the sixties a magician advertised his show as "the Grand Thaumaturgic Psychomanteum", and himself as "the celebrated artist and arch-magician, Professor Anderson, known throughout the civilised Globe as the Wizard of the North, and an Illusionist, Physicist, Thaumatist and Traveller", whose "Soirés de Prestidigitation constitute the most marvellous entertainment in which, at any time, the attempt has been made to blend the highest science with the most genial amusement".

The same high-sounding names were still further developed in the advertisements of circuses and menageries of the sixties. J. B. Lent's show was travelling through Canada West in 1862 under the name "Hippozoonamadon",

which was described as "the largest exhibition in the world", a combination of three circuses, a hippopotamus and elephant exhibition, and an aquarium. A word large enough to frighten the most learned savant is used to describe a part of the Hippozoonamadon—the Athleolympimantheum—in which Mlle. Ariane Felecia from Paris formed the main attraction, for she is described as "the most beautiful, graceful, daring and dashing equestrienne in the world". Numerous other features, including the Grand Opera Band, were offered as a part of the Hippozoonamadon—and all for a mere twenty-five cent piece!

In the following year J. B. Lent came around again, probably with the same show; but he had been able to invent for it a new name—Equescurriculum. In addition to the "unparalleled combination of three circuses" there was "a troop of acting bears, the educated sacred Indian bull, leaping buffaloes and performing dogs and monkeys". The whole formed "a magnificent phalanx of exhibitions—perfection in every detail"; and, as before,—all for a quarter of a dollar.

Several organisations of minstrels were playing in Canada West in the early sixties, among them being Christy's and Sharpley's; a similar performance was given by Kelly's Theatrical Troupe. Some minstrel shows had a repertoire of "stock" plays, particularly of the more emotional and humorous types, and many of them had brass bands. With its light program of vaudeville and burlesque, broad comedy and sentimental melodrama, the minstrel show is a type of entertainment which has retained its popularity with the average amusement-seeker, for it does not require the same capabilities and attention that are necessary for the proper appreciation of the higher operatic and dramatic performances.

There were, however, many entertainments of a higher type in the Toronto of seventy-five years ago. Instrumental and vocal concerts by both local and foreign talent, and including the most famous operatic stars of the day, were not infrequent, while many citizens took an active part in the Philharmonic Society, the Toronto Vocal Music Society, the Toronto Musical Union, and the Metropolitan Choral Society, which were at one time or another prominent in the

musical life of the city.[64] Until the mid-sixties most concerts were held in St. Lawrence Hall, but immediately thereafter operas and comic operas, as well as comedies and farces, were being produced in large numbers at the Royal Lyceum Theatre. *Robert Macaire, Il Trovatore, Aladdin* and *The Doctor of Alcantara* were among the operatic performances, while the farces included *Dombey & Son, A Thousand Milliners Wanted, The Débutante, Slasher and Crasher, Beauty and the Beast, The Streets of New York* and *Nobody's Daughter.* At this time Toronto audiences were being educated in the proper theatrical etiquette *à la* New York, for we find on the playbills that "the audience is respectfully requested not to call the artists before the curtain, excepting on their benefit nights, being a custom long discontinued in all first-class theatres".[65]

The Royal Theatre was erected on the site of the Lyceum in 1874, and about a week later the Grand Opera House was opened on Adelaide Street just west of Yonge—now a parking space. The inauguration of this playhouse on September 23, 1874, was under the distinguished patronage of Lord and Lady Dufferin, and the opening play was Sheridan's *The School for Scandal,* particularly appropriate since the Governor-General was a descendant of the playwright. Some memories of these theatres, and of the days when Sheppard Street, now buried amid office buildings, was a quiet residential street of roughcast cottages where many an actor and actress lived, are recalled by a 77-year old Canadian actor:

"About 1872 the Holman Opera Company was in full swing at the old Royal Lyceum Theatre. I myself joined the Holman Company about 1879 to appear in *H.M.S. Pinafore,* and I remained with them for some time at the New Royal Opera House on King Street. Miss Amelia Shaw, a pretty young blonde, lived in her father's cottage on the east side of Sheppard Street, next to Robert Bond's

[64]See Taylor, *op. cit.,* pp. 272-87, for a comprehensive account of Toronto's musical life. See also Chapter XXIII of the present work.

[65]For considerable material on early Toronto theatres the author is indebted to John Ross Robertson's invaluable *Landmarks of Toronto,* Vol. I, pp. 478 *et seq.*

livery stable near the corner of Richmond Street. Bond ran the first sight-seeing turnout with four horses, or 'rubber-necks' as they were called. Anyway it was a 'swell turn-out'.

"Next, towards Adelaide Street, was a new red brick house built and lived in by A. S. Irving, wholesale news-dealer and publisher of 'Irving's Sheet Music', a cheap edition of all the popular songs of the day. Next to his place, in one of two cottages in the rear of the lot, lived George Barton, a versatile actor and very clever.

"Nearly all the married actors of the Holman Company lived on Sheppard Street. My mother and her sister lived in the next two cottages on the front of the lot now occupied by the Bell Telephone building. On the corner of Adelaide, facing Sheppard Street, there was a row of two-storey white-brick houses. In the corner one Mrs. White kept a boarding house where some of the actors lived. Her son was assistant carpenter at the new Royal Opera House about 1879.

"On the west corner of Adelaide and Sheppard there was a big red-brick house that a doctor lived in. I just cannot remember his name now. Next, going north on the west side of Sheppard Street, there were two two-storey rough-cast houses. In the first a stage carpenter of the old Royal Lyceum lived. He had served in the American war and when he came back he erected a flagpole in the back-yard with the flags of all nations, I think, strung down the sidelines or stays. It could be seen from the lane at the side of the house. Next there was a large cottage in the rear of the lot, and then a two-storey roughcast house nearly opposite the Shaw house, where Allen Halford and his family lived. Allen Halford was the matinee idol of the Holman time."[66]

As the years passed, still better theatres were erected in Toronto. The first Grand Opera House was destroyed by fire on November 29, 1879, but in little more than two months' time the new Grand Opera was ready for the opening performance. Replacing old St. Lawrence Hall as the fashionable centre of musical and operatic entertainment,

[66]Reminiscences of R. L. Milligan, Harriston, Ontario, in a letter appearing in the Toronto *Mail and Empire*, February 6, 1934.

the two Grand Opera Houses long attracted the *élite* of the stage. The new theatre had a seating capacity of 1,750, and in the long list of operatic and dramatic stars who appeared there in the eighties were Adelaide Neilson, Henry Irving, Ellen Terry, Adelina Patti, Albani, E. H. Sothern, Fanny Davenport, Modjeska, Rose Coghlan, Lillian Russell, Tom Keene, Clara Morris and Sarah Bernhardt, several of whom retired from the stage only in recent years. The earlier stock companies of the drama had long since given way to the travelling company, usually organised in New York, and Toronto audiences saw the best performances of the times; and until recent years dramas and girl-and-music shows provided Toronto's typical theatrical entertainment. But the "movies", the "talkies" and the radio have combined with depressed business conditions to cripple the legitimate stage, and its society devotees—the "first-nighters"—have consequently become almost a thing of the past.

Musical education of a valuable type became available to many men as a result of the organisation of brass bands, so frequently in demand for processions, holidays and similar celebrations. There was a "York Band" at least as early as 1824, and others were later formed in imitation of those usually provided by the garrison units. Writing in 1884 C. C. Taylor outlines the development of bands after the last regular regiment left the city in 1867:

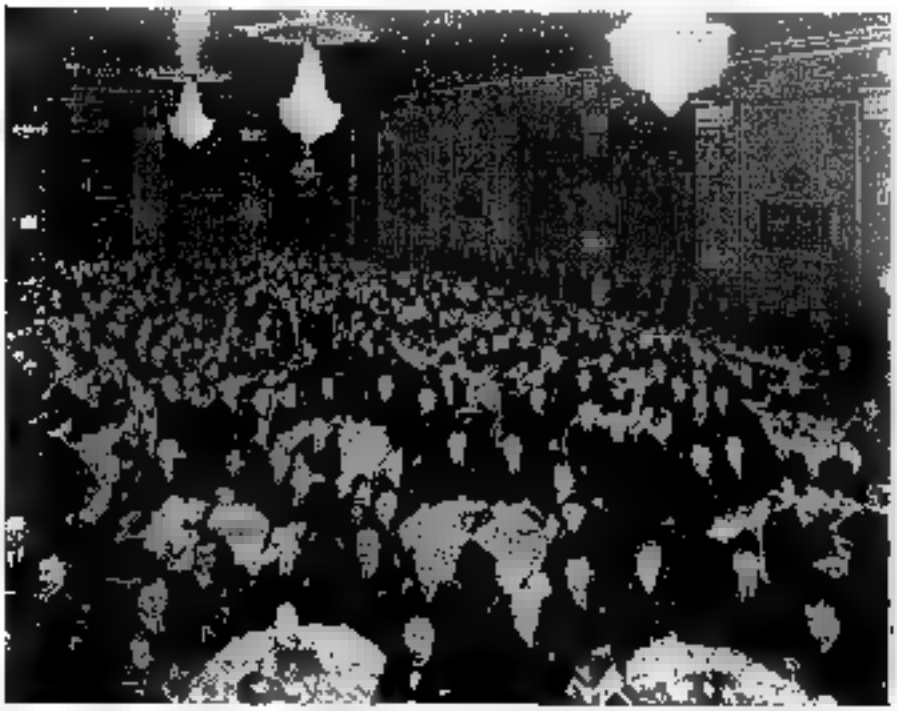
"The removal of the regular troops from Toronto by the English Government caused the want of a military band for several years, the last being that of the 13th Hussars, under command of Colonel Jennings. That want has been well supplied of late years by the splendid bands of the volunteers: the Queen's Own, Mr. Bayley bandmaster, and Royal Grenadiers, with Mr. Toulmin, also the Governor-General's Body Guards, and the Garrison Battery of Artillery. Besides the fine band of C Company, Infantry School, which completes the list of military bands, there are the bands of Heintzman & Co., the Massey Manufacturing Co., and the Christian Brothers, all of which contribute to the pleasure of the citizens, and show a wonderful development of musical talent in our midst."[67]

[67]Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 286-7.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

VETERANS OF 1812
ON SHERIFF JARVIS' LAWN, "ROSEDALE", OCTOBER 23, 1861

The ten men in this notable group are, from left to right, Colonel George Duggan, Rev. George Ryerson, William Roe, Jacob Snyder, Rev. James Richardson, Joseph Dennis, William J. Woodal, James Ross, Colonel Bridgeford, George Ridout.



Reproduced by Courtesy of the King Edward Hotel.

OFFICIAL CENTENNIAL LUNCHEON, MARCH 6, 1934

This historic gathering took place in the Crystal Ballroom of the King Edward Hotel.

Reproduced by Courtesy of Alfred Pearson, Esq.

His Majesty's Airship R-100 Flying Over Toronto, August 11, 1930

A building as lofty and beautiful as the Canadian Bank of Commerce—apart altogether from the airship soaring above it—would have been beyond the imagination of the citizens of early Toronto.

In the realm of "popular" music we find that the latest pieces which could be purchased at A. & S. Nordheimer's in 1855 included a number reflecting the times of the Crimean War, and others more suitable to the dance. The following list contains the "biggest hits" of that day: *The Queen's Letter; Mother, is the Battle Over?; Sebastopol is Ours; Sebastopol is Won; The Battle of Alma; Barnum's Baby Show Polka; Cupid's Polka;* and *Victoria Polka-Mazurka.* The nearest approach in those discreet days to *Gather Lip Rouge While You May* or *Pettin' in the Park* appears to have been *The Ratcatcher's Daughter.* Among dances recently introduced were the highly-admired Esmeralda Gallopade and Zingarella Mazurka, and Mr. Robertson, 64 King West, was a prominent teacher of the latest steps.

Lodges and fraternal societies have always provided facilities for social intercourse—which indeed, is their chief attraction for the majority of members. The Masons, Orangemen, and a number of other associations date their origin upwards of a century ago, while other organisations have been of a more ephemeral nature. Of special significance were the National Societies of St. Patrick, St. George and St. Andrew, which were long prominent in social life in the towns and persist in some instances to the present, though greatly changed in spirit and importance from the organisations of even half a century ago.

Though the National Societies in Toronto date from 1835-36, yet in earlier times prominent citizens frequently met at dinner on St. George's, St. Patrick's or St. Andrew's Day. In 1822, for example, the "Sons of St. Andrew residing in York celebrated the anniversary of the Saint by giving a dinner to the principal gentlemen of the place on the 30th ult. The company, consisting of nearly forty persons, sat down to an elegant dinner at Forest's Hotel".[98]

In 1835-36, however, the three societies were more firmly established, and on April 23, 1934, the Toronto St. George's Society held its 101st annual banquet. The numerous meetings, processions and balls held by these organisations during the first half century of their history were illustrative of a close feeling of fellowship, characteristic

[98] *Upper Canada Gazette*, December 12, 1822. Similarly a St. George's Dinner was held in 1824, but the Society dates from 1835-6.

of the times when many had but recently come from the Old Land. The round of toasts and songs—including *The Fine Old English Gentleman, When I a-Courting Went* and *Old King Cole*—was, perhaps, more attractive in a day of social drinking. Similarly the St. Andrew's Society of old enjoyed *The Scottish Thistle, Wha wad na fecht for Charlie, The Miller of Fife, Scotland Yet* and *The Laird o' Cockpen* until the wee sma' hours o' morn; and their brethren of St. Patrick were regaled by the songs and stories of Auld Ireland.

In 1841 many members of the St. Patrick's Society broke away because it was "managed on party principles". The seceders, some 200 in number, formed the St. Patrick's Benevolent Society. A press account describes the celebration of "the day" in 1842, and in many respects it may be taken as typical of the festivals of the National Societies in Toronto:

"The anniversary of Ireland's Patron Saint was duly celebrated by the two National Societies. We have copied from the *Mirror* an account of the proceedings of the St. Patrick's Benevolent Society, whose muster was larger than any ever made in this City on a similar occasion. The St. Patrick's Society was as usual accompanied to the Cathedral by the Sister Societies of St. George and St. Andrew, where an excellent sermon was delivered by the Chaplain, Dr. McCaul, a gentleman who stands deservedly high in public estimation. In the evening the members of the Society dined together at the Ontario House, Ald. Dixon, President of the Society, in the chair, Ald. Dr. King acting as Vice-President. The Presidents and Vice-Presidents of the St. George's and St. Andrew's Society were present as guests, and several of the officers of the Garrison.

"The dinner went off well. No disturbances took place during the day. Owing to the inflammatory articles published by a portion of the press the Orangemen showed some intention of making a party display in the forenoon, and we were shocked to hear that Allan, the misguided individual from whose house the murderous fire proceeded on the day of Messrs. Dunn and Buchanan's chairing, had the temerity to display an Orange flag. This was immediately removed by order of His Worship the Mayor, who deserves

great credit for his unceasing exertions throughout the day to preserve peace and harmony.

"It is gratifying to be able to state that everything passed off in the most perfect good feeling, and we venture to hope that in future the only rivalry between the two Societies will be in acts of benevolence to their countrymen."[68]

It seems that the Society applied to Mayor Sherwood for permission to use the City Hall on St. Patrick's Day, but the request was refused on the grounds that their activities did not constitute "a general interest". The *Examiner* suggested that if this was a bar to admission all applications would be refused, for "it is notorious that the Hall has been granted to various Companies of Actors whose performances were disapproved of by a portion of the citizens as injurious to public morals. For a long time the congregation of Saint James' Church attended Divine Service in the Hall, the Methodists have had tea parties there—in fact, as the address states, all sorts of uses have been made of the building".[69]

The St. Andrew's Day celebration in the same year consisted chiefly of a dinner. Eleven main toasts, with accompanying speeches and band music, were followed by fourteen "Voluntary Toasts and Sentiments", which varied from the health of diverse personages to the success of the Press, the City, the Bench and Bar, and the Curling Club.[70]

But the elaborate dinners and processions of other days are no more, and the associations have in reality become merely a "high festival of once a year", a change due largely to the development of national feeling in Canada, and a corresponding diminution in the importance attached to original nationality after the passing of the earlier generations who had come directly from the Old Land. Even in 1858 the societies were in some quarters considered to have outlived their usefulness, a writer observing that, while they were still frequently of great assistance to newly-arrived immigrants, yet "our National Societies, formed for a purely benevolent purpose, may be considered to have

[68]The *Examiner*, March 23, 1842.
[69]*Ibid.*, March 16, 1842.
[70]See *ibid.*, December 7, 1842.

seen their day, and violence would not be done to the most sensitive feeling were they allowed quietly to fall into desuetude. . . . We are all, or ought to be, Canadians, and whether of English, Irish or Scotch descent, it signifies very little to society unless we make ourselves good citizens".[72] Until almost the end of the century, however, they retained much of their original significance.

Two other organisations long important in Toronto's social life came to an end in the seventies or eighties—the volunteer Fire Brigade and the Mechanics' Institute. At first all citizens were expected to protect property endangered by fire, but in 1826 York had its first organised fire company. For thirty-five years the members, gradually increasing in numbers, worked their hand fire-engines, held at least monthly meetings, and provided social intercourse by means of processions, balls, competitions and other entertainments. The introduction of the steam fire-engine in 1862 was the beginning of the end of volunteer fire companies, though a diminished membership remained for some years longer.

The Mechanics' Institute was instituted in York in 1831, and was long important in providing educational facilities for "the middle classes, working men and intelligent mechanics", as a contemporary publication[73] denominated them. In addition to a library and courses of lectures, the Toronto Institute held occasional exhibitions of fine and decorative arts, designing, fancy work and other crafts. The Free Libraries Act of 1882 did much to replace the activities of the Institutes by public libraries, and the Toronto association came to an end in the following year.

As the century drew to a close the social life of Toronto was in its essence not greatly different from that of the present, though developments in transportation, and equally great changes in attitude towards social status and the conventions, have considerably altered outward appearances. The Island had become a noted centre of aquatic sports, carrying along the tradition of yacht clubs of the fifties and before; while the numerous debating, oratorical and literary societies which followed the one organised by

[72][G. P. Ure]: *The Handbook of Toronto*, 1858, pp. 181-2.
[73]*Cobourg Sentinel*, January 17, 1863.

Dr. Strachan in 1831 appealed to many of the more highly educated. In 1879 a writer outlined the social clubs of Toronto in terms which, with some amplification, might apply today:

"Toronto literary and journalistic life has not as yet developed its club; though the growing professional status, and the increasing emoluments of writers for the press, will no doubt see it rise at an early date to that dignity. Special interests of a social, professional, or commercial character combine, however, to support one or two city clubs. The Royal Canadian Yacht Club, we have already mentioned, has its habitat on the Island. The National Club, situated on Bay Street, has a large membership drawn from the professions, and from the captains of industry and commerce. The Toronto Club, on York Street, draws its membership from much the same source, with a sprinkling of the more leisured class, and some few sticklers for caste. The United Empire Club, which, as the headquarters of Liberal-Conservatism in the city, styled itself the Canadian Carleton, has recently disappeared. Its building, centrally situated on King Street West, might be secured for a much-needed Merchant's Exchange, or, better still, a Free Public Library. The various societies, national and benevolent, have their respective lodge-rooms and halls in almost every section of the city. There are also a number of rowing and swimming clubs, curling and skating-rink organisations, with several gymnasia, and that latest craze of athleticism, a Bicycle Association."[74]

The following description of the winter sports of the period of the semi-centennial has also a modern ring:

"The winter enjoyments consist of skating, curling, tobogganing, and ice-boating, and for all of these the facilities are unlimited. The bay in front of the city, with its thousands of skaters, with numerous rinks in all parts of the city, which, under cover of splendid glass roofs, with comfortably heated dressing-rooms, and every convenience, might well excite the envy of skaters who, for want of

[74] G. M. Grant (Ed.): *Picturesque Canada*. 1879. Vol. I, p. 428. The clubs of Toronto in the eighteen-eighties, as well as "the Secret and Other Societies", receive individual mention and extensive comment in C. P. Mulvany: *Toronto, Past and Present*. 1884, pp. 119-141.

better, hasten to the 'Serpentine' in London when ice has formed, and continue to use it long after it has lost its native purity, and when it would not tempt any small boy in Toronto to skim on its dark surface. Canada is indeed beautiful in her winter aspect.

"One cannot imagine how animated and brilliant is Toronto when she puts on her snowshoes, and gets herself up on runners and fills all the air with the chimes of the sleigh-bells. There is an endless variety in design, and pattern, and colour of sleigh, and robe, and bell, and plume, and the streets look like Christmas as long as the snow lasts. Even the street cars feel the infection, and mount themselves on bobs (short runners), and jingle the loudest bells, and take the best half of the street.

"Robert J. Burdette, after a visit, asks: 'Who are these in blanket suits? It is pleasant to tarry among people whose girls wade through the snow. Our fair Canadian cousins have no dread of discomfort. The snow has no terrors for them. They dress prettily; and if there is a prettier figure on the North American Continent than a daughter of Canada apparelled for the ice or the toboggan-slide, herself a part of the snow-drifted landscape, a picture of health and comfort that fairly softens the piercing wind into a sense of warmth, I have not seen it. She dresses in perfect harmony with the winter landscape. She has a complexion clear as the ice of Ontario, and her warm blood shines through it rich as the flashes of the Aurora, graceful and free in every movement'."[78]

In modern times, however, the population of Toronto has so greatly increased that social life has become infinitely more complex. Amateur and professional sports have developed through commercialisation, and many people who have never played a game delight to gather in stadium and arena to observe others. The rising standard of living has enabled the spending of much more money by the average person, and the great development of public entertainment since the invention of the motion picture, together with the new accessibility resulting from the use of motor-cars,

[78]Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 218-4. The best description of the semi-centennial celebration of 1884 is to be found in Henry Scadding and J. C. Dent: *Toronto, Past and Present: Historical and Descriptive*. 1884. pp. 302-330.

makes it possible for people to congregate quickly and enjoy themselves in a manner which would have been beyond the comprehension of our pioneer citizens—though the modern development of radio has proven equally effective in eliminating the necessity of leaving home in search of amusement. For now one may experience some of the "thrills" of the featured football or hockey classic, or, without moving from his own fireside, he may listen to "Amos 'n' Andy", the Romanellis or Eddie Duchin, Toronto's Mary Pickford, Toscanini or Al Jolson—who was once, by the way, a bell-boy in the old Iroquois Hotel, York Street. Apart altogether from the entertainment value of the radio and the motion picture they have become strong forces for educational and cultural advancement; and they have aided in decreasing the rigidity of class distinctions and in creating that democratic feeling which, while by no means universal, characterises modern social life to a degree which would have astonished—even alarmed—the chief citizens of Toronto of old.

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The *Reports* of the Ontario Railway and Municipal Board.
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In most cases the files of Canadian newspapers are only partial, and in many instances but few copies—if any at all—have come down to us. A survey of existing files of the following newspapers, all of which are quoted in the work, has provided much invaluable material. Unless otherwise noted they were published in Toronto.

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KEY TO THE INDEX

An exhaustive index has been compiled, but attention to the principles upon which it is based will enable the most effective use:

1. Except where confusion might occur, persons are listed only under their surnames and Christian names. Those whose names occur only as proprietors of taverns, stores, factories, entertainments, etc., are so indexed, and are not repeated as individuals unless their Christian names or other information concerning them makes such additional listing of value.

2. All buildings of importance are indexed every time they occur, so that anyone interested in any particular aspect of local history may follow the references throughout the book.

3. To eliminate continual repetition and avoid confusion the following subjects are indexed in one place only and appear under these general heads:

Cabs
Dramas and Operas
Ferries
Inns, Taverns and Hotels
Regiments
Sailing-Ships
Songs, Dances, Marches and Oratorios
Steamships

4. Cross-references have been provided whenever considered valuable.

5. Individual churches are indexed under their denominational names.

6. Societies and other organisations are indexed under the names by which they are commonly known, the word "Toronto" being omitted unless it appears to be an integral part of the name.

7. Newspapers and periodicals are indexed under their names, and the place of publication of newspapers is given if it is outside Toronto.

8. All authors cited or quoted in this work are indexed under their names, but the source of the reference is not repeated. Artists and their works are listed in the forematter but are not repeated in the index.

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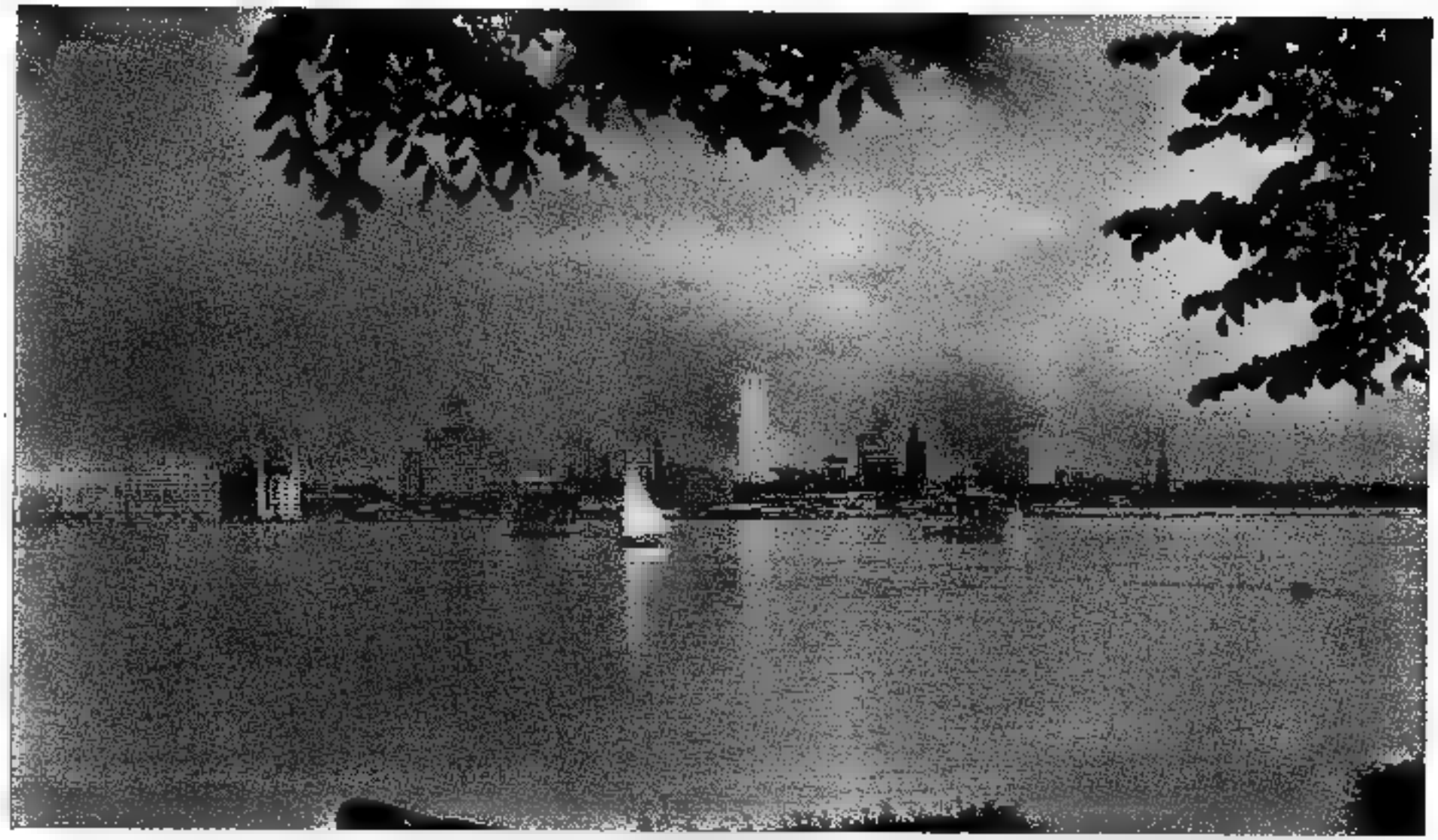

TORONTO FROM THE ISLAND

TORONTO
FROM
TRADING POST TO GREAT CITY

By

EDWIN C. GUILLET, M.A.

Author of "Early Life in Upper Canada."

With 167 illustrations
selected and arranged by the Author.

"I never saw a more beautiful, pleasant place in all my life than Little York is."

—*Letter of Sophia Hill, 1833.*

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To

A. H. U. COLQUHOUN, B.A., LL.D.
Deputy Minister of Education,
Ontario.

FOREWORD

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Knight of Grace of the Order of St. John.
Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario.

In the year 1842 Charles Dickens described Toronto as a city "full of life and motion, bustle, business and improvement," and it is the measure of Mr. Edwin Guillet's accomplishment as a historian that he has succeeded in reproducing not merely the life of the past but its liveliness, and has set in motion not the all too customary marionettes of history books, conveniently labelled and dated for students, but the living, breathing men and women who laboured and fought, played games and danced, hunted and fished, skated and rode in sleighs, quarrelled and made friends, voted at elections, cooked meals, attended concerts, built schools, endowed churches, opened stores, and by strenuous faith built a great city.

For over one hundred years the site on which Toronto stands has been a stage trodden by the feet of generations, —a stage across which has marched an unbroken succession of men and women in search of a new life in a new country. As the years pass and as the drama is unfolded, with interludes of frank comedy, the stage becomes larger, more crowded. There are many entrances and exits; the actors are forever changing. And because of the indefatigable energy of the community of people who form its *dramatis personæ*, the very scene of all this activity appears to change, although it is but the erection and substitution of new "properties" necessitated by the swift growth of the hamlet, the town, the city, by the inflowing tide of immigrants, by commercial development, and by all those exigencies of unpredictable circumstance of which these pages are so moving a record.

The skill with which the author has extracted from historical sources the quintessential facts, that succession

of events which gives body and texture and form to this history, will be all the more adequately appreciated by the reader, who is also the privileged spectator of these events, when he glances at the bibliography which is an informing appendix of this book. For it is a tribute not only to his industry in historical research, but indubitable testimony also to his merit as a historian that Mr. Guillet has sought to write not an easy, romantically coloured narrative which is plausible and ingratiating because it has a certain historic verisimilitude, but he has succeeded in the far more difficult task of presenting an authentic and authoritative marshalling of facts. The result is that once again truth proves to be more interesting than fiction. Far from depriving his story of that glamour which a free use of the imagination is commonly supposed to give, the fidelity with which the author mirrors Toronto's past invests his work, as the reader will see, with an urgency, a freshness, an inevitability of cause and effect which make it a vital record of millions of British subjects who, at one time or another, have made the city of Toronto their home.

Therein lies the considerable feat which Mr. Guillet has accomplished. For it is given to but few historians, and they only the best, to recapture and preserve between the covers of a book the men and women of the past without, in the process, crushing the very breath of life out of them. Without that life they would appear to the reader as but a dull catalogue of names and descriptions, a number of wooden automatons dusty with age, colourless, and motivated by nothing more than the ascertained facts of history.

I congratulate the author, therefore, upon the success with which he has unearthed a dead past and presented it to us as a living spectacle. By so doing he has made not only an extremely valuable contribution to Canadian history, but he has produced a book of extraordinary interest.

Innkeepers and taverns; fire brigades and military garrisons; merchants; the coming and going of canoes and sailing-ships, schooners and steamships in the harbour; sidewalks and bridges and ferries; the old town pump, and the Island when it was still a peninsula; Orangemen and immigrants; soap and candle factories; horse-drawn boats and street cars; squatters and Indians; schools and forts

and blockhouses; pioneers and the streams that were often their only roads—the story of these is told in these pages. It is the story of more than a century, during which Toronto came into being and attained its present stature in this the one-hundredth year of its incorporation.

Finally, as a visual aid to the imagination of all those who in these pages will relive the past, there are nearly two hundred illustrations. They are most happily chosen. Looking at them, the reader is afforded those glimpses of the past which illuminate and are in turn illuminated by the author's written account of persons and places and incidents of old. No verbal or written description, of course, can hope to rival in precision and compactness the presentation of the past in pictorial form—whether that form be etching, drawing or contemporary photograph. And it was doubtless the consciousness of this that led Mr. Guillet to make his story even more graphic by the inclusion of illustrations which alone and in themselves constitute a historical record of great value and absorbing interest. Outstanding among them are a large number from a publication of an earlier generation—the *Canadian Illustrated News*. As a result of research into the dusty pages of these rare volumes the author has been able to include fascinating sketches of those elements of city life which were so seldom recorded in pictorial form prior to the days of photography and the motion picture. Grand balls, soirées and receptions, partisan processions, riots and notable conflagrations are here depicted with remarkable fidelity, and they are reproduced in this volume for the first time.

I cordially invite the reader to raise the curtain and gaze upon "the swelling scene".

PREFACE AND INTRODUCTION

THE recording of local historical material is a field which the enthusiast has largely to himself, for the professional historian, though in general a more highly-trained research worker, does not often delve deeply into local history. While such records may properly be considered as the basis of national history there is a disposition in some quarters to regard them as trivial, and perhaps at times they are. But a nation is a collection of cities, towns and villages plus a great mass of rural inhabitants, and the development of any one district is perforce a cross-section of life as a whole; to which may be added in connection with Toronto that it has for more than a century been the capital as well as the most important city of Ontario, and its history is consequently something greater than merely an example of town life. Several million people have at one time or another lived in Toronto or have been closely connected with the city in political, economic or social relations, and more Canadian citizens are familiar with it than with any other city in the Dominion.

Toronto is fortunate in having had among its inhabitants a very considerable number of men for whom the collection and compilation of records was a hobby in which they persisted with unlimited enthusiasm; and though in that connection one thinks immediately of the Rev. Henry Scadding and John Ross Robertson, whose records of the past are the most extensive and valuable, yet there have been many others, among whom the editors of newspapers, directories, guidebooks, and other publications of the kind are in the front rank. Those, too, who, in an official capacity or otherwise, have been careful to preserve manuscripts, handbills, pamphlets and other fugitive material deserve the thanks of subsequent generations. In spite, however, of the large amount of historical information available, there are many subjects in which our knowledge is deficient, and in almost every instance the work of combining the present material into co-ordinate relation has been most difficult, a fact borne out by the mere recital of the numerous sources.

The files of newspapers, when such exist, form the backbone of local history. Many modern publications elaborate upon lurid and sensational news items, but early newspapers, while containing a large amount of foreign news from two to five months old, often ignored local events which would now be featured in headlines. They did, however, contain market reports and merchants' "announcements", and they usually recorded in great detail the most important social events—such as the celebrations accompanying the visits of royalty and other distinguished personages, the parades and festivities connected with the Firemen's organisations, the National Societies and other lodges, and the proceedings upon the occasion of the inauguration of important public buildings. From these accounts and from other obscure sources the writer has drawn a large amount of fascinating material, almost all of which has never been available before; and much new matter has similarly been obtained from early travel literature and from unprinted records of the City Council and the various departments connected therewith. The printed sources are in almost every instance scarce if not rare. As also applied in connection with the compilation of *Early Life in Upper Canada,* it has been an important part of the plan of this book to quote copiously from the original sources. This is undoubtedly valuable in itself, and at the same time reproduces material compiled by the enthusiasm of earlier writers whose works, if printed at all, are all but inaccessible to the general reader; and while acknowledging our debt of gratitude by citing their work, we at the same time frequently add life and romance to subjects not inherently vivid. Though in many instances quoted material could be greatly improved from a literary point of view, no change has been made in any of it except in the matter of paragraphing and punctuation, which has been modernised where necessary. A considerable number of errors in earlier publications have been discovered, but it is not claimed that none will be found in the present work; for, since many of the sources of information used by former writers have long since disappeared, there is in most instances no means of checking the material, and we are forced either to take it or leave it.

In presenting this volume to the citizens of Toronto the author wishes to express his indebtedness to some two hundred earlier writers whom he quotes, and whose labours have so enriched our city's heritage of the past. Yet, although much has been written, the historical material hitherto published has in general been arranged in chronological, topographical or biographical divisions, and but little effort has been made to assemble all available information in a topical arrangement. It is intended in this volume, consequently, to present—insofar as the scattered and often meagre records will allow—comprehensive accounts of some of the more important aspects of the development of the city, and, in other chapters, to describe in some detail the social, educational, cultural and religious life of its inhabitants; and as it is the first work in which an extensive bibliography and detailed references have been provided, readers and research workers will be able to locate the sources with a minimum of effort.

During the preparation of the work many persons have co-operated in providing material or in offering suggestions concerning subjects upon which they are recognised authorities. Colonel the Honourable Herbert A. Bruce, Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario, has kindly written a foreword for the book, and others to whom the author is indebted for courteous assistance are Dr. George Locke, Miss Staton, Miss Smith and staff of the Toronto Public Library; Mr. Arthur Wilgress, Miss King and staff of the Legislative Library of Ontario; Mr. T. A. Reed; Dr. A. H. Young; Mr. James W. Somers, City Clerk; Mr. R. C. Harris, Commissioner of Works; Mr. V. M. Roberts, Librarian of the Toronto Harbour Commission; Mr. D. W. Harvey, General Manager of the Toronto Transportation Commission; Mr. Edward J. Tucker, Assistant General Manager and Secretary of the Consumers' Gas Company; and Mr. H. C. Powell, Chief Statistician of the Toronto Hydro-Electric System. A number of individuals and corporations have permitted the reproduction of illustrations, and in each case they are so credited where they appear. The Public Library, particularly, has afforded every facility for the use for that purpose of the John Ross Robertson Collection and of rare items of Canadiana. My wife has again aided in

compiling the index and seeing the book through the press, and the publishers, engravers and printers have co-operated fully in its technical production; Mr. T. Wilbur Best, in particular, has contributed greatly to the volume, not only as its publisher but by suggestion and enthusiasm arising from his well-known interest in Canadiana.

As for the book itself it is based upon the same general plan as *Early Life in Upper Canada*, which met with the approval of the critics and the general public: the annotations and references in each chapter are independent of all others, and the bibliography and index have been similarly compiled. Since extensive treatment was given so recently to the American occupation of York and to Toronto's part in the Mackenzie Rebellion these subjects are not repeated in detail in the present work. Much miscellaneous material, it may be of value to point out, has been included within the confines of the first and last chapters, the contents of which alone are of a somewhat general nature. The illustrations, many of which have never been reproduced before, are largely contemporary with the scenes portrayed, or have been faithfully drawn from the most accurate plans and descriptions available. The attempt has been made to produce a work comprehensive without being in any sense exhaustive; to be informative and accurate in statistical facts, but at the same time to elaborate upon material with strong human interest; to record the activities of the poor and humble as well as the life of citizens in high places; and to catch something of that public spirit and initiative which has always characterised the inhabitants of Toronto, and which, in the face of natural obstacles by no means small, has resulted in the great developments of the past century and a half.

E. C. GUILLET,
Toronto, May, 1934.

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TORONTO
FROM TRADING POST TO GREAT CITY

CHAPTER I

Two Centuries of Progress

When the first explorers visited the interior of America they followed the great waterways which had for centuries been the highway of the Indian. Well-defined portage trails supplemented river and lake where it was necessary to avoid waterfalls or make a short-cut between river systems, and one of the most noted of these was the Humber-Holland portage or, as it was long called, "the Carrying-Place of Toronto". After the middle of the seventeenth century the portage was largely an Iroquois route, but its earliest use by a European appears to have been in 1615 when Etienne Brûlé passed southward from Lake Simcoe on a recruiting expedition for Champlain and his Huron allies. In after years, when the fur trade with French, Dutch and English posts developed on a large scale, *le passage de Toronto* was extensively used by Indian and trader, explorer and *voyageur*, and was coveted by each nationality. The site of Toronto was for over one hundred years, therefore, characterised chiefly by traffic with the Indians—particularly in liquor.

The appellation "Toronto", which was variously spelled, was probably first applied to Matchedash Bay, later to Lake Simcoe and, through faulty maps, to the Trent System generally, and finally to the district of which the trading post near the mouth of the Humber was the commercial outlet. Authorities do not agree upon the derivation of the name, but the Indian equivalent of "place of meeting" is most generally accepted, both from their traditional employment of the peninsula (now the island) for that purpose, and from circumstances of the same nature arising from the continual use of portage and post by Indians and traders; it is quite probable, indeed, that the more general suggestion of "carrying-place" better suits the name's significance.

There is some evidence that a French trader was located near the Seneca village Teiaiagon ("a crossing") as early

as 1668, and Joliet's map of 1673 marks the village's site as upon the east bank of the Humber near its mouth—its exact location was undoubtedly the district now called Bâby Point. Again about 1720 a trading post, the *Magasin Royal,* was established by Sieur Douville. It is thought to have been at Teiaiagon, and was in successful operation for some ten years. Further official recognition of the importance of the district[1] as a centre of Indian trade arose from the fact that British merchants at Chouéguen (Oswego) were attracting much of the commerce which had formerly passed to Detroit, Niagara and eastern posts; it was therefore considered advisable by the French Government to establish a palisaded fort at a point which would protect the harbour as well as the trade route. The first fort which resulted from correspondence between the officials in Canada and the French Colonial Minister, Rouillé, was a small structure mounting four guns, erected in the summer of 1750, on the east bank near the mouth of the Humber; and it was succeeded in 1751 by a more elaborate fortification comprising several buildings, but located some two miles eastward, at the foot of the present Dufferin Street.

Though never a first-class trading post, Fort Rouillé, or Toronto, as it was more commonly called, carried on an annual trade of some 35,000 *livres* ($5,833), and its staff in 1754 numbered an officer, five soldiers, two sergeants and a storekeeper. During the early part of the Seven Years' War it was frequently in danger of attack by the British, and in 1759 the French burned the post to prevent its capture. The remains of the works were distinguishable for over a century, but in modern times the encroachments of the lake wore away portions of the site.[2] In 1878 the ground was levelled and a pillar erected to mark the spot.

The change of ownership of the land did not end trading

[1]The most notable researches into the history of the Toronto Carrying-Place have been made by Mr. Percy Robinson, who published in 1934 an exhaustive and scholarly work, *Toronto during the French Régime, 1615-1793.* This volume contains so much that is new that it entirely supersedes all partial accounts hitherto available.

[2]A summary of the correspondence relating to the establishment of these posts, as well as travellers' references to Fort Toronto or its ruins, may be found in E. C. Guillet: *Early Life in Upper Canada,* 1933, pp. 80 *et seq.* The documents are in the Public Archives of Canada, Correspondance Générale, Volumes 91, 93, 95 and 97.

activities at Toronto. Almost immediately after the destruction of the fort several independent traders were established near the mouth of the Humber. One of these, Jean Baptiste Rousseau, commonly called St. John, had a post on the east side of the mouth of the river, which was on that account long called St. John's Creek. In the early seventeen-sixties at least two others—Messrs. Bâby and Knaggs—were debauching the Indians by the rum trade, and in 1763 British troops under General Gage seized Knaggs and his supplies. Among the most interesting descriptions of a journey across the Toronto Carrying-Place is that of the famous fur-trader, Alexander Henry, who tramped over the portage in 1764 while virtually a prisoner of the Indians. After a short stop on the north shore of Lac aux Claies (Simcoe), the expedition continued southwards:

"On the 18th of June we crossed Lake aux Claies, which appeared to be upward of twenty miles in length. At its further end we came to the Carrying-Place of Toronto. Here the Indians obliged me to carry a burden of more than a hundred pounds' weight. The day was very hot, and the woods and marshes abounded with mosquitoes; but the Indians walked at a quick pace, and I could by no means see myself left behind. The whole country was a thick forest, through which our only road was a foot-path, or such as, in America, is exclusively termed an Indian path. Next morning at ten o'clock we reached the shore of Lake Ontario. Here we were employed two days in making canoes out of the bark of the elm tree, in which we were to transport ourselves to Niagara. . . . On the 21st we embarked at Toronto, and encamped, in the evening, four miles short of Fort Niagara, which the Indians would not approach till morning."[8]

In 1787 the British Government recognised the importance of the trade route by buying a considerable amount of the land from the ruins of Rouillé northward, the tract being the second district in Upper Canada to be purchased from the Indians, though the sale was not entirely completed when the first palaver was held at the Carrying Place, Bay of Quinté. On August 1, 1805, a second meeting with the Indians took place on the Credit River, when

[8]Alexander Henry: *Travels and Adventures in Canada and the Indian Territories, 1760-76*. 1807. pp. 179-80.

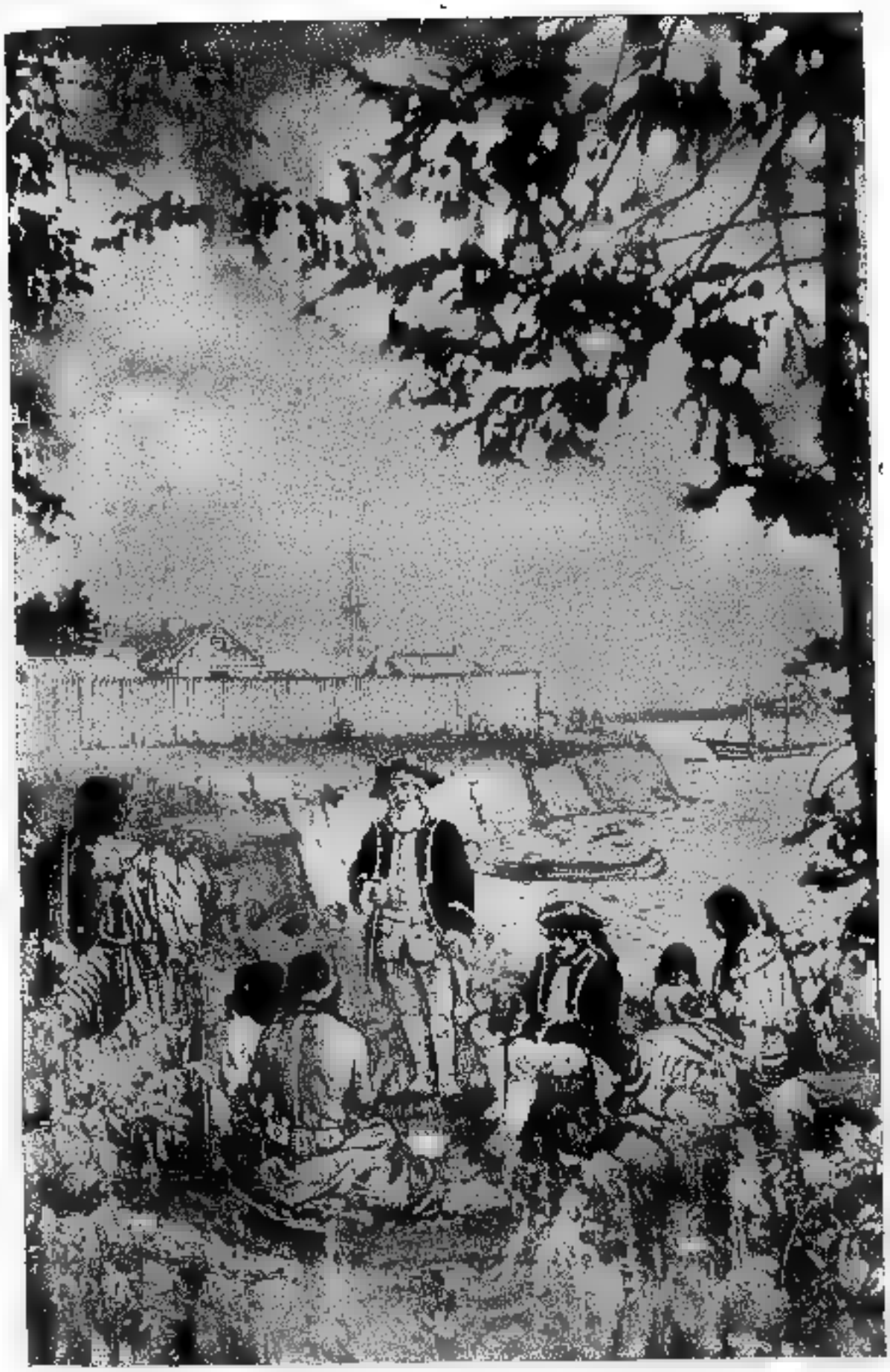
250,808 acres, made up largely of York, Etobicoke, Vaughan and King Townships, was transferred to British control for £1,700 sterling in cash and goods.

Some years prior to the creation of the Province of Upper Canada the British Government had decided to establish a town at Toronto. In 1788, in fact, a site was surveyed by Alexander Aitkin at the order of Lord Dorchester, and later in the same year Captain Gother Mann made similar investigations. Nothing resulted from these activities and plans at that time, but three years later Surveyor Augustus Jones was busy examining the same district. The first capital of the province, however, was Niagara (Newark), although Kingston desired the honour, and the Lieutenant-Governor himself would have preferred the present site of London when he learned that Fort Niagara, close by the infant capital, was in United States territory and about to be garrisoned by American troops. This choice of Simcoe's, "Georgina-upon-Thames", was made during his first tour of the Western District in February, 1793; but the Governor-General disallowed it, and Simcoe had to content himself with Dorchester's choice of Toronto—at first intended to be merely an arsenal.

When Surveyor Joseph Bouchette visited the Bay of Toronto in 1792 he noted that only two families of Indians dwelt in the dense forests which then covered the entire shore.[4] The wigwams in which these Mississaugas lived had probably been constructed many years earlier, and had been used by various Indians passing back and forth over the trade route; for there is no record of a permanent Indian settlement on the site of Toronto, though references to the Indian village Teiaiagon, mentioned previously, are found in accounts of travel written in the last quarter of the seventeenth century by such men as Hennepin and La Salle, both of whom visited the village on the Toronto River.

From Mrs. Simcoe's diary we obtain a knowledge of the Governor's arrival at Toronto, and of early life there, that was not available when Dr. Scadding wrote his *Toronto of Old*. On May 2, 1793, the Governor, accompanied by seven officers, made his first visit to Toronto, the expedition fol-

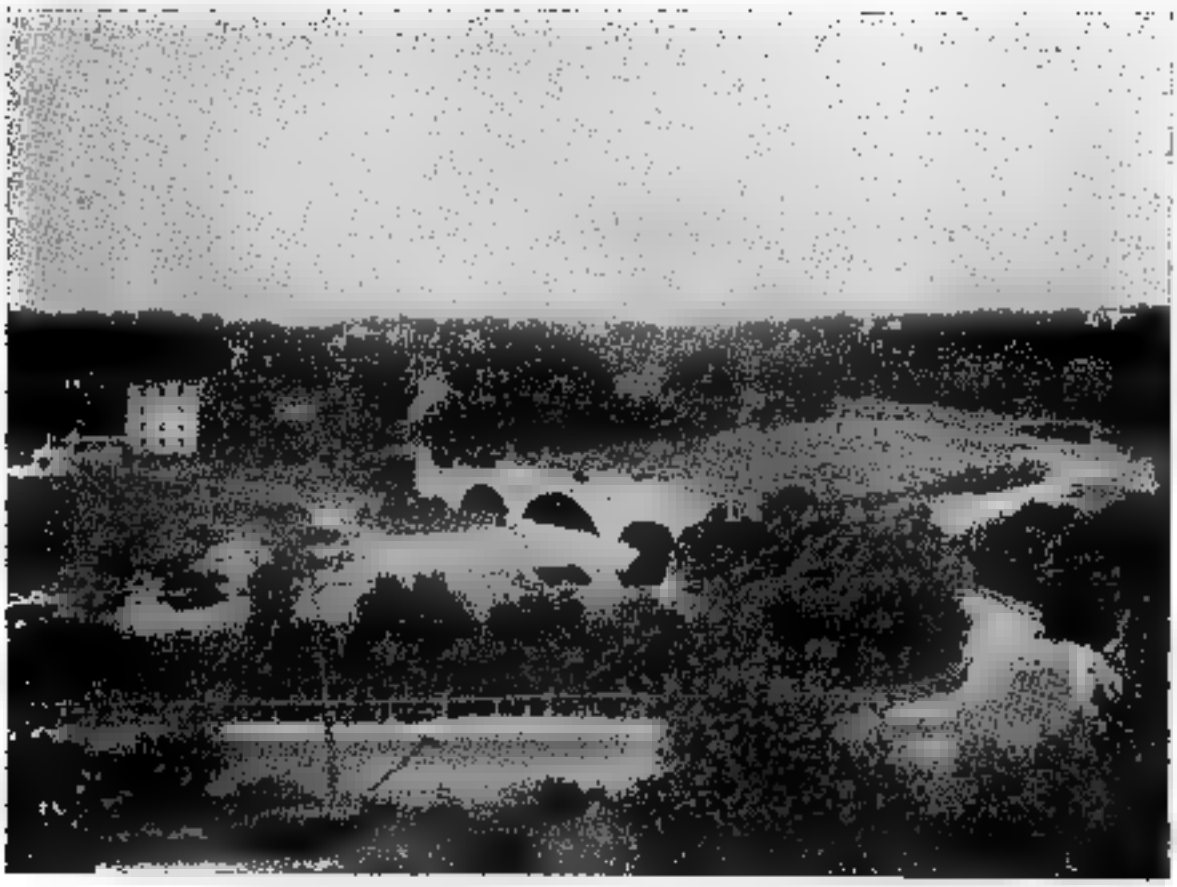
[4]J. Bouchette: *The British Dominions in North America*. 1831. Vol. I, p. 89 fn. Bouchette's survey is dated November 15, 1792.



Reproduced by Courtesy of the Artist — F. S. Challener, R.C.A., O.S.A.

FORT ROUILLÉ, 1751-1759

This fort, at the foot of the present Dufferin Street, was the third French military post in the vicinity of Toronto.



THE "OLD MILL" ON THE HUMBER

The Indian village Teiaiagon was in the right background.

THE MOUTH OF THE HUMBER RIVER

In Indians days the River Tau-a-hon-ate; in the French Period the Toronto River; and in trader Rousseau's time called St. John's Creek. The Carrying-Place ended at the French fort (later the site of Rousseau's post), where now is situated the Silver Slipper Dance Hall.

lowing the shore line in a bateau around the head of Lake Ontario. Governor Simcoe was immediately impressed by the fine harbour, and set his men to work developing the site of the future capital. On May 13th Mrs. Simcoe wrote in her diary: "Colonel Simcoe returned from Toronto, and speaks in praise of the harbour, and a fine spot near it covered with large oaks, which he intends to fix as a site for a town."[5]

On July 29th Mrs. Simcoe sailed to Toronto on the sloop *Onondaga*, and the party camped in tents just east of the present Old Fort. While the soldiers were clearing away the trees and preparing the "canvas houses", the Governor's wife "went in a boat two miles to the bottom of the bay, and walked through a grove of oaks, where the town is intended to be built".[6] Soon after, Augustus Jones surveyed a series of lots on the shore of the lake from St. John's Creek (the Humber) eastward, leaving spaces for proposed roadways. In his notes he mentions "the Blacksmith's old house", which Dr. Scadding suggests was a forge near the ruins of Fort Rouillé where the Indians and traders had repaired their implements and guns.[7]

For the first few weeks after its establishment the town was known as Toronto; but on August 26th the Governor changed the name to York, and at noon the following day a salute was fired in commemoration of the change, which was made to honour the Duke of York who had won a notable victory over the French. Some people objected to Simcoe's policy of anglicising the place-names of Upper Canada: for instance, Isaac Weld, who travelled in Upper Canada in 1796, wrote: "It is to be lamented that the Indian names, so grand and sonorous, should ever have been changed for others. Newark, Kingston, York are poor substitutes for the original names of the respective places Niagara, Cataraqui, Toronto." Weld also mentions that before he arrived in Niagara "orders had been issued for the removal of the seat of government from Niagara to Toronto" (Weld would not use the new names!); and he

[5]*Diary of Mrs. John Graves Simcoe*, May 13, 1793.
[6]*Ibid.*, July 30, 1793.
[7]Henry Scadding: *History of the Old French Fort at Toronto, and its Monument.* 1887. p. 29.

says that "the projected change is by no means relished by the people at large".[8]

The first official plan of York harbour, drawn in 1793 by Alexander Aitkin, shows the townsite to the west of the Don, the proposed battery on Gibraltar (now Hanlan's) Point, and the barracks to the east of the present Exhibition grounds; this was very different from the plans in the survey of 1788. Simcoe tried to prevent York from becoming a straggling village by setting aside the entire waterfront of the western section of the Bay as a Garrison Reserve, and to his action we owe the availability of the land for the great Fair over three-quarters of a century later. Until modern times the island was a peninsula, joined to the mainland at the foot of the present Woodbine Avenue. The small sandy connection was gradually weakened, and in 1858, when the waters of Lake Ontario broke through during the course of a heavy wind, the island was created.

Apart from the military works, no buildings were erected in York until 1794, when the first homes of officials were built. In Simcoe's time the boundaries of the town were George Street on the west, Ontario Street on the east, Duchess Street on the north, and Palace (Front) Street on the south. The main thoroughfare was King Street. Ontario Street appears to have followed the course of the trail leading to the canoe landing, where it was usual to carry small boats across the narrow neck of land between the lake and the bay. Palace Street was so called because of the plans to erect a residence for the Governor there, though the structure became the Parliament Buildings; and from 1797 to 1824 the seat of government was at the corner of Parliament (now Berkeley) and Palace Streets.

We owe to Mrs. Simcoe's artistic ability the only pictures of York before 1800, and from her diary we catch a glimpse of life there during the first years of the town.[9] She describes rides she took on the peninsula, and along the north shore of the lake "till we were impeded by large trees on the beach"; of rowing in "Mr. Grant's (the surveyor's) boat to the highlands of Toronto. They appeared so well that we

[8]Isaac Weld: *Travels through the States of North America*. 1799. p. 296.

[9]John Ross Robertson, the editor of Mrs. Simcoe's diary, reproduced most of her Canadian sketches.

talked of building a summer residence there and calling it Scarborough".[10] On another occasion she "walked two miles to the old French Fort, but there are no remains of any building there".[11] One day some Ojibway Indians "brought the Governor 'a beaver blanket to make his bed', as they expressed themselves; . . . . and invited him to visit their country".[12] On September 11, 1793, Mrs. Simcoe "rowed six miles up the Don to Coons', who had a farm under a hill covered with pine".[13] The diary contains a detailed account of the Governor's trips northward to Georgian Bay and westward to Detroit, expeditions which were made by canoe, or on sleds in winter.[14]

During the spring of 1794 Castle Frank, a combined summer residence and Government House, was built; it was a frame building, on the heights overlooking the Don Valley, just beyond the northern boundary of the present St. James' Cemetery. The location was very dear to the Simcoes, but after they left Canada the building was but little used, and in 1829 was burned by a fire left by careless fishermen.

The first bridge over the Don was known as Playter's because it was on land granted to Captain George Playter, an early Loyalist settler in York. The bridge was located at the foot of Winchester Street, and Mrs. Simcoe thus describes it: "I passed Playter's picturesque bridge over the Don; it is a butternut tree fallen across the river, the branches still growing full leaf. Mrs. Playter being timorous, a pole was fastened through the branches to hold by. Having attempted to pass it I was determined to proceed, but was frightened before I got half way."[15] Mrs. Simcoe had another adventure in June, 1796, when she and and her little daughter Sophia accompanied the Governor on a lake trip during a severe storm. They were proceeding east from Burlington in a canoe and were surprised how well their frail boat rode the waves; but Mrs. Simcoe felt much more at ease when they landed at the mouth of the

[10] *Diary*, August 4, 1793.
[11] *Ibid.*, August 5, 1793.
[12] *Ibid.*, August 9, 1793.
[13] *Ibid.*, September 11, 1793.
[14] *Ibid.*, September 25, 1793, *et seq.*
[15] *Ibid.*, July 6, 1796.

River Credit, where "numbers of Indians resort to fish for salmon".[16]

Governor Simcoe wished York to be a very English town, but under his *régime* it developed chiefly as a military establishment. The garrison of some 200 Queen's Rangers formed the great bulk of the population, and these men were set to work constructing buildings and opening up roads, especially Yonge and Dundas Streets. The fort of Simcoe's day was on the bay shore, with Garrison Creek on two sides of it. As will be described shortly, the military works were quite extensive; but none of them survived the American occupation of 1813, the present structures having been erected at various times after the close of the War of 1812.

Advertisements in Upper Canada's first newspaper give us some knowledge of the early development of York. In the Niagara *Upper Canada Gazette, or American Oracle* of July 10, 1794, appears the following: "Wanted—Carpenters for the public buildings to be erected at York. Applications to be made to John McGill, Esq., at York, or to Mr. Allan MacNab, at Navy Hall."[17] John Ogden visited York, "called by the natives Torento", and observed the preparations: "A town is here in great forwardness, and should the seat of government be removed from Newark thence, as is contemplated, it will soon become a flourishing place".[18]

The first few years of the town were filled with activity, and the soldiers did the greater part of the work. A landing-pier and a canal or navigable opening into Garrison Creek was also being constructed, a warrant being signed by the Lieutenant-Governor authorising the Commissioner of Stores, Mr. McGill, "to supply from time to time from the Government stores such quantities of rum as may be required to be given to the men (Queen's Rangers) employed on the wharf and canal at York".[19]

[16]*Ibid.*, June 16, 1796.

[17]*Upper Canada Gazette*, July 10, 1794.

[18]John Ogden: *A Tour through Upper and Lower Canada.* 1799. pp. 100-2.

[19]Quoted in Henry Scadding: *Memoirs of Four Decades of York, Upper Canada.* 1884. p. 21.

From a report[20] concerning public property in Upper Canada, issued by the Hon. Peter Russell in 1799, we learn the extent of the first military works at York. A saw-mill had been erected on the Humber to supply boards and other materials. Round log huts were constructed in 1793 and 1794 as quarters for the Queen's Rangers, as well as a similar structure in the latter year for the commissary of stores. Canals, locks and wharves were built at the Garrison to aid in landing provisions and supplies safely, and to provide a shelter for the three bateaux. A bridge was also constructed there, and a roadway pushed westward as far as the Humber, presumably as part of Simcoe's projected highway, Dundas Street.

In 1795 a powder magazine of squared hemlock logs was erected, and the intervals between the log huts were gradually stockaded; a similar protection was raised in front of the huts on the Parade, and gates with locks and bars were put up. A large blockhouse barracks was also constructed and occupied by the soldiers, and a storehouse of two storeys for the Indian presents. The Hon. Peter Russell states that 40,000 bricks had been supplied at one time or another for the building of new barracks, chimneys and ovens.

Two one-storey brick buildings, originally intended as the wings of a residence for the Lieutenant-Governor, were erected in the town. They were each twenty-five feet by forty, and were about 100 feet apart. The houses in their rear were advanced to the front as guardhouses, and some of them were later incorporated into a sort of gallery or passageway between the brick wings; here it was that the sessions of the second parliament of Upper Canada were held, and the building served also as a court of justice.

In 1795 La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, a French duke, found about twelve houses in York, chiefly located along the Bay near the Don. One of these was the Scadding cottage, erected in 1796 on the east side of the Don; this is the York Pioneers' log house now located in Exhibition Park. The Duke shared in the love of his nation for the United States, and consequently grasped the opportunity to cast a slur on

[20]Report concerning public property in Upper Canada, 1799. This valuable document is in the Toronto Public Library.

William Berczy's settlers in Markham Township, who had in the previous year abandoned the Pulteney settlement across the lake, in the Genesee River district, and had come to Upper Canada. In describing York he says: "The inhabitants do not possess the fairest character. One of them is the noted Baty, the leader of the German families. . . . In a circumference of 150 miles the Indians are the only neighbours of York."[21] The reference was undoubtedly intended, therefore, to apply to the German settlers up Yonge Street, though it must be admitted that there were some inhabitants of York to whom it would have been more applicable.

When the Simcoes left York on the *Onondaga*, on July 21, 1796, Mrs. Simcoe felt so badly that she wept all day, for the town was about to take on a new importance as the capital of Upper Canada, the climax of the plans of the Lieutenant-Governor and his wife who had so thoroughly enjoyed themselves in the little garrison settlement in the wilds; they had been the founders of the town which was soon to be variously called "Little", "Muddy", or "Dirty" York.

One of the noted achievements of Governor Simcoe was the opening of Yonge Street to Lake Simcoe. The road had been commenced both by the Rangers and by Berczy's settlers in 1794, but it was not open for the whole distance until February 16, 1796. Augustus Jones was the surveyor in charge of this work, as of many other early surveys in Upper Canada. Simcoe's dream of a highway across the province from east to west was not realised until long after his death, though a start was made in 1793 on some sections of Dundas Street west of Burlington Bay.

After Simcoe's departure, Acting-Governor Russell wrote from Niagara to an official in York that, as the legislature would meet there on the 1st of June, "You will therefore be pleased to apprise the inhabitants of the town that twenty-five gentlemen will want board and lodgings during the session, which may possibly induce them to fit up their houses and lay in provisions to accommodate them".[22] The

[21]La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt: *Travels through the United States of North America*. 1799. Vol. I, p. 269. "Baty" is presumably a translator's error for "Berczy".

[22]Scadding, *Four Decades of York*, p. 28.

officials of the government sailed in the *Mohawk* for York, at the end of May, 1797. Perhaps they were not all taken care of satisfactorily, for a traveller who visited the town in 1798 described it as "a dreary dismal place, not even possessing the characteristics of a village. There is no church, schoolhouse, nor in fact any of the ordinary signs of civilisation. There is no inn; and those travellers who have no friends to go to, pitch a tent and live there while they remain".[23] It would appear, however, that Abner Miles' Inn was in operation at that time, but the accommodation was not extensive.

In 1797 York consisted of twelve city blocks immediately north of the Parliament Buildings, which were located close to the waterfront at the foot of Parliament (now Berkeley) Street. Six of these blocks were on the north and six on the south of the present King Street, and most of the street names were in honour of the Royal Family. At that time even Church Street was remote from the business district of York, while the present corner of King and Yonge Streets was not even a cross-road! Upper Yonge Street was approached by a trail along the route of the present Parliament Street, the section of Yonge Street below Yorkville having fallen into disuse soon after it was opened by Surveyor Jones. Hospital (Richmond) Street and Lot (Queen) Street were the usual routes by which one entered the town. Russell Abbey, the residence of the President of the Provisional Government of Upper Canada, was located at the corner of Palace and Princes (now Princess) Streets.

In the early years of the new century all the buildings in York were of wood except the parliament buildings and Quetton St. George's general store; and almost all were of log construction, though frame clap-board houses were occasionally found. John Ross Robertson states that St. George's brick store was erected in 1807, but, as in his reference to the government buildings' being of wood, he is mistaken in saying that the bricks brought by St. George from the United States were the first used in York. George Heriot states that the government (parliament) buildings

[23]Memoirs of Mrs. Breakenridge, daughter of Dr. W. W. Baldwin, quoted in William Canniff: *History of the Settlement of Upper Canada*. 1869. pp. 530-1.

were of brick, and if further proof is necessary it is supplied by the journal of David Thomson, the first settler in Scarboro Township. Thomson was employed as mason and brick-layer in York in 1797, and noted in his account book on July 26th that he began "to wall the government brick houses"; and he also stated that 53,500 bricks at 17s. 6d. per thousand were used, the cost totalling £46 16s. 2d. The government house, or residence for the lieutenant-governor, must not be confused with the parliament-house which in early times was always referred to as "the government buildings". Russell Abbey, where the Hon. Peter Russell lived—and died, was erected in 1798, and George Heriot considered that it was "sufficiently commodious for the present state of the province".[24]

The material development of York during the next few years was very gradual, but many events are of interest in that they form the very foundation stones of a great city. "Our Town of York", as the governors called it in their proclamations, remained a very small settlement for a quarter of a century. Officials, merchants and tradesmen gradually occupied the original townsite and spread westward along the shore towards the Garrison, but at no point did the straggling town extend northward more than a few hundred feet. Dr. Scadding describes the course of development as commencing at the government buildings, "the Westminster of the New Capital", and spreading along its "Strand" towards the fort: "Growing slowly westward it developed, in the customary American way, its hotel, its tavern, boarding-house, wagon factory, tinsmith shop, bakery, general store, its lawyer's office, printing office, and places of worship."[25]

In 1797 George Street was the western boundary of the town, but in June of that year, D. W. Smith drew up a *Plan for the Enlargement of York* by which Peter Street was the new boundary. For some years, however, comparatively few of the inhabitants lived west of George Street. A small wharf stood at the foot of Frederick

[24]George Heriot: *Travels through the Canadas*. 1807. p. 138. See also, in connection with the references in this paragraph, John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Canada: What Art has done for Canadian History*. 1917. p. 84. David Thomson's account book is quoted in David Boyle: *The Township of Scarboro*. 1896. p. 37.

[25]Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old*. 1873. p. 28.

Street, and above the beach, on an embankment some ten or fifteen feet high, was a path often used as a promenade. The shores of the Bay were in most parts well covered with a growth of small cedars, while the waters abounded with rushes and seaweeds. Mosquitoes were consequently very numerous, and the inhabitants of York were frequently stricken with intermittent fever carried by the mosquitoes and aggravated by the general dampness of the climate, which also led to severe colds, or agues as they were long called. At the mouth of the Don was an extensive marsh, and early plans of the town note that the inhabitants are permitted to cut the hay in these beautiful meadows.

Soon after York replaced Niagara as the capital the official publication of the government was transferred to the town. The original name of the newspaper was *The Upper Canada Gazette, or American Oracle,* and the first number to be printed in York appeared on October 4, 1798. Another result of the increased importance of York was that a post office was established there in 1799. The public mail was brought at infrequent intervals by couriers or other travellers on foot, horseback or in sailing-ship, though a purely governmental service by Schenectady boat began in the summer of 1794 and was carried on weekly during the season of navigation. The York postmaster appears to have had his share of troubles, and announces his resignation in 1801:

"To prevent disappointment and trouble, the public is requested to take notice that some time ago Mr. Willcocks resigned his place as Postmaster for York, his reasonable charges for the rent of an office, stationery, fire, candles, and a servant to attend being disputed; although by his assiduity and attention the revenue was productive beyond expectation, as appears by the accounts he rendered and the money he remitted to the Postmaster-General at Quebec."[20]

The inhabitants of York at the close of the century consisted largely of the garrison and the official class. In addition to the merchants and tradesmen to be found in any town, there were also a few members of the professions and a number of negroes, some of whom were

[20] *Upper Canada Gazette,* December 19, 1801.

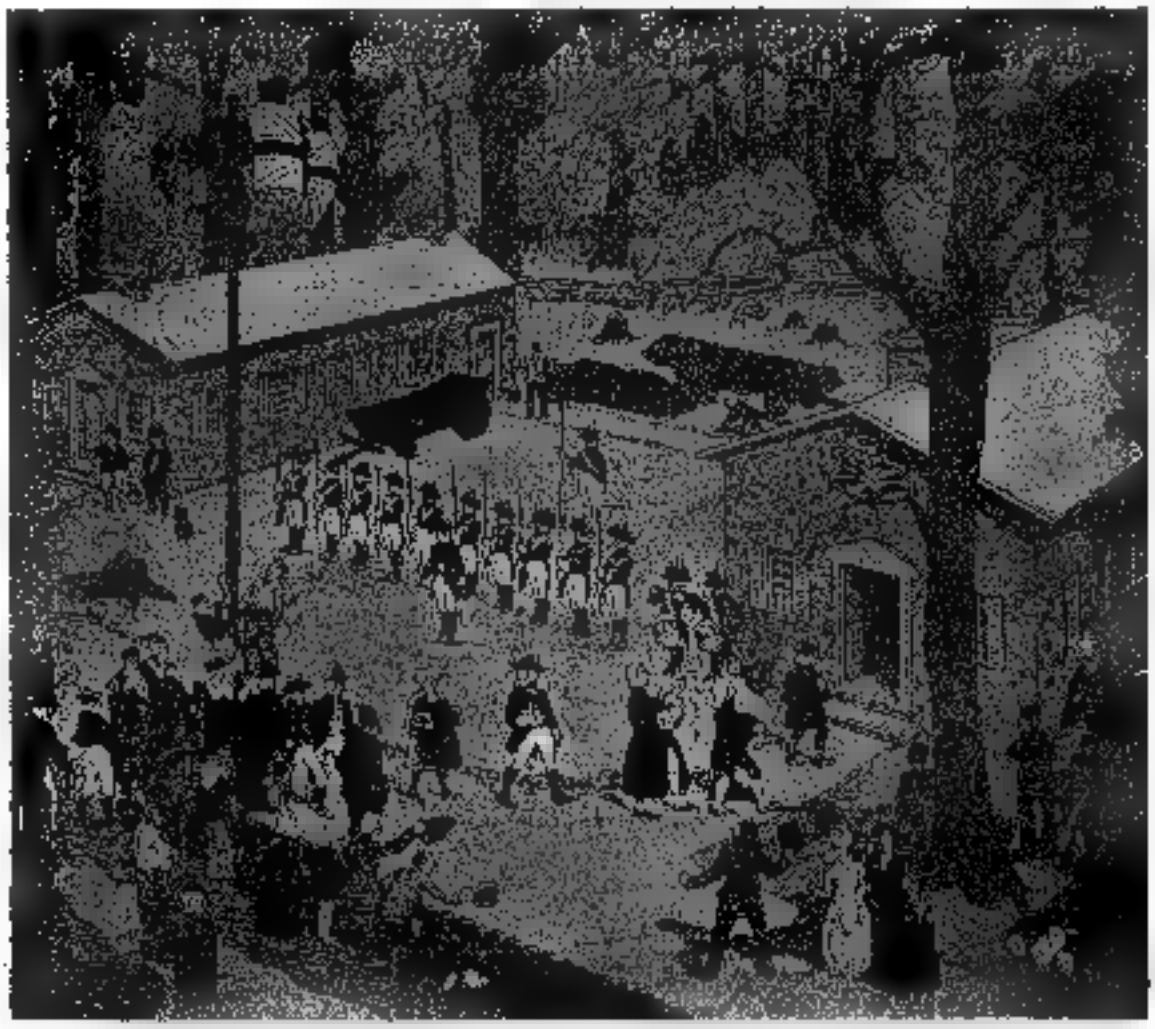
slaves of the officials, while others had escaped from the United States. Among the earliest families to settle in or near York were the Denisons, Baldwins, Allans, Ketchums, Crookshanks and Playters; while the official class included Peter Russell, John McGill, John Small, Thomas Ridout, Captain Lippincott, William Jarvis and William Willcocks. One of the first lawyers in York was Dr. Baldwin, who added that profession to those of medicine and teaching, which presumably had not proven sufficiently remunerative. He was admitted to the bar in 1803, and carried on all his professions for some years. In 1800 Chief Justice Elmsley presided over the Court of King's Bench, and he was assisted by Mr. Justice Powell and Mr. Justice William Henry Alcock.

Many other aspects of early life in York are treated separately and need not be repeated here; but it may be said that in general the town was a mere police village in size, and it was for many years governed by the township meeting, supplemented in respect to the issuance of licences and the enforcement of law by the Court of General Quarter Sessions of the Home District, of which it was the only town. Some interesting details of activities in York may be obtained from the minutes of this court. The arbitrary appointment of citizens to the position of Constable, Collector of Taxes, Pathmaster, etc., was not always appreciated by the recipient of the office, and frequently was refused on conscientious or other grounds. In 1800, for example, Samuel Marther said "he would never serve the office of Constable", and Robert Willson also declined serving.[27] They were given two days to provide substitutes or pay the fine, which was usually £2. On one occasion an official benefitted financially by this system of compulsory public service and alternative fines. The Court records show that "in 1816 the Magistrates appointed John Murchison Town Clerk without consulting him. On his modestly pleading that he did not consider himself capable of holding that exalted office they fined him £2 for contempt and appointed Jonathan Cawthra instead. The latter, on refusing, was also fined £2. Then Jonathan Post was ap-

[27] Minutes of the Court of General Quarter Sessions, April 23, 1800. See *Report of the Archives of Ontario, 1932*, p. 5.

John Ross Robertson Collection. Mrs. John Graves Simcoe.

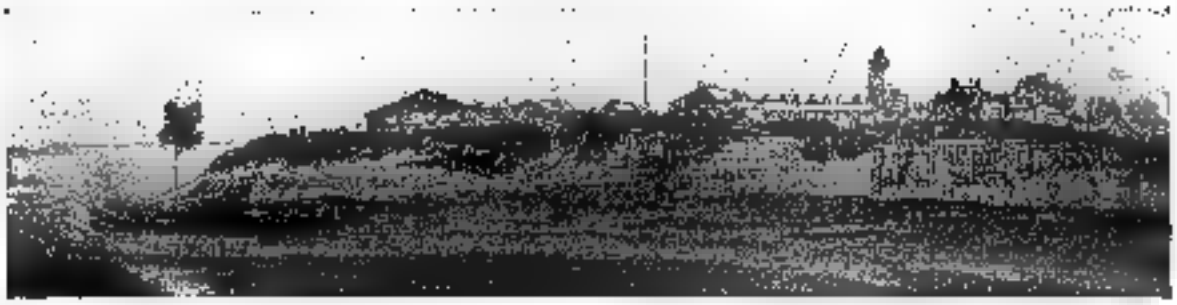
THE GARRISON AT YORK, 1796



Reproduced by Courtesy of the Imperial Life Insurance Company. S. Turner.

THE OPENING OF THE SECOND PARLIAMENT OF UPPER CANADA, AT YORK, 1797

Toronto's first Parliament Buildings were small brick structures at the foot of Parliament (now Berkeley) Street.



John Ross Robertson Collection. James Hamilton.

Old Fort, York, 1832

Until 1858 the only entrance to the harbour was from the west, and the fortifications were built to protect the approach to the town. The barracks and blockhouses may be seen in this illustration.

Reproduced by Courtesy of the Artist. J. D. Kelly.

The Birth of Toronto's Waterborne Trade

For over a century the name Toronto applied to the Humber-Holland Carrying-Place, and the mouth of the Humber was a centre of the fur trade.

pointed and in turn fined £2 for refusing. Finally one Wm. Barber was called in and accepted. He got his reward in the next month by being allowed to keep the three fines in addition to his salary".[28]

A pound in which to place wandering hogs and other animals was early established in York. In 1800 the members of the Court ordered "that the Pound in the Town of York do contain the one-eighth of an acre, that it be a square of 52 feet each side, and that it be divided, for the present, into three Compartments".[29] Poundkeepers were entitled to receive the following fees for impounding animals:

For each horse	2s. 6d.
For each ox	2s.
For each pig or hog	1s.
For each sheep	1s.

At the next meeting, however, it was stipulated that the poundkeeper should be entitled "to ask and to receive the sum of Five Shillings for each and every Hog he shall take up and empound".[30] Ten years later it was decided to apply to the Lieutenant-Governor for a piece of ground opposite the Gaol for the purposes of a pound. Hugh Carfrae agreed to erect the enclosure "at the rate of 1s. Halifax Currency per picket, and to be six feet from the ground and pointed, to be completed this fall, and agrees to wait 'till April for his pay, with interest thereon".[31] Very stiff penalties were enforced against anyone guilty of "pound-breach" (stealing impounded animals), and fines imposed upon those who failed to keep their swine at home. John Murchison, when called before the Court for allowing his hogs on the street, made the unique plea "that the swine by *undermining* its stye forced his way out";[32] and even though not particularly grammatical it was successful in enabling him to escape a fine.

Hugh Carfrae, gaoler in 1810, also placed pickets around the gaol of the Home District, receiving for the

[28]J. Edmund Jones: *Pioneer Crimes and Punishments in Toronto and the Home District*. 1924. p. 151.
[29]Minutes, April 23, 1800. See *Report*, p. 6.
[30]*Ibid.*, July 8, 1800. *Report*, p. 7.
[31]*Ibid.*, September 1, 1810. *Report*, p. 168.
[32]Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

work 1s. 10½d. per picket. The agreement made between him and the magistrates stipulated that "each picket is to be squared and joined close together and to be placed four feet in the ground; that those pickets which can afford to make two are to be sawed by Carfrae for that purpose, and paid for exclusively by the Court; and also that the nails and spikes requisite, for putting up said pickets as well as ribband for strengthening the work are to be paid for or found by the District; and lastly that Hugh Carfrae do perform and completely finish the said undertaking on or before the first day of June, 1810".[33]

In the following year the gaol had to be repaired, and, as there were no spike nails available in York apart from those in the King's Stores, application was made to the Lieutenant-Governor requesting that he direct that a requisite number be furnished from that source. Upon the Clerk of the Peace making an official call upon the Hon. Francis Gore he issued an order for 1500 spike nails for the purpose.[34] Times have greatly changed since the day when one visited the highest official in the province on such business.

There has been criticism of the Toronto Gaol in recent years, but conditions are greatly improved over those described by the Sheriff in 1811. He wrote to the Court "that the Prisoners in the Cells of the Gaol of the Home District suffer much from Cold and Damp, there being no method of communicating heat from the Chimnies, nor any Bedsteads to raise the Straw from the Floors, which lie nearly, if not altogether, on the ground". The Sheriff suggested, therefore, "that a small Stove in the Lobby of each range of Cells, a rough Bedstead for each Cell, together with some Rugs or Blankets, will add much to the Comfort of the unhappy Persons confined". After the matter was thus brought to their attention the Magistrates ordered "that the Treasurer do procure two small Mettle Stoves, and pipes, and direct them to be put up in the Lobby of each range of Cells, and furnish such Bedsteads, Blankets or Rugs as may be found necessary for the Prisoners".[35]

[33]Minutes, November 1, 1809. *Report*, pp. 148-9.
[34]*Ibid.*, May, 4, 1811. *Report*, p. 186.
[35]Sheriff John Beikie's letter to the Court may be found in the Minutes of December 4, 1811. *Report*, pp. 203-4.

The days of slavery in Canada seem very remote, but in early York they were a reality. Two items in Court records concern the slaves of William Jarvis, who was, by the way, Chairman of the Court. On January 16, 1801, Kitty, a negress, was brought before the magistrates for sentence, having previously pleaded guilty to a charge of assault. Upon the application of her master, however, she was dismissed and ordered to return to her duty, "on which condition the punishment of whipping has been remitted"; but she replied she was not guilty and would not return to Mr. Jarvis, whereupon she was remanded to prison.[36] In 1811, when Thomas Ridout was Chairman of the Court, William Jarvis informed the magistrates "that a Negro Boy and Girl, his Slaves, had the Evening before been committed to Prison for having stolen Gold and Silver out of his Desk", and he prayed that some action might be taken against them and against one Coackley, "a Free Negro also committed to Prison on suspicion of having advised and aided the said Boy and Girl in Eloping with their Master's property". It was decided that the boy should be committed to prison, the girl sent back to her master, and Coackley discharged.[37]

A pleasant description of York as it appeared in the early years of the century is given by George Heriot, Deputy Postmaster-General, who wrote that the town, "according to the plan, is projected to extend to a mile and a half in length. . . . The advancement of this place to its present condition has been effected within the lapse of six or seven years, and persons who have formerly travelled in this part of the country are impressed with sentiments of wonder on beholding a town which may be termed handsome, reared as if by enchantment in the midst of the wilderness". Viewed from a point near the Don, "the scene is agreeable and diversified; a blockhouse, situated upon a wooded bank, forms the nearest object; part of the town, points of land cloathed with spreading oak trees, gradually receding from the eye one behind another, until terminated by the buildings of the garrison and the spot on which the governor's residence is placed, compose the objects on the right. The left side of the view comprehends the long

[36]Minutes, January 16, 1801. *Report*, p. 14.
[37]*Ibid.*, March 1, 1811. *Report*, p. 174.

peninsula which encloses this sheet of water, beautiful on account of its placidity, and rotundity of form; the distant lake, which appears bounded only by the sky, terminates the whole".[38] The following additional details are quoted from a book published in 1805:

"The society of the place is highly respectable, and its hospitality is experienced by every visitor. . . . The town is not large, but well furnished with every necessary convenience, and the market is well supplied. . . . There are several respectable private stores, but goods are rather high. . . . The River Don empties itself into the harbour a little above the town, running through a marsh which, when drained, will afford most beautiful and valuable meadows. This has already been effected in a small degree. . . . The long beach or peninsula affords a most delightful ride or walk, and is considered as so healthy by the Indians that they frequently resort to it when indisposed."[39]

Yet "Little York", as it was often called, was little better than in the wilds at the opening of the nineteenth century, for there were occasional visits of bears and wolves. Bay Street is said to have once borne the name Bear Street because Mr. Justice Boulton's horses attacked a bear in their pasture in the vicinity. Joseph Willcocks' letters contain descriptions of similar events. On November 3, 1800, he wrote: "There was a great depredation committed the night before last by a flock of wolves that came into the Town. One man lost 17 sheep; several others lost in proportion".[40] He also describes how "two great bears . . . . took away two pigs. They carried the pigs in their arms and ran on their hind legs".[41] In 1809 Lieutenant Fawcett of the 100th Regiment killed a bear in George Street by cleaving its head with his sword!

At the close of 1803 the town plot of York measured

[38]Heriot, *op. cit.*, pp. 188-9.

[39]D'Arcy Boulton: *Sketch of His Majesty's Province of Upper Canada.* 1805, pp. 45-6. The last two sentences appear to have been copied from the notice of the town in D. W. Smith: *A Short Topographical Description of His Majesty's Province of Upper Canada.* . . . 1799.

[40]Joseph Willcocks to Richard Willcocks, November 3, 1800, quoted in W. R. Riddell: *Life of John Graves Simcoe.* 1927. Notes to Chapter XX, p. 292.

[41]*Ibid.*, August 31, 1800.

420 acres, and there were 456 inhabitants within its limits. The total value of the property was £14,871, and the taxes collected reached the staggering total of £62, a sum which would nowadays hardly pay a month's salary to a minor civic official; but it is a far cry in every respect from the York of the early years of the century to the Toronto of modern times. By 1805 the inhabitants had increased to 474, and the population slowly advanced in succeeding years; but such progress as the town had made prior to the War of 1812 was largely nullified by the two American occupations of 1813.[42] The population of the capital at that time was a mere 700, and but little preparation had been made by the British Government to place the town in a state of defence. On April 28th a large fleet of American warships appeared at the harbour entrance and landed some 2000 men to the west of the fortifications. Momentarily halted by a small Canadian force under Major Givins, the Americans were soon in possession of the town, but not before a large number of them had been killed or wounded when a British powder magazine was fired. General Sheaffe's regulars, meantime, were on the way to Kingston, leaving wounded in various farmhouses as they retreated along the Danforth Road.

The soldiery engaged in this raid were of a comparatively low calibre, and the plundering of the town was restricted only by continual exertions on the part of the Rev. John Strachan, who was also prominent during the capitulation negotiations. Whether the Government Buildings were burned by Americans or by disaffected Canadians is not certain, but it would appear probable that drunken American sailors set the fire without orders from their superiors. The Provincial Treasury suffered a loss of some £2000, and the town library and St. James' Church were entered. Numerous inhabitants, especially women, fled up Yonge Street for safety, some of them finding upon their return that their homes had been ransacked. Other ladies engaged in patriotic activities during the occupation. John Ross Robertson obtained reminiscences from Mrs. Charles Seymour, and wrote that in less than a year after the

[42]For a detailed account of the occupation of York see Guillet, *Early Life in Upper Canada*, Section V, Chapter 3.

Seymours' arrival at York "war was declared between the two countries, and Mrs. Seymour, although at the time not quite six years of age, has still a distinct remembrance of the taking of York by the American troops.

"Mrs. Grant Powell, her mother, had issued invitations for a party to be held on the 27th April. Mrs. Seymour says she well remembers the guests were slow in arriving. One or two ladies came, but not a gentleman, and all present were feeling excited and uncomfortable, dreading they knew not what. The suspense was at last ended by the hurried entrance of her father who informed them that the American fleet had been sighted. He told his wife to take the child and maid-servants and go at once to Mrs. McGill's cottage, which stood in the centre of the now Metropolitan Church square. This they did without loss of time. Dr. Powell also said that what was most required by the Canadians was food, they not having been prepared for the attack. Consequently the following morning, Mrs. Seymour says, all the ladies at Mrs. McGill's were hard at work preparing provisions for the troops, some making bread, while she and Bishop Strachan's son, James, were first sent out to pick up chips to keep the fire alight while the provisions were being cooked. The following morning Mrs. Powell went with her mother and nurse to their home, which they found a scene of desolation. The supper table, which had given her so much pleasure to admire the night before, had evidently been well appreciated by the invaders. The house had been ransacked by the Americans, who, she presumed, were looking for public papers, mistaking it for that of her grandfather, Chief Justice Powell".[42]

The Americans had all re-embarked by May 2nd, and the townspeople were left to repair the damage as best they might. A few weeks later, however, there was another raid on York, though in the attack of July 31st the Americans remained long enough merely to open the jail, seize flour and other provisions from warehouses, and parole the male inhabitants. Several public storehouses were ordered burned before the invaders withdrew. Many years elapsed

[42]John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*. 1894-1914. Vol. III, pp. 288-9.

before the town recovered from the misfortunes of 1813.

A few months after the American occupation Dr. William ("Tiger") Dunlop was despatched to York, as he relates, "to take charge of my own men, who were in general hospital in that garrison. Toronto, then a dirty straggling village, contained about sixty houses. The church—the only one—was converted into a general hospital".[44] Soon afterwards the Loyal and Patriotic Society of Upper Canada provided funds to the extent of £2,000 for the establishment of the York General Hospital, the construction of which was commenced in 1820 on land set aside for the purpose by the government; the site was the corner of King and John Streets, where the Arlington Hotel now stands, and to Archdeacon Strachan is due the credit for the hospital's erection.

Lieutenant Francis Hall visited York shortly after the close of the War of 1812, and was not favourably impressed. His opinion of the harbour appears particularly unjustified in the light of later developments:

"York, being the seat of government for the upper province, is a place of considerable importance in the eyes of its inhabitants; to a stranger, however, it presents little more than about 100 wooden houses, several of them conveniently—and even elegantly—built, and I think one, or perhaps two, of brick. The public buildings were destroyed by the Americans; but as no ruins of them are visible we must conclude either that the destruction exceeded the desolation of Jerusalem or that the loss to the arts is not quite irreparable. I believe they did not leave one stone upon another, for they did not find one. Before the city a long flat tongue of land runs into the lake, called Gibraltar Point, probably from being very *unlike* Gibraltar. York, wholly useless either as a port or a military post, would sink into a village, and the seat of government be transferred to Kingston, but for the influence of those whose property in the place would be depreciated by the change."[45]

Robert Gourlay, who walked from Montreal to York and continued by way of the Talbot Settlement to Niagara

[44]William Dunlop: *Recollections of the American War*. 1905. p. 89.
[45]Francis Hall: *Travels in Canada and the United States in 1816-17*. 1818. pp. 214-5.

during the early summer of 1817, wrote[46] that York's population was then about 1,200. An interesting picture of the town as it was two years later has been recorded by Bishop Bethune:

"We crossed the Don over a strong wooden bridge, and after half a mile's drive alighted at Mr. De Forest's Inn, the best in the place, though Jordan's, nearly opposite, notwithstanding its low shabby exterior, was the more popular one. There were a few scattered houses on King Street as far up as the residence of the Lieutenant-Governor, and on Front Street, at long intervals, they reached nearly to the old Garrison. There were also a few on Duke, Yonge and Queen Streets. There were but three brick edifices in the town, and exclusive of the military the population was about 1,200. Though inferior in size and condition to many of our present (1870) villages, York took a high rank as to social position, ... having not less than twenty families of the highest respectability—persons of refinement, and many of high intellectual culture. To these were added a small sprinkling of military. For the size of the place there was a large amount of hospitality exercised, and on a handsome and bountiful scale."[47]

Soon afterwards E. A. Talbot visited York, being impressed more by its swampy site than by such material improvements as its thirteen hundred citizens had contrived to make:

"It now contains 1,336 inhabitants, and about 250 houses, many of which exhibit a very neat appearance. The house in which the Lieutenant-Governor resides is built of wood; and, though by no means contemptible, is much inferior to some private houses in the town, particularly to that of the Honourable and Reverend Dr. Strachan. . . . The streets of York are regularly laid out, intersecting each

[46]Robert Gourlay's opinions upon the economic condition of the province may be found in his *Statistical Account of Upper Canada.* 3 volumes. 1822. Reference to this much-persecuted Reformer recalls an interesting study in impressions: Archdeacon Strachan considered Gourlay to be "a wicked and malignant person who has no regard for the truth"; while Gourlay was equally complimentary concerning his ultra-Tory critic, describing him as "a monstrous little fool of a person—rogue would have been nearer the truth".

[47]A. N. Bethune: *Memoirs of the Right Rev. John Strachan.* 1870. p. 81.

other at right angles. Only one of them, however, is yet completely built; and in wet weather the unfinished streets are, if possible, muddier and dirtier than those of Kingston. The situation of the town is very unhealthy; for it stands on a piece of low marshy land, which is better calculated for frog-pond or beaver-meadow than for the residence of human beings. The inhabitants are, on this account, much subject, particularly in Spring and Autumn, to agues and intermittent fevers; and probably five-sevenths of the people are annually afflicted with these complaints. He who first fixed upon this spot as the site of the capital of Upper Canada, whatever predilection he may have had for the roaring of frogs, or for the effluvia arising from stagnated waters and putrid vegetables, can certainly have had no very great regard for preserving the lives of his Majesty's subjects."[48]

The editor of the *Gazette* was early sensible of the unhealthful location of York, and we find that in 1808 he published directions which he hoped would maintain the physical condition of his subscribers:

"As the month is fast approaching which in this part of the country is understood to be the ague and lake fever season we publish the following select medical advice, wishing that if followed it may prove a useful preventive, viz.: Use great regularity and moderate abstemiousness in diet, avoiding fat substances, matters which encourage superfluous bile. Two gentle emetics and a mild proportion of cathartic medicine, previously taken, are sufficient."[49]

During the eighteen-twenties York did not make much progress in population, the number of citizens in 1827 being only 1,817. It was still a very small town in every respect,

[48]E. A. Talbot: *Five Years' Residence in the Canadas*. 1824. Vol. I, pp. 100-2. Though Edward Talbot was in general unappreciative of Upper Canada and its inhabitants, his opinion of York is similar to that of several other travellers. John Howison, for example, was impressed with "the natural unpleasantness of its situation", and noted that it was "nearly defenceless" and "not at all calculated for the seat of government". He found that York's trade was "very trifling", and was of the opinion that the town owed "its present population and magnitude entirely to its being the seat of government, for it is destitute of every natural advantage except that of a good harbour". (See John Howison: *Sketches of Upper Canada*. 1821. pp. 55-6.)

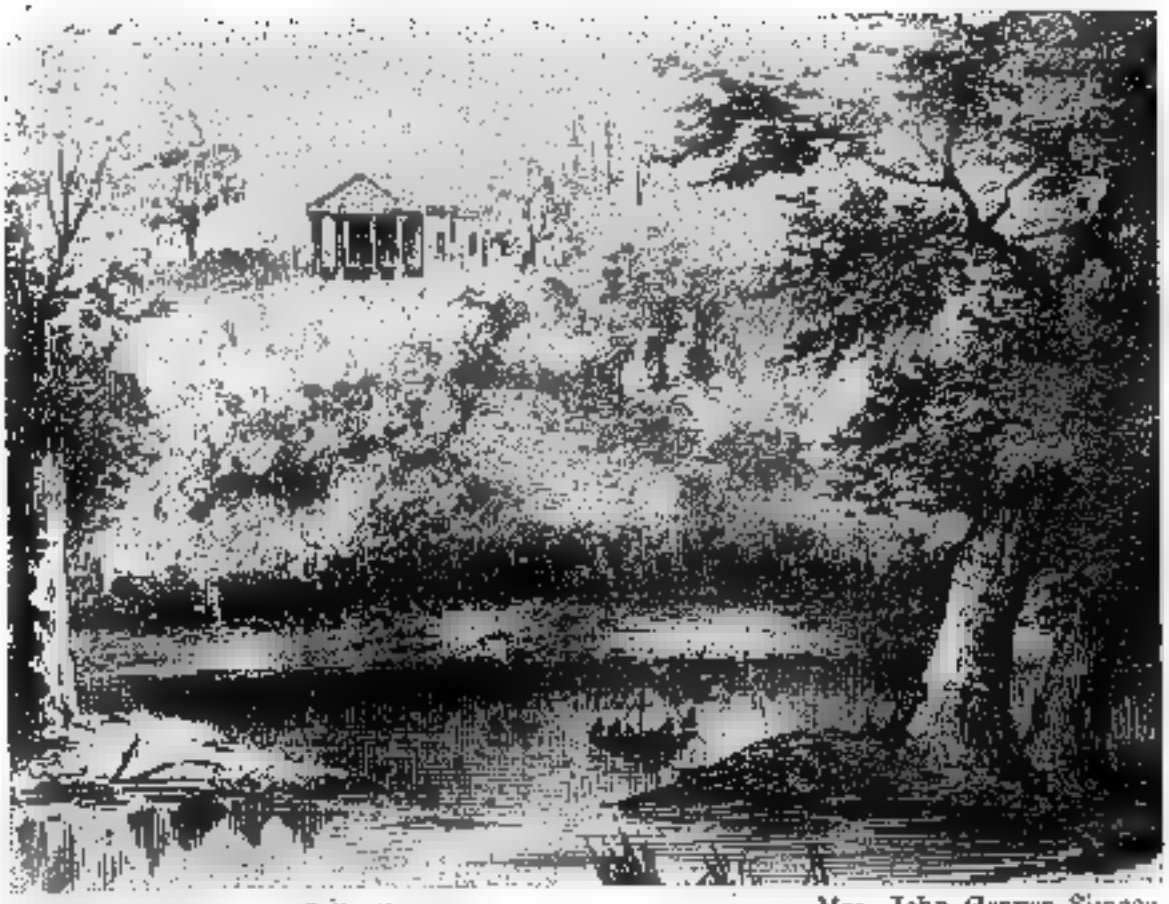
[49]*York Gazette*, August 13, 1808.

but a public well had been sunk at the market-place, a volunteer fire company organized, and itinerant theatricals and circus performances were not unusual. After 1825 the open space in front of the Jail and Court House was the "public place" of the town, and crowds gathered there to hear election harangues from William Lyon Mackenzie and other politicians of the day—their reception varying from popular enthusiasm to mob violence.

In July, 1827, Captain Basil Hall visited York, "formerly called Toronto,—a name which it was a sin to change"; but he was more interested in the cordial reception accorded him by certain of the inhabitants than in a survey of the material aspects of the town. As he points out, "There is a bright charm in the renewal of old friendships; but at the same time, on a long journey in a distant foreign land, there is a fine sparkling sort of freshness in the active hospitality of new acquaintances of whom all that we know is from what we see; and, as that is full of kindness to us and of anxiety to supply our wants, there is a fairy-tale kind of animation cast over incidents which, if enacted in the tranquil life of home, would probably possess little or no romantic character". Captain Hall experienced in York "one of the truest pleasures of travelling":

"Our dinner was laid under the fly of a tent, on the rich greensward of a dressed piece of ground, sloping gently towards the lake. We sat on the eastern side of the house, so that by five o'clock the shadow fell on us. The deep sea-blue surface of old Ontario was now quite smooth; for the morning breeze had fallen, except where a few straggling catspaws, as we call them, here and there breathed on the face of the calm mirror and straightway disappeared. . . . The air had become deliciously cool and more grateful than I can describe, after the sultry day to which we had been exposed. The wine was plunged into a large vessel filled with ice, close to the table; but the water cooled in a goblet, or unbaked earthen pitcher, brought from Bengal; the sight of which, with drops like dew oozing from its sides, carried my thoughts far back to times when, with friends now all gone or scattered never to meet more, I first learned the luxuries of a hot climate."[50]

[50]Basil Hall: *Travels in America in 1827 and 1828*, 1829. Vol. I, pp. 262-3.



John Ross Robertson Collection. Mrs. John Graves Simcoe.

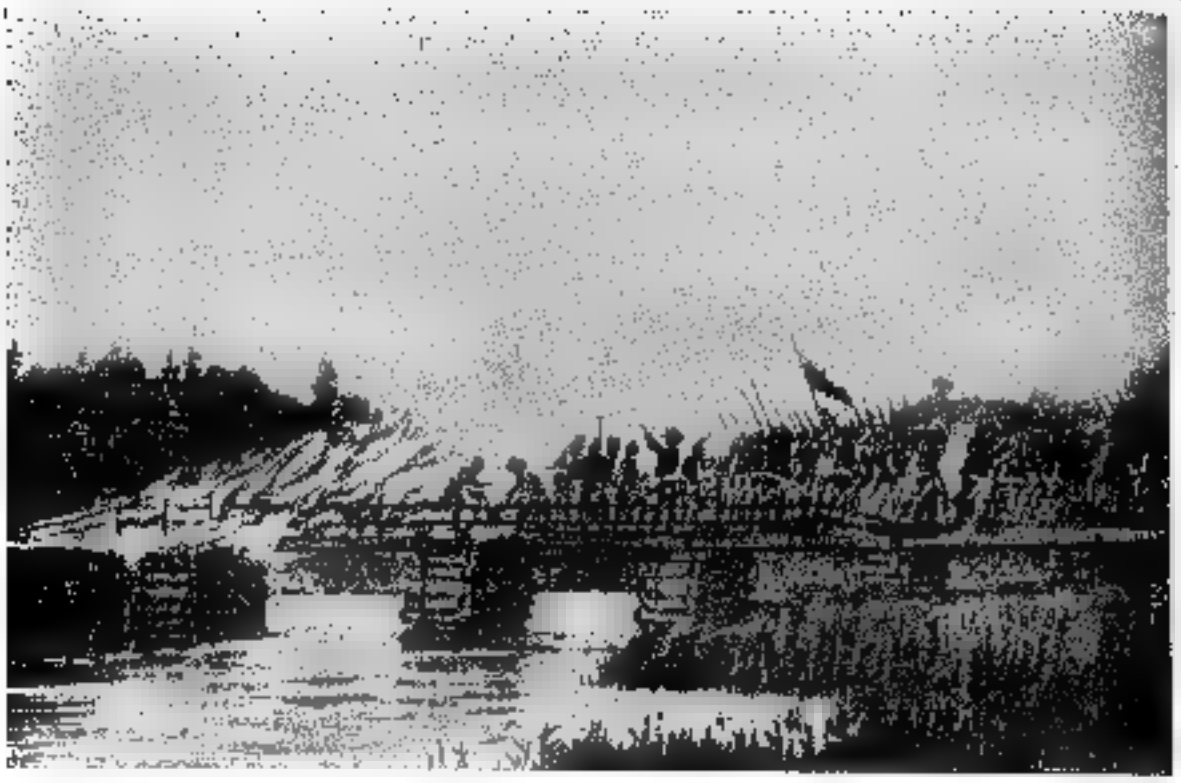
CASTLE FRANK IN 1796

This is one of Mrs. Simcoe's best sketches, and depicts a building dear to her heart.

Royal Ontario Museum. Paul Kane.

SPEARING SALMON BY TORCHLIGHT

"In my boyish days I have seen as many as 100 light-jacks gliding about the Bay of Toronto and have joined in the sport."—PAUL KANE.



Isaac Bellamy.

BRITISH TROOPS BURNING THE DON BRIDGE AT THE TIME OF THE AMERICAN OCCUPATION OF YORK, 1813

The reputation of General Sheaffe was not enhanced by his speedy retreat eastward on this occasion.

Scadding's *Toronto of Old.*

YORK HARBOUR FROM THE DON BLOCKHOUSE, 1810

This interesting fortification did not survive the American occupation of the town.

There were several cemeteries in old York, but all trace of them has, of course, long since disappeared. The earliest was an ancient Indian burying-ground at the Sandhill, to the west of Yonge Street, in the vicinity of the present St. Michael's College. Dr. Scadding describes the locality as "a moderate rise, showing where, in the woods here, at the top of the rise, on the west side, was the 'Indian's Grave', made noticeable to the traveller by a little civilized railing surrounding it. The story connected therewith was this: When the United States forces were landing in 1813 near the Humber Bay, with the intention of attacking the Fort and taking York, one of Major Givins' Indians concealed himself in a tree, and from that position fired into the boats with fatal effect repeatedly. He was soon discovered, and speedily shot. The body was afterwards found and deposited with respect in a little grave here on the crest of the Sandhill, where an ancient Indian burying-ground had existed, though long abandoned. It would seem that by some means the scalp of this poor Indian was packed up with the trophies of the capture of York and conveyed by Lieutenant Dudley to Washington. From being found in company with the Speaker's Mace on that occasion, the foolish story arose of its having been discovered over the Speaker's chair in the Parliament Building that was destroyed".[51]

Farther northward, on the north side of Bloor Street, and extending from Yonge Street almost to Avenue Road, was the Potter's Field, the gates of which, and the keeper's lodge, were long a familiar sight. Those who declined the use of St. James' Churchyard and the other burial grounds found a place in this cemetery, officially called The York General or Strangers' Burying Ground. Walton's *Directory for 1834* contains the following concerning it:

"This institution owes its origin to Mr. Carfrae, junior. It comprises six acres of ground, and has a neat sexton's house built close by the gate. The name of the sexton is John Wolstencroft, who keeps a register of every person buried therein. Persons of all creeds and persons of no creed are allowed burial in this cemetery: fees to the sexton, 5s. It was instituted in the fall of 1825, and in-

[51]Scadding, *Toronto of Old*, p. 399.

corporated by Act of Parliament, 30th January, 1826. It is managed by five trustees, who are chosen for life; and in case of the death of any of them a public meeting of the inhabitants is called, when they elect a successor or successors in their place. The present trustees (1833) are Thomas Carfrae, jun., Thomas D. Morrison, Peter Paterson, John Ewart, Thomas Helliwell."[52]

The five trustees named were, respectively, Collector of Customs, doctor, iron merchant, builder and brewer, all of them prominent citizens in early York. Concerning the later history of the cemetery Dr. Scadding says:

"A remote sequestered piece of ground in 1825, the Potter's Field in 1845 was more or less surrounded by buildings, and regarded as an impediment in the way of public improvement. Interments were accordingly prohibited. To some extent it has been cleared of human remains, and in due time will be built over. Its successor and representative is the Toronto Necropolis, the trustees of which are empowered, after the lapse of twenty-one years, to sell the old burying-ground."[53]

In another direction, west of Spadina Avenue, was the ancient military cemetery, "a clearing in the thick brushwood of the locality, of an oblong shape, its four picketed sides directed exactly towards the four cardinal points. The setting off of the neighbouring streets and lots at a different angle caused the boundary lines of this plot to run askew to every other straight line in the vicinity. Over how many a now forgotten and even obliterated grave have the customary farewell volleys here been fired!—those final honours to the soldier, always so touching; intended doubtless, in the old barbaric way, to be an incentive to endurance in the sound and well; and consolatory in anticipation to the sick and dying.

"In the mould of this old cemetery, what a mingling from distant quarters! Hearts finally at rest here, fluttered in their last beats far away, at times, to old familiar scenes 'beloved in vain' long ago; to villages, hedgerows, lanes, fields, in green England and Ireland, in rugged Scotland and Wales. Many a widow, standing at an open grave here,

[52]George Walton: *York Commercial Directory for 1834*. 1833. p. 131.
[53]Scadding, *ibid.*, p. 409.

holding the hand of orphan boy or girl, has 'wept her soldier dead', not slain in the battlefield, indeed, but fallen, nevertheless, in the discharge of duty, before one or other of the subtle assailants that, even in times of peace, not unfrequently bring the career of the military man to a premature close. Among the remains in this ancient burial-plot are those of a child of the first Governor of Upper Canada, a fact commemorated on the exterior of the mortuary chapel over his own grave in Devonshire, by a tablet on which are the words: 'Katharine, born in Upper Canada, 16th Jan., 1793; died and was buried at York Town, in that Province, in 1794'."[84]

While upon the subject of landmarks in York and vicinity it will be appropriate to describe the eight block-houses, one or two of which still remain—interesting survivals of other days. The first was located in the south section of the enclosure of the fortifications as erected by Governor Simcoe. The second was farther westward, about the centre of the parade-ground. A third was on Gibraltar Point (now Hanlan's): this blockhouse, which had one or two guns, was erected in 1794 and demolished in 1818. The point upon which it was located was later dredged out, and ferry docks erected near by; and in the early eighteen-nineties the remains of the blockhouse, as well as some small cannon balls, were uncovered during dredging operations.

To the north-west of the fortifications was located a fourth blockhouse, but it disappeared in the early eighteen-twenties. The remaining blockhouses were scattered about at a considerable distance from one another. One was located on the west side of the Don River, near the mouth, just south of the site of the first Parliament Buildings. It was destroyed during the American occupation of 1813. At the corner of Sherbourne and Bloor Streets, on the east side, stood a sixth blockhouse, and a seventh of similar construction occupied the north-east corner of Spadina and College Streets, where an office building recently replaced the church known as Broadway Tabernacle. The eighth blockhouse stood on the east side of Yonge, opposite the present Belmont Street. The structure was built of logs and covered an area of 100 square feet. It was erected by

[84] *Ibid.*, pp. 64-5.

the Provincial Government in 1838, presumably in anticipation of further advances upon Toronto similar to those which characterised the rising of the previous year. Before its demolition in 1865 several families had occupied it as a residence.

All the blockhouses were very similar in construction and adaptability for defence. The Bloor-Sherbourne and College-Spadina structures were almost exactly alike, being built of squared pine logs about a foot in diameter, and the interstices were filled with mortar. They were two storeys in height, about twenty-five feet square, and were entered by a flight of steps from the ground to the upper storey. Loopholes for muskets enabled defending troops to command every approach on all four sides. The buildings would accommodate about fifty men, twenty of whom could be stationed at the loopholes at one time.

A military memory of another nature is provided by the low log buildings which long stood on the Garrison Common. They were controlled by the Indian Department, and in one of them was a forge in charge of Mr. Higgins, armourer; here the Indians were able to have their fishing-spears, axes, knives and tomahawks sharpened. Another building in this group later provided a schoolroom for the children of the locality. Before returning to the progress of the town itself it will not be out of place to mention that an interesting reminiscence of the Davenport Road district relates to the earliest ice-houses in the vicinity of York, "rude buildings of slab, thickly thatched over with pine branches",[55] where spring-water ice obtained from near-by mill-ponds was first stored in large quantities about 1829-30 by one Richards, a negro.

In July, 1833, the population of the town proper was given as "4,001 males and 3,472 females". But added to this was "Macaulay Town, 558; from Osgoode Hall, where Macaulay Town ends, to Farr's Brewery, Lot Street, about 400; and Windmill, about 300";[56] making a grand total of 8,731 people. Just prior to its advance to city status York did not extend even into localities which have long been considered the centre of Toronto. A writer notes that

[55] *Ibid.*, p. 410.
[56] Walton's *Directory*, facing p. 125.

"Albert Street, now the most densely-built portion off Yonge Street, was in 1834 known as Macaulay Lane, and described by Walton as 'fronting the fields'. From this point a long stretch of fine forest-land extended to Yorkville; the fields which Macaulay Lane fronted were the improvements around Dr. Macaulay's abode. The white entrance gate to his house was near where now a street leads into Trinity Square. Dr. Macaulay's clearing on the north side of Macaulay Lane was, in relation to the first town-plot of York, long considered a locality particularly remote, a spot to be discovered by strangers not without difficulty. In attempting to reach it we have distinct accounts of persons bewildered and lost for long hours in the intervening marshes and woods. Mr. Justice Boulton, travelling from Prescott in his own vehicle and bound for Dr. Macaulay's domicile, was dissuaded, on reaching Mr. Small's house at the eastern extremity of York, from attempting to push on to his destination, although it was by no means late, on account of the inconveniences and perils to be encountered; and half the following day was taken up in accomplishing the residue of the journey. A quarter of a century sufficed to transform Dr. Macaulay's garden and grounds into a well-peopled city district."[57]

On one occasion at least there was some remarkable wild pigeon shooting in the town. An account contemporary with that pioneer sport says that "some two summers ago a stream of them took it into their heads to fly over York; and for three or four days the town resounded with one continued roll of firing, as if a skirmish were going on in the streets,—every gun, pistol, musket, blunderbuss, and fire-arm of whatever description was put in requisition. The constables and police magistrates were on the alert, and offenders without number were pulled up,—among whom were honourable members of the executive and legislative councils, crown lawyers, respectable staid citizens, and last of all the sheriff of the county; till at last it was found that pigeons, flying within easy shot, were a temptation too strong for human virtue to withstand; and so the contest

[57] J. Timperlake: *Illustrated Toronto, Past and Present.* 1877. pp. 102-3.

was given up, and a sporting jubilee proclaimed to all and sundry".[58]

A glimpse of the life of a class of citizens which does not figure largely in the pages of historical works is afforded by the following enthusiastic letter[59] of Sophia Hill, an immigrant of but a few months:

"Little York, Upper Canada.

Dear Father and Mother:—I have to inform you that John and I are living at his aunt Carpenter's, and we are very comfortably settled indeed. John has plenty of work, and we are doing very well indeed, for John is getting 7s. 6d. a day of our money; and his aunt is very kind to me, and I am just as comfortable as I was at home, indeed more so, for I never knew the want of victuals or drink since I entered my aunt's house, and while I am writing this we have a bottle of good old port wine on the table; and I was wishing that you could enjoy yourselves with the same. But if you were all here, to enjoy yourselves altogether, it would be more comfortable; and if you were here you would find it a great deal better than you do in England, for you do not hear any complaint or any begging here. I should like to fly over to Frome to see you all, but if you would give me all the birds' cages you have got I would not stop there, for I never saw a more beautiful, pleasant place in all my life than Little York is. I shall not persuade you to come, you can use your own mind; there are plenty of your tools used here for combing flax.

"Please to tell my brother Frank there is hatting business carried on here, and if he had a little money he might soon be a gentleman. Tell Frederick shoemaking is an excellent trade, and so is glazing. Please to tell my brother Richard that gardening is one of the best of trades here, for people are too independent to raise their own gardenstuff, and a cabbage is sold for 4d. in the market; a good gardener is wanted here very bad indeed. Please to tell

[58] *Sussex Emigrants for Canada*. 1833. pp. 56-7. The description, however, is evidently taken from Dr. William Dunlop's *Statistical Sketches of Upper Canada* (1832), so that the event chronicled probably occurred in 1830.

[59] Printed in the *Quarterly Review*, September, 1835, in the section devoted to "Emigration—Letters from Canada", pp. 426-7.

my dear sister Eliza if I had hearkened to her I never should have been in America; but I only wish she had my spirit to come here too,—she would not want to go back again. Ask her if she knew Nancy Poolman, in Wine-Street, who used to play with Edith Sheppard so much, and tell her I am living with her, and am as happy as the day is long; and I should have been ten times more so, had it not been for the loss of my poor child, who died soon after we came here—she had every attention paid her.

"We were five weeks coming from Bristol to Quebec, and eighteen days to Little York; we had a very pleasant passage on the ocean, but very rough up the rapids, and that is the reason Mrs. Carpenter wished me to come New York way. Give my kind love to Little Jane and tell her I wish she was out here, as she could get as much work as she could do, and good work too—it is 2s. 6d. for making a shirt, without any stitching, and I have as much in the house as I can do. Please to tell Mr. and Mrs. F— that I think they were foolish in going back again, for I am sure they might have done very well here; but that is the way of some people, they just come and look round and run back again before they know anything about it, and give it a bad name; but I speak as I find it: I have never known the want of anything since I landed in America; and wearing apparel is just as cheap as it is at home; I have bought a very handsome leghorn bonnet for 19s., a new hat for John, a pair of shoes each, two new gowns and aprons, a very handsome black silk shawl, and a pair of new trousers for John, and I have a pound to spare; and this is more than I should have had in Frome in a year, therefore I do not repent leaving it; but if I had you all here I should be happier. Do not delay writing, for I long to hear from you.

From your loving Son and Daughter,

John and Sophia Hill."

Another of the immigrants of the early thirties who so greatly increased the population of Upper Canada wrote from York in 1832 that he had not enough capital to take up farming, "so I thought I had better give up all thoughts of land and go on with shoemaking, which I think is the

most profitable trade here; the journeyman's wages are very high; if you put out the best top-boots to make, they are £1 5s. making: Wellington boots, 14s.; and common boots that people wear instead of high shoes are 7s. 6d. making; women's low shoes, 8s. I have got more work than I can do myself. I am happy to tell you I never had a better chance in my life to do well".[60]

The town in which these tradesmen's families were doing so much better than they could ever hope to in the Old Land was described by a contemporary traveller as standing "in a level and marshy country. The place is prosperous, and the price of building-ground struck me as very high. . . . The public buildings are just what they ought to be—plain and substantial. . . . The Government House is of wood—rather a singular circumstance, since brick is a common building material in town".[61] When the Rev. Isaac Fidler, for a time Anglican missionary at Thornhill, arrived at York in 1832 after a five-day passage across the lake by sailing-vessel, he immediately "went in quest of lodgings; but emigrants had begun to pour in by hundreds daily, and all places where boarders were admitted were already occupied. The Archdeacon's son, on learning my difficulty, accompanied me to two or three houses, at the last of which we obtained lodgings for eight dollars a week—about one-third what they had cost us in New York. . . . The number of brick and wood buildings in progress of erection was quite surprising. All over the town were building lots on which masons and carpenters were busy. The saw, the axe, the chisel, the hammer, and the trowel resounded on every side".

In addition to private buildings, the Rev. Mr. Fidler noticed that "a capacious market-house of brick" and the Houses of Parliament were being constructed. The corner-stone of the new St. James' Church was laid during his stay in York, and such a large crowd was attracted by the event that most of the ladies could not obtain admittance. Observing that the circumstance proved "how strongly the spirit of independence exists in Canada", he noted that "the Arch-

[60]Letter of Humphrey Cooper, October 25, 1832, quoted in *Sussex Emigrants for Canada*, pp. 47-8.

[61]Thomas Hamilton: *Men and Manners in America*. 1833. Vol. II, pp. 334-5.

deacon's lady and daughters, with some other ladies, ascended to the belfry (*i.e.*—of the old church), but the room was already so crowded with spectators that admission to the windows was impossible unless some of the others would resign their place. I interceded for the ladies, but those who were already on the vantage ground refused to resign it, and the ladies were consequently debarred".[62]

A formal description of York at this period of its history notes that "it is well situated on the north of an excellent harbour on Lake Ontario, and contains the House of Assembly, Government House, Provincial Bank, College, Court House, Hall for the Law Society, Gaol, Barracks, Churches and other places of worship, with several other public buildings; the streets are spacious and regular; many of the houses are built of brick and stone, but the majority are of timber. The population is considerable, and rapidly increasing. Being the residence of the Chief Officers of the Government, many of the luxuries of life are to be had. There are several newspapers published here. The lands in the neighbourhood are highly cultivated, and the market of the town is always well supplied".[63]

As a general rule this last statement was true, but a resident of Toronto in 1837 noted that there were times when it was difficult to procure any meat but salt pork; it may be assumed, however, that this condition was caused almost entirely by difficulties of transportation in the spring season, when the roads were breaking up and navigation had not commenced. Mrs. Jameson refers to a comparative scarcity of this kind in Toronto in April, 1837. She was living in the fashionable western suburbs of the city of that day—in the vicinity of Spadina and Palace (Front) Streets—and the remoteness of the Toronto market necessitated management and forethought to keep the larder full:

"Our table, however, is pretty well supplied. Beef is tolerable, but lean; mutton bad, scarce, and dearer than beef; pork excellent and delicate, being fattened principally on Indian corn. The fish is of many various kinds, and delicious. During the whole winter we had black bass and

[62]Isaac Fidler: *Observations on the Professions, Literature, Manners and Emigration in the United States and Canada.* 1833. pp. 257 *et seq.*

[63]Francis A. Evans: *The Emigrant's Director and Guide.* 1838. p. 143.

whitefish, caught in holes in the ice, and brought down by the Indians. Venison, game and wild fowl are always to be had; the quails, which are caught in immense numbers near Toronto, are most delicate eating; I lived on them when I could eat nothing else. What they call partridge here is a small species of pheasant, also very good; and now we are promised snipes and woodcocks in abundance. The wild goose is also excellent eating when well cooked. . . . The higher class of people are supplied with provisions from their own lands and farms, or by certain persons they know and employ. . . . Those who have farms near the city, or a country establishment of their own, raise poultry and vegetables for their own table. As yet I have seen no vegetables whatever but potatoes; even in the best seasons they are not readily to be procured in the market."[64]

There were, of course, fancy foods available in Toronto. Those who could afford imported delicacies were usually able to buy them, though some luxuries—oysters, for example,—had often to be purchased in large quantities. In the *Upper Canada Gazette* occurs the advertisement of James F. Smith, a merchant at the corner of Church and Palace (Front) Streets, and in his announcement dated March 25, 1830, he states that he "daily expects Oysters (in shell). Lobsters, Mackerel, North Shore Herring and Salmon pickled and smoked". He also advertises for sale a large variety of imported wines and liquors, "Sugar-Double, Single Refined, and moist; Tea of every description; Sauces, Pickles, East India preserves; Candied Lemons, Citron and Orange Peel; Anchovy Paste and Fresh Curry; Codfish of various kinds; Digby and Lockfine Herrings; English Cheese—Dolphin, King's Arms, Berkley, Pine Apple, Truckle and Double Gloucester; Tobacco, Snuff, Havana Cigars and Pipes."[65] In the early thirties even ice cream, then usually called ices, was sold in York. Thomas Hamilton states that in passing through the streets he was "rather surprised to observe an *affiche* intimating that ice creams were to be had within. The weather being hot I

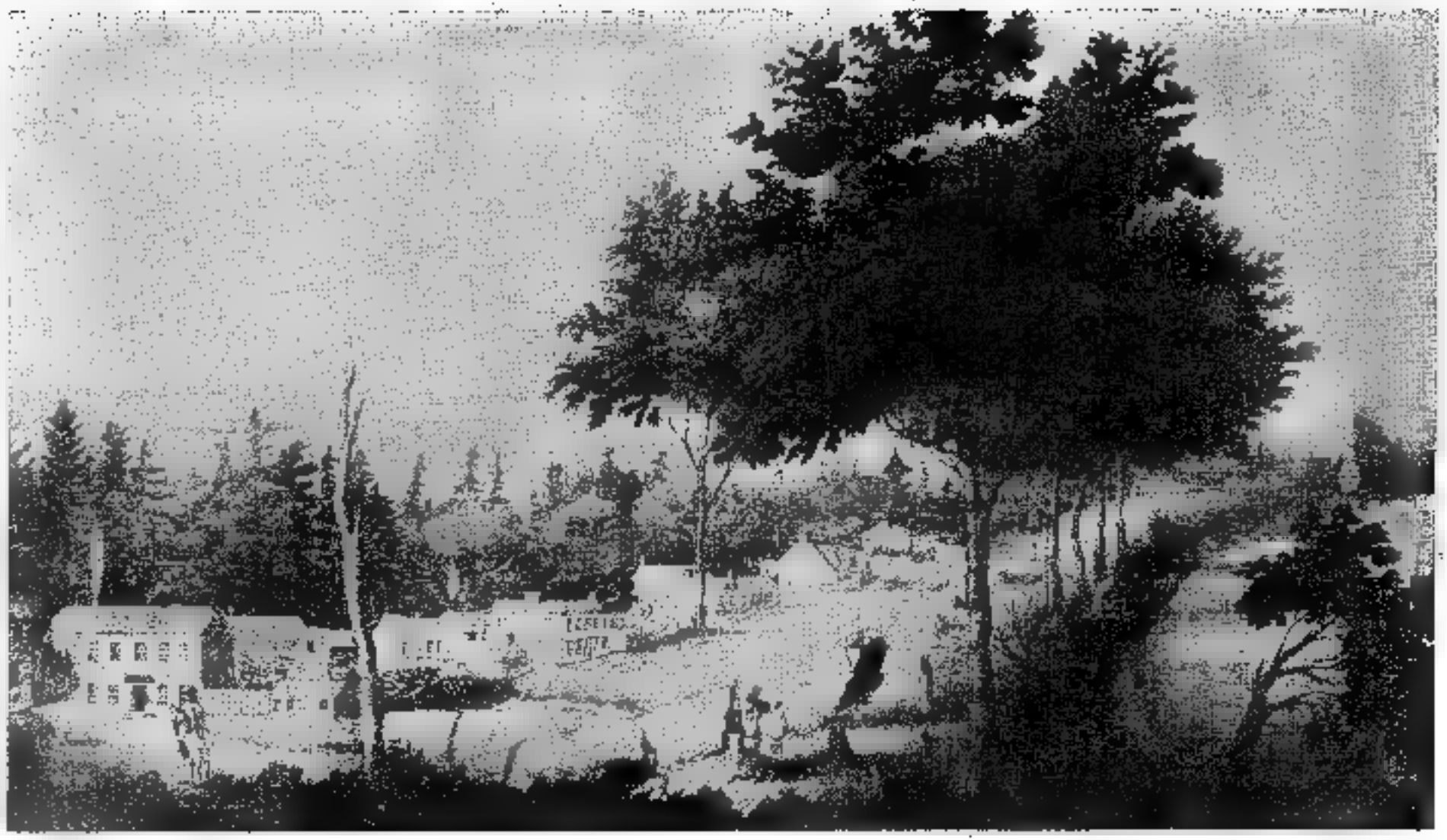
[64] Anna Jameson: *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada.* 1837. Vol. I, pp. 267-9.

[65] *Upper Canada Gazette,* March 25, 1830.

Public Archives of Canada — Lieutenant Sempronius Stretton

YORK BARRACKS, U.C., MAY 13, 1804

Among the interesting activities being carried on by the soldiers may be seen men engaged in "stumping", and in sawing planks with a whip-saw, one man standing in a pit in this typical pioneer work.



Public Archives of Canada. Artist Unknown.

YORK, THE NEW CAPITAL OF UPPER CANADA, 1803

The town then fringed the shore between *Jarvis* and *Parliament Streets*.

entered, and found the master of the establishment to be an Italian. I never ate better ices at Grange's".[66]

On March 6, 1834, the town of York became the city of Toronto. The change to city status was not accomplished without a fight. The Family Compact and ultra-Tory party, who at that time claimed a monopoly of the spirit of loyalty, were determined in their opposition to the alteration of the good old British "York" into the "wild and terrific" Indian name "Toronto". It was opposed for another reason, too, and one for which there was better argument. It was quite apparent that the change meant the concession of responsible government to the inhabitants, for while they had formerly elected merely one town warden (whose chief duty seems to have been to preside at the town-meeting), they were, under city status, to have power to select the entire City Council which was to replace the Court of Quarter Sessions, the chief governing body perviously. This quite evidently imposed upon the citizens the necessity of an appeal to the people, or—as one of the most violent critics of the scheme, Chief Justice William Dummer Powell, described it—"the curse of a popular election". But all the power that could be brought to bear was not enough, and it is consequently quite appropriate that the first Mayor to be chosen from his fellow aldermen was that agitator and Reformer—the John Wilkes of his period—William Lyon Mackenzie.

The inauguration of the city of Toronto in March, 1834, was the signal for great developments in all directions. Numerous by-laws and regulations which were passed in quick succession are described elsewhere. Among other improvements the first wooden sidewalks were built to replace the footpaths and flagstones, and the main streets were graded and gravelled. The financial condition of the new city, we are informed, was "wretched":

"The value of all the property in the city was under five hundred thousand dollars, and there was a debt of forty-five thousand dollars, contracted on account of the Market Buildings. In anticipation of the taxes it was necessary to borrow five thousand dollars. The Bank of Upper Canada refused to advance the money, though this might perhaps be

[66]Hamilton, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 335.

YORK, THE NEW CAPITAL OF UPPER CANADA, 1834
The town then fringed the shore between Jarvis and Parliament Streets.

accounted for by the fact that the Bank President, Dr. Widmer, was defeated by the Mayor in the election of councillors. Application was next made to the manager of the Farmers' Bank, and, on personal security of the Mayor and other members of the Council being given, the money was loaned. To meet the demands on the city treasury it was necessary to levy a rate of three pence on the pound sterling. This was regarded as a monstrous piece of fiscal oppression, almost sufficient to justify a small rebellion. To such an extent was the public dissatisfaction carried at what was considered the exorbitant taxes that the Mayor found it necessary to call a public meeting to make an explanation.

"The meeting called by the Mayor took place on the 29th of July. After Mr. Mackenzie had explained at some length the necessity for the three-penny tax, Mr. Sheriff Jarvis interrupted by saying it was his intention to move a censure on the conduct of the Mayor. There were some two thousand persons present, and as the majority were the friends of the Mayor he met this menace by a resolution pledging the citizens not to support at the next Parliamentary election a candidate whose position as an office-holder made him dependent upon the Government. The meeting became very noisy and uproarious, and was in consequence adjourned till the next day. The meeting had commenced at six o'clock in the evening, and on the morning of the second day the opponents of the Mayor issued placards calling the adjourned meeting for three o'clock in the afternoon—an hour at which it would be very inconvenient for the mechanics and business men to attend. The Mayor regarded this as a breach of faith, forbade the city bellman to cry the meeting for that hour, and resolved not to attend it himself. The market, in which the meeting was held, was a parallelogram, and over the butchers' stalls was a balcony to accommodate spectators. While the Sheriff was addressing the meeting he said: 'I care no more for Mr. Mackenzie than'—here he looked up and saw a crow flying over—'that crow', he added. This was deemed a great oratorical stroke and it elicited a cheer. The crowd above, in stamping their feet, broke down the balcony, and in the descent some were impaled on the butchers' hooks, and

others were wounded by the falling debris or by the crush of persons upon them."[67]

Seven or eight people, including Sheriff Jarvis' son, died of the injuries they received, and others were crippled for life by this unfortunate accident.

The new city forged ahead a little too rapidly at the start, and there was a reaction. The *Toronto Albion* outlines the advance as it appeared about a year and a half later:

"In Mr. Gourlay's *Statistical Account of Upper Canada*, published in 1817, he writes of what was then Little York as follows:—'I suppose its population to be 1,200 souls; for five miles round the capital of Upper Canada scarcely one improved farm can be seen in contact with another. The only connected settlement is about five miles to the north of Yonge Street; in other directions, as far as the district goes, you might travel to its utmost limits and not find more than one farm house for every three miles.' Such was the state of things in Upper Canada in 1817. In 1835 we find the town of Little York metamorphosed into the City of Toronto and a population of from 12,000 to 14,000 souls. Supposing that on the average six persons lived in each house, there were then 200 houses; upon the same calculation, now there must be, taking the large amount of the estimated population, 2,333 houses, and supposing the average value of the houses in 1817 to be £200 each, the building property was then worth £40,000; and suppose their average value now to be £400 each (and considering the number of large and valuable houses being built it will be greatly too low) the building property of the city is worth £933,200, showing an outlay of £893,200 since 1817. This applies to dwelling houses alone, and, when the large stores and public improvements are taken into account, the least sum that can be supposed is a million. Look again at the difference in the three principal outlets; instead of the four miles Mr. Gourlay talks of, on which there was scarcely one improved farm, there is now scarcely a lot not improved. . . .

[67] Timperlake, *op. cit.*, pp. 94-5. The tax rate which almost provoked riots amounted to about fifteen mills on the dollar. For an excellent description of Toronto in 1834 see the account of "An English Visitor", reprinted in the Toronto Centenary Number of the *New Outlook*, March 14, 1934.

"It is not unusual to hear people croaking that there is a check to business and buildings in Toronto; every place is subject to such checks; a year or two ago Rochester was universally thought to be on the decline; it is now all activity. The truth was that the folks of Rochester had done as those of Toronto did last year—they went too fast, and a little time must be taken to recover it."[68]

In 1832 the first great cholera epidemic had visited York, and about 400 persons died of the disease. Archdeacon Strachan was as active in good works during this time of stress as he had been during the American occupation of 1813. He circulated a subscription list by which £1,263 9s. was collected for the relief of widows and orphans bereaved by the epidemic, and 150 families benefitted from the fund. An inscribed piece of plate was presented to Dr. Strachan by a large number of citizens, who rightly considered that his self-sacrifice was worthy of public recognition.[69] Memories of the distressing conditions so vividly narrated in Defoe's *Journal of the Plague Year* are called to mind when one reads in the Court records of 1833 the resolution "that the cholera carts be sold forthwith". The Potters' Field had, by order of the Magistrates, received the bodies of most of those who had died in the York hospital.[70]

From time to time during the next quarter century the cholera or, as it was later called, "ship fever", recurred in Toronto as in other parts of Canada during the days of extensive immigration under improper supervision. In 1834, shortly after the unfortunate market accident, the pestilence broke out again. Concerning William Lyon Mac-

[68]*Toronto Albion*, 1835. (The exact date of issue is not available.)

[69]See J. E. Middleton: *The Municipality of Toronto, a History*, 1923. Vol. I, pp. 168-9, for details concerning this presentation, and a list of the subscribers. A rare pamphlet descriptive of the presentation, the address and inscription, and Archdeacon Strachan's reply, is in the Toronto Public Library. It is entitled *Tribute of Respect and Gratitude to the Honourable and Venerable Archdeacon Strachan, by a number of the Inhabitants of the City of Toronto*. 1835. A sermon on the cholera epidemic, by Archdeacon Mountain, dedicated to Lord Aylmer and published at his request, was delivered in the Cathedral Church of Quebec on December 30, 1832. When printed in Quebec in 1833 it was entitled *A Retrospect of the Summer and Autumn of 1832*. A considerable part of it may be found in the *Canadian Literary Magazine*, April, 1833.

[70]Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

kenzie's unselfish activities during this epidemic his biographer says:

"During the term of Mr. Mackenzie's mayoralty the cholera revisited the city, and swept away every twentieth inhabitant. During the whole of the time that it raged, the Mayor was at the post of duty and of danger. He sought out the helpless victims of the disease and administered to their wants. He was constant in his attendance on the cholera hospital. In the height of the panic occasioned by this terrible disease, when nobody else could be induced to take the cholera patients to the hospital, he visited the abodes of the victims, and, placing them in the cholera cart with whatever assistance he could get from the families of the plague-stricken, drove them to the hospital. On some days he made several visits of this kind to the pest-house. Day and night he gave himself no rest. At length worn out by fatigue, the disease from which he had done so much to save others overtook himself. The attack was not of an aggravated nature; and he was fortunate in obtaining the timely assistance of Dr. Widmer; for medical men were difficult to be obtained, and many persons without medical education or experience practised on the unfortunate sufferers."[71]

In 1849 occurred the great ship fever epidemic, spread through the Canadas by incoming settlers. A writer describes that in Toronto "the worst ravages of the disease had been among immigrants worn by fatigue and misery, and among the lower class of the static population who were steady patrons of the small drinking-shops with which the city abounded".[72] Large numbers of immigrants died on Toronto wharves or in the hospital at the north-west corner of King and John Streets. January 3, 1850, was appointed a day of public thanksgiving for the end of the plague.

Again in 1854 there was a recurrence of the disease. As

[71]Charles Lindsay: *Life and Times of William Lyon Mackenzie*. 1862. Vol. I, pp. 316-7.

[72]Middleton, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 244. There was also a plague of cholera in 1847. For a most vivid and poignant account of suffering and death in Toronto see Patrick Slater: *The Yellow Briar*. 1933. pp. 58-9. During the summer and autumn of that year 863 poor Irish citizens died in Toronto, and of 97,933 immigrants from Ireland during the spring and summer a total of 18,625 had died before winter set in.

in the visitations of 1832 and 1834 there was one man whose self-sacrifice merited the public thanks of his fellow-citizens; and anyone might well envy the appreciation which was accorded—not after his death but during his lifetime—to Joseph Rowell, Councillor and Chairman of the Board of Health. The City Council presented him with a resolution engrossed on parchment, "for his indefatigable zeal and perseverance during the late epidemic, he having spared neither time nor trouble in endeavouring to arrest the ravages of that dreadful disease; cleansing filthy habitations, visiting the sick, and even coffining the dead. He was a daily gratuitous visitor of the hospitals, providing for the comfort and medical attendance of the unhappy victims of that destroying disorder, there being no duty, however disagreeable or dangerous, that he did not cheerfully undertake, to the very great and material assistance of the Board of Health in the execution of their arduous and responsible duties".[73]

While upon the subject of medical conditions it will be of interest to refer to Mr. Gidney, who was possibly Toronto's first dentist. In any case he received "very liberal patronage" as early as 1825, and after some years "in the most opulent and enlightened capitals in Europe" was back in town again; all of which he explains in his well-worded announcement in the press of 1836:

"Mr. G. remembers with lively gratitude the very liberal patronage received during his residence in this place in the winter of 1825. He now thinks that his services will be more valuable from the ten years' additional practice, 6 or 7 years of which have been passed in some of the most opulent and enlightened Capitals in Europe."[74]

In later years, even in comparatively recent times, there were numerous quacks and "characters" about the Market who would sell you anything from cure-all salve to fly-paper, and whose repertoire comprehended any service from pulling teeth to writing love letters.

Meanwhile the city was extending westward. In 1834 King Street had 287 buildings, the greater part of them, of course, east of Yonge; and in the same year Yonge Street

[73]Quoted in Middleton, *ibid.*, p. 256.
[74]*Courier of Upper Canada*, January 16, 1836.

contained 104 buildings. But by 1838 the population of the city was almost equally divided by Yonge Street, 6,469 people residing east of it and 6,002 to the westward; while ten years later there were 23,503 persons, occupying 3,795 houses, and the city boasted 10 public halls, 21 churches, 4 colleges, 51 schools, 318 merchant' shops, and 142 inns and taverns.

Travellers' impressions are always of interest, though not infrequently biassed. Mrs. Anna Jameson described Toronto in the late thirties as " a little ill-built town on low land at the bottom of a frozen bay, with one very ugly church without tower or steeple, some government offices built of staring red brick in the most tasteless, vulgar style imaginable; three feet of snow all around, and the grey, sullen, wintry lake, and the dark gloom of the pine forest bounding the prospect: such seems Toronto to me now. I did not expect much, but for this I was not prepared".[76] But she was not quite so severe in her criticism of the city as it appeared in summer. At the time of her residence in Toronto the increasing population had led to some improvements in street transport. The first cabs were introduced about 1837, and there were two livery stables—Field's on Henrietta Street, and John Grantham's at the Old British Coffee House on Front Street—"where can be had Horses, Coaches, Gigs, Waggons, Sleighs, etc., upon reasonable terms".[76]

Social life was quite extensively developed in the Toronto of the late thirties, for we find[77] among organisations in active operation many of a fraternal nature—of which those of the firemen and the National Societies were preeminent—and others with religious, charitable or literary aims:

City of Toronto Auxiliary Bible Society.

City of Toronto Ladies' Bible Association.

Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

[76]Anna Jameson: *Sketches in Canada, and Rambles among the Red Men.* 1839. Edition of 1852, p. 1.

[76]George Walton: *City of Toronto and Home District Commercial Directory and Register, with Almanack and Calendar for 1837,* p. 42.

[77]The list of societies and organisations was compiled from Walton's *Directory for 1837.*

Upper Canada Religious Tract and Book Society. (Established 1832).

Society for Converting and Civilizing the Indians, and Propagating the Gospel among the Destitute Settlers in Upper Canada. (Established 1830).

City of Toronto Institution for the Relief of the Orphan, the Fatherless and Widow.

City of Toronto Temperance Society. (Established 1828).

City of Toronto Annual Bazaar.

Upper Canada College Cricket Club.

City of Toronto Literary Club. (Established 1836).

City of Toronto Ethical and Literary Society. (Established 1836).

Strangers' Burial Ground. (Established 1825).

City of Toronto Horticultural Society.

Commercial News Room, City of Toronto.

Toronto Mechanics' Institute. (Established 1831).

City of Toronto Board of Trade.

City of Toronto Mechanics' Association. (Established in 1836 "for the protection of Mechanical Labour").

St. George's Society. (Established 1835).

St. Patrick's Society. (Established 1836).

St. Andrew's Society. (Established 1836).

At the time of the Rebellion of 1837 Toronto was in the midst of an era of notable expansion, having developed during the previous few years from a small town to a thriving and enterprising city of some 12,000 inhabitants. Characteristically conservative, its people were not usually sympathetic towards Reformers—as rabid mobs had more than once demonstrated. There is no doubt, however, that reforms were long overdue, and, though the means to effect changes were not always the best, it may at least be said that the difficulties to be overcome appeared almost insuperable. William Lyon Mackenzie, at his best as an agitator, gained a greater following after the dumping of his type into the harbour by sympathisers of the Family Compact. In Toronto the Reformers were accustomed to meet at the Sun Tavern, at the north-west corner of Queen and Yonge Streets, and later in John Doel's home and brewery on the north-west corner of Bay and Adelaide.

Jail | Court House | St. James' Church | Site of King Edward Hotel

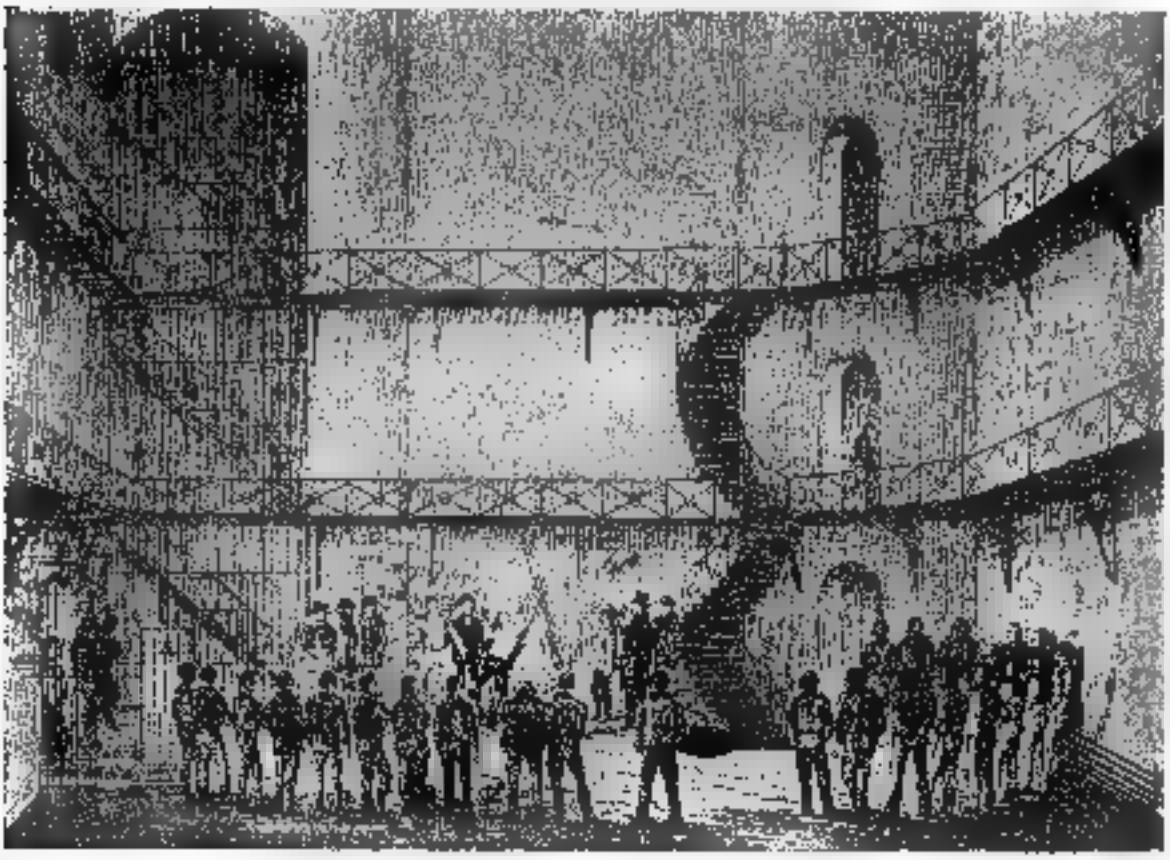
KING STREET, EAST OF TORONTO STREET, 1836

The artist represented the church as it was planned, but St. James' did not boast a steeple at that period.

Dent's *Story of the Upper Canadian Rebellion.* William Bengough.

COLONEL MOODIE SHOT AT MONTGOMERY'S TAVERN, 1837

The Tavern stood on the west side of Yonge Street, a short distance north of Eglinton Avenue, and was the rendezvous of Mackenzie's "Patriots".



Canadian Illustrated News.

FLOGGING A PRISONER AT TORONTO JAIL, JANUARY 6, 1871

In part the punishment was apparently for the edification of the other prisoners.

42 (b)

The details of their activities and the preparations for rebellion may be found elsewhere,[78] but some description of the resulting confusion in the city will be of interest here.

The gathering of "Patriots" at Montgomery's Tavern, North Yonge Street, in the early days of December, 1837, appears to have been taken seriously by everyone except the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Francis Bond Head. Such was his neglect of all precautions that nothing but disorganisation and indecision among the rebels prevented the capture of the capital. The shooting of Colonel Moodie on the Monday evening prior to the main engagement showed that the insurgents meant business, though their cowardice during Tuesday's raid down Yonge Street was a great disappointment to their leaders. The journal of William Hamilton Merritt provides some interesting details of the confusion in the city after the raid. Merritt, then a student at Upper Canada College, notes that the ringing of the alarm bells was considered "merely a lark of the porter"; but in the morning the reality and imminence of danger was quickly felt, though, since the boys obtained a holiday on that account, they were naturally not at first greatly concerned. Several of them, however, were captured by the rebels when their curiosity led them up Yonge Street:

"It was a curious sight to behold guards of civilians about Government House, the shops all closed, people hurrying silently in all directions, some with arms and some without; then, at the town hall, where was the chief assemblage, were cannon with torches ready to be lighted, arms were being distributed, and melancholy was exhibited in every countenance. Nothing was done that day except various movements to defend the town, barricading the streets and filling houses with men. All was exciting; it was indeed a change agreeable from our dull work at college. This was something like life; we had often read in history of rebellion and war, but had never experienced the feeling of the immediate presence of conflict, of a real state of things when human life is held at so cheap a rate.

"We boys almost in a body visited Government House

[78]An excellent short account is W. S. Wallace: *The Family Compact*. 1915. See Guillet, *Early Life in Upper Canada*, Section V, Chapters IV and V, for a description of the Battle of Montgomery's Farm and the subsequent escape of the "Patriots".

to offer our services to Sir Francis Bond Head to fight for our Queen and country. He received us kindly, gave us a piece of cake, and advised us to go home as soon as possible. My brother and I and James Ingersoll, also of St. Catharines, not quite satisfied with playing so tame a part, were determined that we would catch a sight of the rebels if possible.

"We ran north up what is now Queen Street Avenue and the park, then struck towards Yonge Street, seeing nothing out of the way till we neared the toll-gate, when we caught glimpses of rough men riding about, apparently much excited, one of whom galloped over to me and promptly took us prisoners, shutting us in the back room of the little toll-gate house. We could see a few men riding about with guns, and that seemed to be the extent of the invading force. We thought of the preparations being made down town—closed stores, cannon in front of the market buildings, armed men in the windows, cavalry galloping up and down King Street to keep the people out of the cannon's range, and the enemy, of presumed great strength, momentarily expected by way of Yonge Street. We were aching to get back and tell what we had seen. One rebel aimed his rifle to shoot a man who was making away, so we knew what to expect if we tried to escape.

"In a couple of hours, however, we became bold, worked at the window until at last it yielded, when we quickly dropped out of it and crept on all fours to the nearest brushwood. But the vigilant eye of one of the rebels had sighted us and several gave chase. The woods at that time were so thick in that vicinity that it was not difficult to evade the horsemen and reach what is now Avenue Road, down which we sped at a much quicker pace than we had come up. When it was safe to breathe again we told our tale, and soon there gathered a curious crowd around us who conducted us to headquarters, where they were much surprised and relieved at our discovery of the handful of men whose dreaded presence had caused so great an alarm; and we did not regret the rashness that had suddenly made us the heroes of the hour."[79]

[79]Journal of William Hamilton Merritt, quoted in the *College Times* (Upper Canada College), Easter, 1907.

The arrival on Wednesday of considerable bodies of men from points east and west put heart into Toronto's citizens, and there developed a feeling of security which had been lacking before. Judges and lawyers shouldered muskets alongside labourers and students, and the march northward on Thursday *viâ* Yonge Street and College (University) Avenue partook of the nature of a public holiday. Windows and housetops were crowded to view the cavalcade, flags waved and cheers rang out on this day of great public enthusiasm. The result was never in doubt, and the "Patriots" were soon fleeing in all directions. Two of them, Lount and Matthews, were brought back to be hanged at the old jail on Toronto Street in April, 1838.

William Lyon Mackenzie, however, escaped to the United States; and finally, offered amnesty by the proclamation of February 1, 1849, returned to Toronto on March 18th, being welcomed by a few relatives and friends. A few days later, when news of his return became generally known, a rabble of "unshaven, dirty-looking, half-drunken men and ragged boys", (or, if you prefer it, "a band of loyal citizens determined to save Toronto from shame"),[80] gathered at Queen and Yonge Streets to drive Mackenzie out of town. Images of Reformers were burned, and the mob milled about the streets for a time, finally bombarding the house where Mackenzie was supposed to be. Stones, bricks and rotten vegetables alternated for three hours with howls for his blood, but the supply of liquor gave out, and after smashing windows in George Brown's home the mob broke up. Mackenzie left town for some months, but was back again in June, 1850. Though he once more sat in the House he seemed out of place when there was no longer the same need for an agitator. He and the other Reformers who returned after the general amnesty found that the policies which they had long advocated and had fought for in 1837-38 were then in large measure a reality, for full responsible government had been achieved in their absence. An increasing number of Canadian citizens now consider that Mackenzie's "rebels" have every claim to the title "patriots" advanced by the Rt. Hon. W. L. M. King at the Centennial Banquet of March 5, 1934.

[80]The descriptions are from the *Examiner* and *Patriot*, respectively.

Captain Marryat, the novelist, visited Toronto shortly after the Rebellion, and as soon as he stepped off the boat he felt that he was "no longer in the United States: you are at once struck with the difference between the English and the American population, systems and ideas. On the other side of the lake you have much more apparent property, but much less real solidity and security. The houses and stores of Toronto are not to be compared with those of the American towns opposite. But the Englishman has built according to his means—the American, according to his expectations. The hotels and inns at Toronto are very bad; at Buffalo they are splendid: for the Englishman travels little; the American is ever on the move. The private houses of Toronto are built, according to the English taste and desire of exclusiveness, away from the road, and are embowered in trees; the American, let his house be ever so large, or his plot of ground however extensive, builds within a few feet of the road that he may see and know what is going on. You do not perceive the bustle, the energy and activity at Toronto that you do at Buffalo, nor the profusion of articles in stores. . . . If an American has money sufficient to build a two-storey house he will raise it up to four storeys on speculation, ... whilst at Toronto they proceed more cautiously".[81]

Descriptions of the city as it appeared in the early forties contain much of interest. One publication notes that "the streets are laid out at right-angles to each other, are broad and spacious, generally flagged on each side, and some of them macadamised. King Street, the great thoroughfare, is half a mile long and contains the principal buildings and public offices of the province".[82] James B. Brown ("A Four Years' Resident") writes as follows in 1844:

"The City of Toronto has much increased in population within these last four years, and with the recent introduction of gas and other improvements its appearance is much like some of our provincial towns in Britain; and in several respects, such as the amount of trade and general comfort of the inhabitants, the advantages, with the greater

[81] F. Marryat: *Diary in America*. 1839. p. 60.
[82] Samuel Butler: *The Emigrant's Hand-book of Facts*. 1843. p. 14.

number of these towns, are on the side of Toronto. The principal streets are comfortably paved, the buildings large and imposing, and the shops spacious and filled with every luxury to be had in the best cities at home.

"In 1841 there were as many as 90 four-wheeled open and close carriages and 130 gigs and pleasure waggons returned upon the assessment rolls of the city. The churches and chapels amount to thirteen, and there are numerous benevolent and other societies: eight or ten newspapers are regularly published, three of which are twice-a-week papers, the others weekly. A Temperance Society which commenced in 1839 numbered in 1841 about 1,300 members. The Home District Agricultural Society holds its meetings and public shows in Toronto. Fourteen or fifteen (if not more) spacious and elegantly fitted-up steamboats which ply upon Lake Ontario are some of them almost continually touching at the wharves close to the town. The building of King's College is at present in operation, situated within pleasantly laid-out grounds, and promises to be a fine structure of hewn stone, and to prove the chief ornament of the fast-growing and comparatively wealthy city of Toronto."[88]

Charles Dickens and his wife paid a short visit to Toronto in 1842, registering as guests at the old American House, at the north-east corner of Yonge and Front Streets. No public reception was accorded them, but the Chief Justice entertained the famous author at dinner, and a large number of prominent citizens were introduced to him during the evening. He afterwards wrote the following impressions of the city:

"The country around this town being very flat is bare of scenic interest, but the town itself is full of life and motion, bustle, business and improvement. The streets are well paved and lighted with gas; the houses are large and good; the shops excellent. Many of them have a display of goods in their windows such as may be seen in thriving country towns in England, and there are some which would do no discredit to the metropolis itself. There is a good stone prison here; and there are, besides, a handsome church, a court house, public offices, many commodious

[88][James B. Brown]: *Views of Canada and the Colonists*. 1844. p. 190.

private residences, and a Government Observatory for noting and recording the magnetic variations. In the College of Upper Canada, which is one of the public establishments of the city, a sound education in every department of polite learning can be had at a very moderate expense, the annual charge for the instruction of each pupil not exceeding nine pounds sterling."[84]

Dickens was, however, more discreet about what he published concerning Toronto than appeared with reference to his experiences in the United States; but in one of his letters to John Forster he noted the prevalence of "wild and rabid Toryism" in Toronto, a condition which he considered "appalling".[85] In more modern times there have been many people who look upon this condition as the one outstanding characteristic of the city.

Dr. John Bigsby, who had known the York of the eighteen-twenties, found the Toronto of a quarter of a century later greatly increased in size. He noted that there were "91 streets, one of which, King, is two miles long, 21 churches and chapels, 10 newspapers, 20 medical men, 5 artists and portrait-painters, 107 taverns, 16 auctioneers, 27 butchers, 19 bakers and 6 booksellers. Toronto is a gay place, and in its wealthy shops, stately and crowded churches, paved and gas-lighted streets, public walks, societies—religious, scientific, literary and social—and charitable institutions, is much in advance of British towns of the same size".[86] The Rev. Henry Christmas, however, suggests that the city had frequently the characteristics of rural life:

"In Toronto even cows and pigs are occasionally seen running loose about the town, though contrary to law, frequently pursued by half the dogs in the parish, who seem to consider them fair game as they beat a hasty retreat by a variety of squealings, lowings and bellowings which form now and then in the back streets a whimsical and most unmusical concerto. By the way, talking of concerts, the lovers of ancient music will be pleased to be informed that

[84]Charles Dickens: *American Notes*. See Household Edition of his *Works*, 18?, Vol. II, p. 98.

[85]See Forster's *Life of Charles Dickens*, in *Works*, Vol. XXII, p. 123.

[86]J. J. Bigsby: *The Shoe and Canoe, or Pictures of Travel in the Canadas*. 1850. Vol. II, p. 63.

a very promising society for the performance of the works of the great masters flourishes in Toronto under the auspices of the Rev. Dr. McCaul, the learned and deservedly popular president of King's College, who, I hope, will accept my apology for introducing him and his harmonious labours in such close juxtaposition with those of the bovine and other gentry above named."[87]

The "Great Fire of 1849" devastated the city to a greater extent than any other conflagration, and, like the fire of London in 1666, prepared the way for many new and better buildings—among others St. Lawrence Hall. The following account of the fire appeared in the *Globe*:

"About half-past one this morning a fire was discovered in some outbuildings in the rear of Graham's Tavern, King Street, and Post's Tavern, Nelson Street. The fire speedily extended to the main part of Nelson Street, on the east, consuming Post's Tavern, the *Patriot* office, and turning into King Street, on the east, burnt all Mr. Sprule's buildings, where it stopped. The fire extended from King Street to the south of Duke Street, where it consumed nearly all the back buildings and the office of the Savings Bank.

"It then crossed to the west side of Nelson Street to Rolf's Tavern, destroying the whole block, including the *Mirror* office, to Mr. Nasmith's bakery. Proceeding from Rolf's Tavern the flames laid hold of the corner building, occupied by Mr. O'Donohue, which was speedily consumed, and then they ran along the whole block to Mr. O'Neill's, consuming the valuable stores of Messrs. Hayes, Harris, Cherry, O'Neill and others. About three o'clock the spire of St. James' Cathedral took fire, and the building was entirely destroyed; about the same time the flames broke out in the old City Hall, consuming the greater part of the front building, including Mr. McFarlane's small store.

"The fire then extended from the Cathedral across to the south side of King Street, where a fire had lately occurred. The shops of Mr. Rogers and others were with difficulty saved. All that block was in great danger; some of them had most of their goods removed, and great injury to

[87]Henry Christmas: *Canada in 1849: Pictures of Canadian Life, or the Emigrant Churchman.* 1850. Vol. I, pp. 71-2.

property was sustained. About five o'clock the flames were in a great measure subdued. The exertions of the firemen were for a long time retarded for want of water. The soldiers of the Rifle Brigade from the garrison were extremely active, and deserve the highest gratitude of the citizens. The loss by this fire is estimated at the lowest computation to be £100,000 sterling.

"It is not easy to describe the gloom which this calamity has cast over the city, or the ruined appearance of the ground so lately occupied by many respectable and industrious individuals, who, by the work of four or five hours, were suddenly thrown out of business or seriously injured in their circumstances. In whatever light this serious event be regarded, it must be acknowledged as a heavy blow and sore discouragement to Toronto, the heaviest it has received.

"There cannot be a doubt, however, that the activity and enterprise of the inhabitants will soon surmount the loss. The season is favourable for rebuilding, and many improvements will doubtless be introduced in the formation of new streets. Meantime there is a first duty to be looked to: we mean the relief of those who are so reduced by the fire as to require public assistance. There are cases of the kind where a small amount of assistance promptly administered will revive the drooping spirits of those who may be ready to sink under their burdens. We hope the public will not lose sight of this, but will come forward with a liberal hand when it is required.

"Mr. Watson, publisher of the *Canadian and Upper Canada Gazette*, lost his life in trying to save some type from the *Patriot* office."[88]

Though unsanitary living conditions had no doubt much to do with outbreaks of disease in earlier times, the development of an extensive "slum" district in Toronto occurred some years after the fire of 1849, as the city steadily increased in population. One writer outlines in considerable detail the conditions as they applied in the sixties, and gives an illuminating account of the lack of sanitation which characterised no inconsiderable portion of Toronto—as, indeed, of almost all towns and cities prior to the development and general use of sanitary appliances and before

[88]*Globe*, April 7, 1849.

sewage and garbage disposal had advanced beyond the primitive means in use for centuries:

"The sanitary condition of the city at this time began to attract the attention of our city fathers; after the outbreak of the cholera in 1849 life and vigour had been infused into this department of the City Council's work. New sewers were constructed, new drains built, inspection was occasionally made, but in a few years the sanitary affairs of the city began to be neglected and no attention paid to its wants or requirements, until in 1866 the miserable drainage, bad air, bad water, filth, dirt and refuse of the worst kind appeared to invite disease. The state of one of the streets in the very centre of the city was thus described: 'You enter a house from the front door and find yourself in a room twelve by fourteen feet, in which are huddled together, as if they are frightened to look on their fellow-creatures, a man, five women, three boys, and a couple of young specimens of the *genus homo* in arms. The stove is almost reddened with heat, the room is fumigated with fumes of the mid-day meal which is in course of preparation, the walls are so black that one would think sable was their original colour, and, on the back door being opened to admit one to the yard, the stench from the pig-pen within three feet of the back door is so foul that you could cut it with a knife. In another yard we have a pig-pen four feet six inches square, with a floor a couple of feet thick with offal, filth, dung and manure, and no less than five pigs lying snorting and snoring within it. Going further down the same street the visitor sees in every yard and closet the same accumulations. Near Nelson Street, on the south side of Stanley Street, we have a house the rear room of which is occupied by a brigade of pigs. The next room, (with a doorway between the two), a few feet from this nest of filth, the residents of the house use as a cooking, eating and sleeping room. Just fancy the sickening odour of a pig-pen curling through the cracks of the door and winding around the kitchen stove and dinner table!'

"Near the corner of George and Duchess Streets we have a sink of death and disease in a place called Bethune's Lane or Fish Alley, where, in a former year, during the

heavy rage of cholera, every resident was affected, and the dead-cart a daily visitant. This lane contains nine apologies for houses, and is inhabited by about fifty souls. There are no back yards to these miserable hovels, and slops, filth and dirt are thrown out in front of the doors. At one end of the lane the necessary is in a fearful state, and it is credibly believed that a well, situated a short distance from it, received the sewage, and that it was to residents drinking this water in 1854 the severe attack of cholera in that quarter was attributed.

"Pine Street is another bad street in the city for cow-pens, and in these there is not the slightest attempt at cleanliness. Queen Street, east of Parliament, is another locale of pig-pens and cow-sheds, and on Queen Street, opposite Cooke's Church, can be seen a dwelling house the cellar of which is used as a stable for three cows and a horse, and the effluvia from which must find its way into the rooms above, occupied by human beings. Coming further west an examination of the premises within eyesight of the City Hall will show how dilatory those whose duty it is to inspect the city have been in their duties. In the rear of the buildings on Palace Street, where decent citizens are supposed to live, will be found overloaded necessaries, and filth of every kind, which ought to put decent men to shame. Take a glance at the western part of the city, and in the rear of buildings on the west side of York Street, between Richmond and Adelaide Streets, the same story will be found of filthy places. Walk as far as Dummer Street. Look in the rear of 'Deadbeat Lane' and 'Whiskey Alley', and go through a passage three feet wide, and have a look at 'Hole in the Wall'. In this latter, which is situate on the west side of Dummer Street, we find ourselves in a room eight by ten feet, the entrance being by a half door, and the light coming through an old-fashioned casement window which has not been cleaned since the building was erected fifteen years ago. In one corner is a dilapidated-looking stove, with a pot full of dirty water attempting to boil by the feeble aid of a few hardwood chips. On a chair minus a leg and back is seated a youth about ten years of age, half clad and holding two benumbed hands over the flickering embers of the half-lighted chips;

a little girl is nestling in a corner of the room on a quantity of dirty straw, half covered with a torn counterpane, and both are anxiously awaiting the return of their mother, who is out begging a morsel; their father is an inmate of the gaol, and when he is not working for the good of the city he is sawing wood for any citizen who will give him a job."

"If the east end of the city can claim the premium for dirt, filth, cow-sheds and pig-pens, the west certainly can follow close in its wake. Renfrew Street, around St. Patrick's Market, Maple Lane, near Phoebe Street school-house, where hundreds of children are daily congregated; Grog Lane, Centre Street, and some parts of Brock Street were also named as being in a disgraceful condition."[89]

From time to time new public buildings were erected to replace those which had outlived their usefulness. In 1853 a new Post Office at 10 Toronto Street (now the Receiver-General's Office) commenced to serve the city, and continued to do so until 1873, when the present building at the head of the street was erected. In announcing the opening of the 1853 office the *Globe* was in a reminiscent mood:

"The provision for the accommodation of the public, in beauty of design and practical convenience, far surpasses anything we have seen in North America, and does great credit to the architect, Mr. Cumberland. . . . Not many years have passed since the office was removed to the place it is now deserting, but how few of our present citizens remember the little old house at the foot of Yonge Street. At that time there were not 15,000 people in Toronto. Now there are probably 35,000. The Markets, the Banks, the St. Lawrence Hall, the Asylum, the two University piles, the Normal School, eight splendid churches and cathedrals, and whole streets of elegant buildings, have all sprung into existence since then, and yet but ten years have gone past. It seems like magic to look back upon it. We question if there is a town in the world which has advanced more rapidly than Toronto."[90]

To this Toronto, improved by seven years of further development, came the Prince of Wales on September 7,

[89]Timperlake, *op. cit.*, pp. 146-9. Early in 1934 Lieut.-Governor Bruce instituted a movement to eliminate slums in modern Toronto.
[90]*Globe*, February 5, 1853.

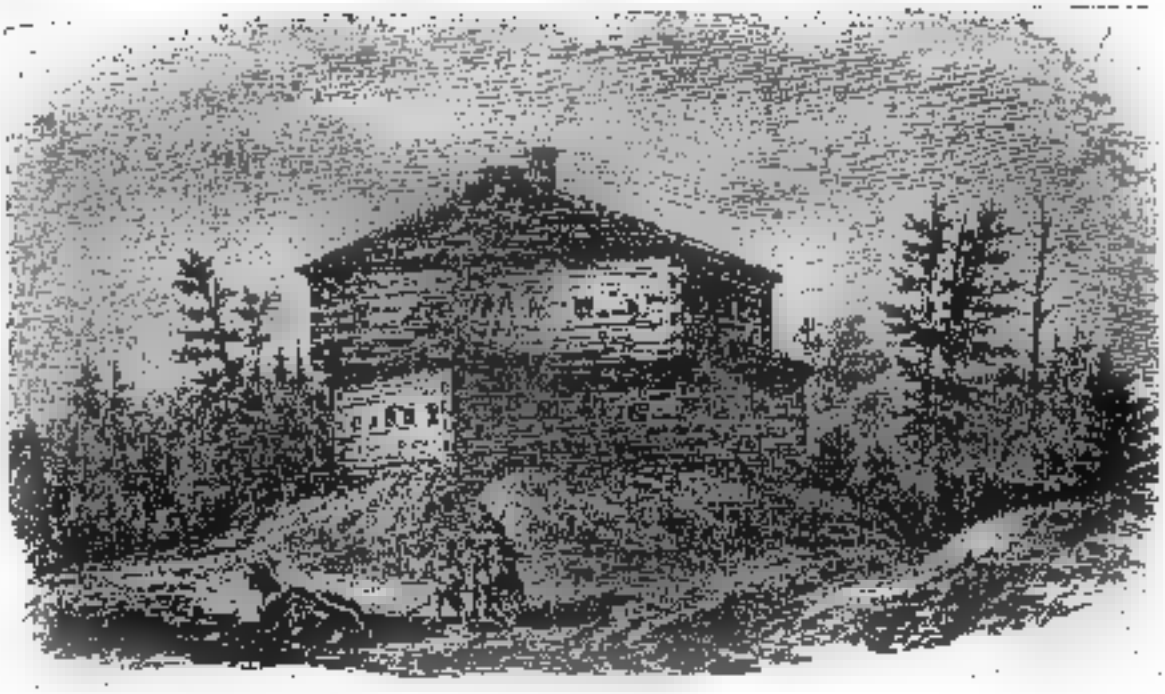
1860. The press characterised his visit as "the brightest day in the annals of Upper Canada":

"Many a year hence it will be told that on that day the heir-apparent to the British throne made his public entry into the chief city of the Western Province, and received a welcome surpassing in magnificence and enthusiasm all the public ovations ever before witnessed in the New World. No pen could adequately describe the unbounded enthusiasm of the joyous multitude assembled to greet their future Sovereign on the banks of Lake Ontario. Nor will anyone who witnessed it ever recall without thrilling delight the magnificent spectacle presented when the Prince stepped from his vessel and took his seat upon the throne amidst the thundering cheers of the vast concourse piled up in the noble amphitheatre around him.

"The illumination of the city at night was a very grand sight, far surpassing, we believe, any similar demonstration ever witnessed on the continent. Particular buildings may have been illuminated elsewhere on a grander scale, but as a whole we doubt if the display was ever excelled in America in extent, variety, and brilliance of decoration. The Normal Schools, Osgoode Hall, and the Romain Buildings were magnificently decorated, and the *Globe* Buildings, St. Lawrence Hall, the Edinburgh Assurance Company, the St. Nicholas Restaurant and several other buildings were illuminated in splendid style. Many of the arches erected at prominent points of the city were noble designs, and executed with a degree of artistic taste which must have astonished the illustrious guests who passed under them. The arch erected at the crest of the noble amphitheatre at the landing will be a lasting monument to the fame of its designer, Mr. Storm. Fine as were the arches erected at Quebec, Montreal and Ottawa, the finest of them could not for a moment enter into competition with it."[91]

In 1866 the Fenian Raid scare was exciting the inhabitants in a much less pleasant manner. The frivolous attitude which the government adopted towards the activities of Fenians is paralleled only by Sir Francis Bond Head's manner of treating the Mackenzie Rebellion of 1837; and it was not unexpected, consequently, that on Sunday,

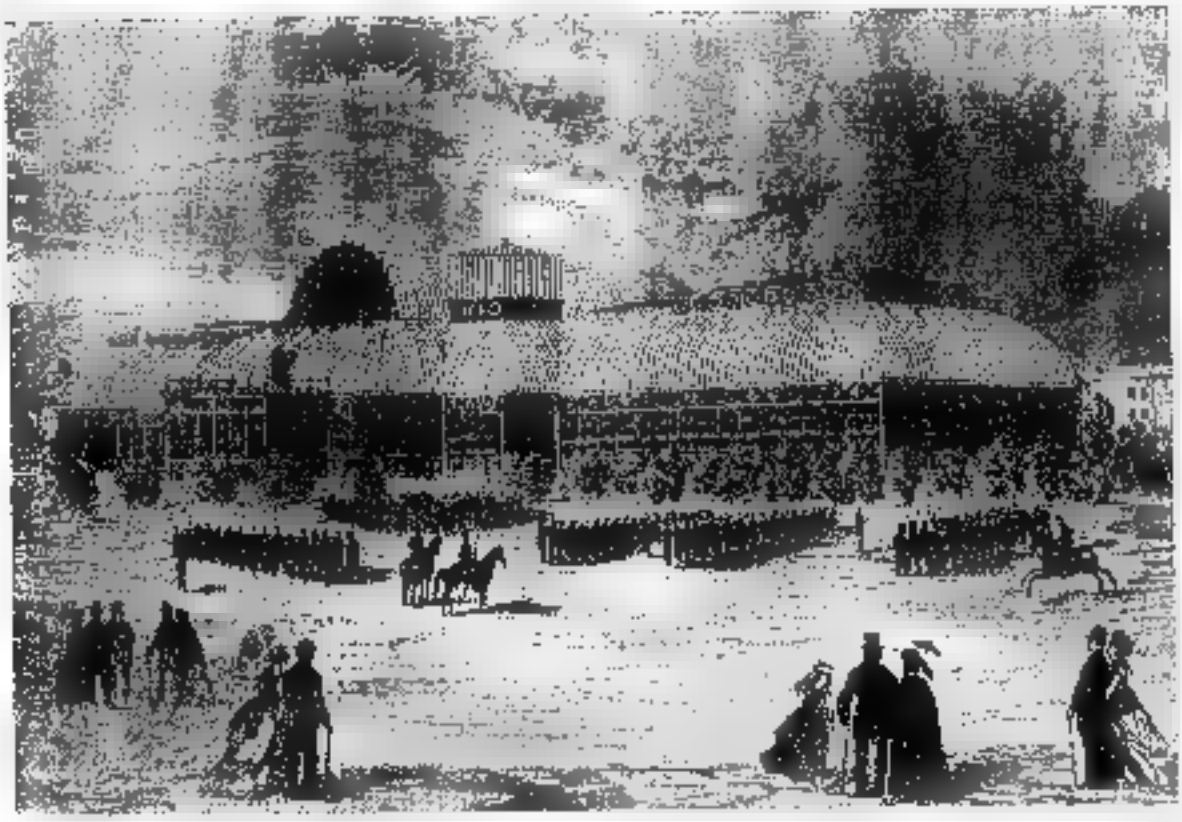
[91] *Ibid.*, September 8, 1860.



Canadian Illustrated News.

THE "OLD BLOCK FORT" NEAR YORKVILLE, C.W., IN 1863

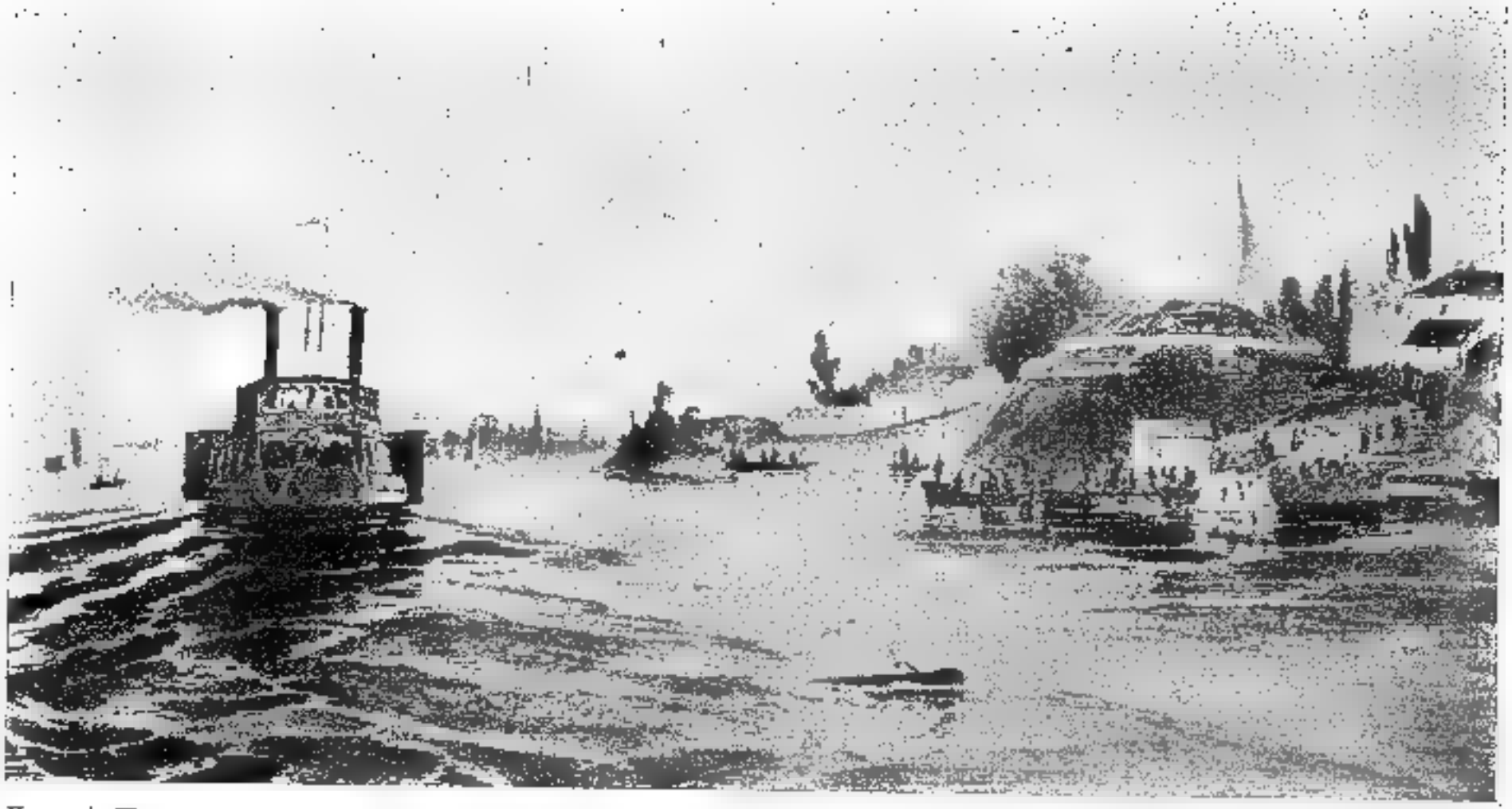
This notable landmark stood on the east side of Yonge, opposite the present Belmont Street. Several similar blockhouses were erected in various parts of Toronto, but only those at the foot of Bathurst Street now remain.



L'Opinion Publique.

VOLUNTEERS TRAINING AT THE CRYSTAL PALACE, 1870

Originally called the Palace of Industry, the first permanent Exhibition building was located to the south of the Provincial Lunatic Asylum. The troops were quartered in the building before leaving for the West to quell the first Riel Rebellion.



Hannay's *War of 1812.*

THE WESTERN ENTRANCE TO THE HARBOUR, 1832

The original high banks were very different from the flat bay shore of today.

June 3, 1866, it was rumoured in Toronto "that the Queen's Own Volunteers, then near Ridgeway, would shortly be in want of provisions. A few citizens became aware of the fact during the forenoon. A meeting was promptly called, citizens were detailed to canvass among merchants and others for supplies, and at two o'clock the steamer *City of Toronto* sailed with the following free offerings of the merchants, contributed in two or three hours' time, viz.: 2 barrels of sugar, 2 barrels of pork, 1 barrel of tobacco, 8 boxes of tobacco, [illegible] boxes of sundries, 9 boxes of cigars, 19½ boxes of biscuits, 16 barrels of biscuits, 41 barrels of bread, 9 boxes of cheese, 5 sides of bacon, 6 tons of hams, 2 chests of tea, 1 case of matches, 3 cases of brandy, 2 cases of gin, 6 hogsheads of ale, 1 case of glasses, 6 rolls of spiced bacon, 9 rolls of dried beef, 1 box of butter, 3 cases of coffee, a very large quantity of fresh meat (about five tons), bacon, medicine, splints and surgical instruments. The whole was given in charge of Messrs. C. W. Bunting, John Boyd and John Leys, members of the Committee, and for hours after the steamer had left the wharf citizens poured down Yonge Street, bringing with them their contributions in quantities sufficient to have supplied a small army."[92]

In such a generous manner did the inhabitants of that day forecast the patriotism that was to be so characteristic of the much greater city of the days of the Great War.

The Toronto of the seventies and eighties is sufficiently remote to be unfamiliar to most of the citizens of today, and yet close enough that many people still living can recall it. It was the time when people were tremendously excited over Edison's little tin-foil phonograph, and when roller-skating and the first awkward-looking bicycles were arousing as much curiosity as the earliest "motor carriages" did nearly a quarter of a century later. The period forms a fitting point to close this chapter, for Toronto was then a great city, although the horse-car had not yet been superseded by the trolley, wooden sidewalks and cedar-block streets were still in general use, and the boundaries of that day did not comprehend a very large section of the present city. In 1877 Yonge Street had over 600 buildings, about six times the number in the first year of the city; while the

[92]Timperlake, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

main street, King, had 848, many of them old and dilapidated, the number in 1834 being 287. Apart altogether from the city's structural development and extent there still remained among its topographical features many evidences which were to disappear as they came to be considered in the path of progress. Hills were to be cut down, ravines filled in, and the water of creeks carried away in underground sewers; but old inhabitants can still recall when there were several streams within the city limits, the course of one of which passed through its very centre, and is still easy to trace in part. An interesting description of this creek recently appeared in the press:

"There was a stream or creek which crossed Bloor Street, where the McMaster University building stands, and flowed south through the university grounds, forming the dog pond (now the site of Hart House). It went on past the site of the Medical building to College Street, crossing it into the lovely estate of Sir John Beverley Robinson ('Sleepy Hollow'), then past the Caer Howell Hotel and its bowling green on what is now Murray Street, to about where the Military Institute stands; then it turned eastward through the present parade ground of the Armories to Holy Trinity Church, which stood on its banks. Crossing Yonge Street it found its way to Moss Park and so to the Don.

"A branch of this stream turned east at the present site of Sir Joseph Flavelle's home, and wound past where Victoria University now is on to Yonge Street. The northern side was known as 'Clover Hill' as far as Yonge. Crossing Yonge it entered the grounds of Donald MacKay, extending to Church Street, where it was well wooded and full of fish. After crossing Church Street to the present old Granite Rink, the water was turned into the sewer and the creek ended. Before that the stream had made its way to the Normal School grounds. There was a stone culvert across Church Street; one can still see where the original bank was, in the yard at the southeast corner of Gould and Church.

"I can remember three collapses of walls of buildings along the course of this stream—the east end of the original Granite Rink, a house on Wellesley Street, and at the corner

of Breadalbane and Yonge; even to-day you can see where the sidewalk at this point has sunk, and I well recall when the sewer collapsed and a good piece of Yonge Street there disappeared."[23]

In the early eighties the old but not venerable City Hall was still in use—and so continued until 1899; but Toronto was by no means deficient either in natural advantages or structural beauty, as the following quotations from G. Mercer Adam's essay will show:

"The reign of solitude on the Great Lakes has nowhere been more pleasantly broken by the life and movement which indicate the approaches to a great city than in the case of Toronto. . . . To the traveller whose brain has been stunned by the sights and sounds of Niagara, and to whom the restful passage of the lake has brought relief, the view of the 'Queen City of the West', with its array of dome and turret, arch and spire, and the varied movements of its water-frontage, is one that cannot fail to evoke pleasure and create surprise. . . . Coaches and cabs are flying to and from the hotels. The street cars glide past, diverging, a short way on, towards various points. . . . Massive warehouses and piles of buildings block in the traffic, though the vista of crowded streets opens everywhere to view. The city, which covers an area of eight or ten square miles, is built on a low-lying plain with a rising inclination to the upper or northern end, where a ridge bounds it, which was probably the ancient margin of the lake. Within this area are close upon 120 miles of streets, laid out after a rigid, chess-board pattern, though monotony is avoided by the prevalence of boulevards and ornamental shade trees in the streets and avenues not given up to commerce.

"What the city lacks in picturesqueness of situation is atoned for in its beautiful harbour, in the development of an aesthetic taste among the people. . . . We have now less flimsy sheet-iron ornament, and more decorative work in stone. . . . On the whole there is a creditable display of architectural taste and skill. . . . The Custom House, with its adjoining Examining Warehouse, is perhaps one of the

[23]Reminiscences of Harry P. Nasmith, quoted in Fred Williams: *In Toronto Fifty Years Ago.* (Toronto *Mail and Empire*, January 17, 1934.)

most striking instances of the new architectural *régime*. . . . The American Hotel . . . . the Queen's . . . . the Bank of British North America . . . . the Ontario, Imperial, Toronto, Standard and Federal Banks . . . . the head office of the Bank of Commerce . . . . Toronto Street, the upper end of which is terminated by the Post Office, an imposing building in the Italian style of architecture. . . . The County Court Buildings and the headquarters of the Police Department and the Fire Brigade."[94]

All of these were important and even notable buildings in the city of that day, though most of them—if still standing—are now hidden by more colossal, if not more imposing structures. There were, of course, many other buildings of architectural merit. The Insane Asylum, Knox College, Osgoode Hall, Trinity University, the Normal School, St. Lawrence Hall, the University of Toronto (now University College), McMaster Hall and the Metropolitan Methodist Church were among the sights of the city. The limits of this Toronto of some 80,000 inhabitants are apparent from further selections from the work[95] just quoted:

"From Bloor Street, or what used to be known as the Sydenham Road, the adjoining suburb of Yorkville extends north and east. . . . To the north is Deer Park, another pretty off-shoot of the town. . . . To the west lies Seaton Village, and all about are the suburban residences of wealthy merchants. . . . West and north of the Asylum a new Toronto is rapidly rising in the suburban villages of Brockton and Parkdale. . . . A short drive beyond the Don, through Leslieville, the pleasant site of extensive market gardens, brings us to Norway, Ben Lamond, and the com-

[94]This is quoted from the chapter on Toronto in G. M. Grant (Ed.): *Picturesque Canada*, 1879, Vol. I, p. 398 *et seq.*

[95]*Ibid.* In addition to the villages named in this description, others in the vicinity of Toronto were Dovercourt at Bloor and Dovercourt Streets; Bracondale near Bathurst and Davenport; Todmorden, Doncaster and Chester near the Danforth Road; and Davisville and Eglinton north of Yorkville. From 1834 to 1883 the city was 6,771 acres in extent, but in 1883 a development, partly speculative, commenced, and the village of Yorkville threw in her lot with Toronto, to be followed soon after by other villages. By 1889 the area of the city had increased to 11,889 acres, and sewers, cedar block pavements and plank sidewalks were rapidly pushed into what was largely farm land. Taxes rose, real estate agents flourished, the Belt Line Railway was built—but the deflation and depression of the early nineties was the inevitable end of over-development and speculation.

manding elevation of Scarboro Heights. . . . Regaining the Don, we direct our steps northward, and, passing by Riverside, another outflow of the city, and by the fine buildings and adjoining farm of the New Jail, we continue our ramble through the woods in the direction of Yorkville."

All of these suburbs which then encircled Toronto have long since been swallowed up by the extension of the boundaries of the city—now rapidly approaching the million mark in population; but the mere recital of them recalls a day not yet remote, when disciples of Izaak Walton might, without wandering far afield, enjoy "the contemplative man's recreation"; . . . . "a wholesome walk to the Brookside, pleasant shade by the sweet silver Streams; . . . . good air, and sweet smells of fine fresh meadow Flowers; . . . . the melodious harmony of Birds."

CHAPTER II

THE HARBOUR

THE sandy spit extending some six miles from the mouth of the Don River enclosed a natural harbour known to the French as *La Baie de Toronto*. The bay is represented on a number of maps made prior to the founding of the town of Toronto in 1793, that ascribed to Louis Joliet and thought to have been made about 1673 being the earliest. Captain Gother Mann made late in 1788 a "Plan of Tarento Harbour with the proposed Town and Settlement"; and in 1791-2 Augustus Jones, government surveyor, laid out eleven townships in the district. The most westerly, York, was originally named Dublin, for the Toronto harbour section was entitled "Plan of the Front Line of Dublin, with the Harbour and Soundings".

Joseph Bouchette visited the site of Toronto in 1792, before the founding of the town, and afterwards wrote with reference to his survey of the harbour: "I distinctly recollect the untamed aspect which the country exhibited when first I entered the beautiful basin, which thus became the scene of my early hydrographical operations. Dense and trackless forests lined the margin of the lake and reflected their inverted images in its glassy surface. The wandering savage had constructed his ephemeral habitation beneath their luxuriant foliage—the group then consisting of two families of Mississaugas—and the bay and neighbouring marshes were the hitherto uninvaded haunts of immense coveys of wild-fowl."[1]

Bouchette's minute delineation of the peninsula enables one to see the course of its formation, as well as that of the inevitable marshes at the mouth of the Don. The eastern part of the bay—the marshy section—has long been known as Ashbridge's Bay; while the harbour proper is a circular basin to the westward, nearly two miles in diameter. The excellent protection which the peninsula afforded led to Lord Dorchester's choice of the location as the site of "the King's

[1] J. Bouchette: *The British Dominions in North America*. 1831. Vol. I, p. 89 fn.

arsenal on Lake Ontario," and it was later to become the capital of the province. Lieut.-Governor John Graves Simcoe first visited Toronto on May 2, 1793, and selected the site of the town, but it was the latter part of July before his plans for its development were well under way.[2]

The town proper was not commenced until 1794, but work on the fortifications to the westward was actively pushed in 1793, and on August 26th the Governor changed the name from Toronto to York in honour of the Duke of York, who had won a notable victory over the French. At noon the following day the first royal salute was fired from the garrison of the town and responded to by the gunboats in the harbour in commemoration of the change in name.

As is evident from the plan of York harbour made by Alexander Aitkin in 1793, the stress was laid upon the town's military expansion, and the first development of the harbour was in the vicinity of the Garrison. Buoys were placed at the entrance to prevent the repetition of the stranding of vessels on the sandy shallows. At the mouth of Garrison Creek the first wharves were built, and to facilitate the landing of stores a canal and several sluice gates were constructed, which enabled control of the water level.

At the town, meanwhile, the development of landing facilities was, and long continued to be hampered by a dense growth of weeds and rushes. Temporary landing-places were used in the early years of the town, but something better was essential at the commencement of the new century. In 1801 York was made a customs port, and a report of duties received mentions a storehouse. This was located at the foot of Frederick Street, and in November, 1803, the first important wharf was constructed there by W. Allan, who, among other offices, held the position of Collector of Duties. This was for some time the only wharf at which the larger ships could land, and after being known for some years as Allan's Wharf it came to be called the Merchants' Wharf.

As time passed, other wooden jetties were pushed out into the Bay. The King's or Navy Wharf, between John and Peter Streets, the Commissariat Wharf, at the foot of Peter Street, and the Farmers' Wharf, were among those con-

[2]*Diary of Mrs. John Graves Simcoe*, July 30, 1793.

structed in the next few years. Cooper's Wharf, later called Feighan's and then Maitland's, was built at the foot of Church Street previous to 1818, for it is marked, along with the other wharves and large storehouses, on Lieutenant George Phillpott's Plan for York, dated May 24th of that year. This wharf was the place at which the first steamship on Lake Ontario, the *Frontenac*, landed in 1817. A storehouse, with a covered way in the middle, and a shipbuilding yard of considerable size, were located near the wharf.

In the shoal water between the various wharves great quantities of rushes grew. Numerous attempts to eradicate them were made from year to year at considerable expense to the town or county authorities. Perhaps the most successful efforts in this direction were those of Captain Macaulay. After Mr. Coles' account of £13 6s. 3d. "for his assistants' labour in destroying rushes in front of the Market Square" in July, 1821, had been paid, the minutes of the County Court for August record that "Capt. Macaulay, Royal Engineers, offered to cut down the rushes in front of the town between the Merchants' Wharf and Cooper's Wharf, for a sum not to exceed ninety dollars, which would merely be the expense of the men and materials in executing the undertaking: his own time he would give to the public on this occasion, as encouragement to others to endeavour to destroy the rushes when they became a nuisance". It was accordingly ordered "that ninety dollars be paid to Capt. Macaulay or his order, for the purpose of cutting down the rushes, according to his verbal undertaking to cut down the same, to be paid out of the Police or District funds in the hands of the treasurer of the District".[3] Commenting upon these activities Dr. Scadding gives an interesting account of the method employed:

"We have understood that Capt. Macaulay's measures for the extinction of the rank vegetation in the shallow waters of the harbour proved to be very efficient. The instrument used was a kind of screw grapnel, which, let down from the side of a large scow, laid hold of the rushes at their root and forcibly wrenched them out of the bed of mud below. The entire plant was thus lifted up, and

[3]See Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old*. 1873. p. 39.

drawn by a windlass into the scow. When a full load of the aquatic weed was collected it was taken out into the open water of the Lake and there disposed of."[4]

Previous to the creation of the City of Toronto in 1834 three more wharves were built. The next in point of time was Ewart's, near the foot of Church Street. In 1831 Tinning's Wharf was constructed a short distance east of York Street; and in 1833-4 the New Wharf (extended in 1837, the year of Victoria's accession, and renamed the Queen's) was built farther westward, near the foot of Bathurst Street, and remained until 1917 when it was buried by the reclamation work of the Harbour Commission. This wharf, the first work of any magnitude to be undertaken in Toronto Harbour, resulted from Acts in 1833 and 1837 granting a total of £4,500 to facilitate navigation and provide more adequate wharf accommodation for large steamers. A system of tolls and wharfage charges was instituted at the same time, all previous dues, excepting a toll for the upkeep of the Island lighthouse, being regulated entirely by the private companies which owned the docks.

The fortifications which were early established at the Garrison as a defence for the harbour cannot be described in detail here. The barracks and blockhouses erected under Simcoe's direction, 1793-6, were supplemented in 1798 and subsequent years, but it is unlikely that any of the buildings survived the American occupation of 1813. Three years later, during 1816, fortifications of considerable magnitude were planned, and the scheme put into execution during the next few years. The group of buildings east of the Exhibition Grounds include several which, with some later variations, date from this period. Among the eight blockhouses which at one time or another were erected in the vicinity of the town was one on Gibraltar (Hanlan's) Point which was among the first military works constructed for the defence of the harbour and town. This blockhouse was erected in 1794 and demolished in 1818, and was once armed with one or two guns. The point upon which it was located was later dredged out, and the remains of the blockhouse, as well as some small cannon balls, were uncovered during the operations.

[4] *Ibid.*

It was early realised by Governor Simcoe that some type of light to guide vessels into York harbour was essential, but, apart from a few buoys in the western channel, nothing was done about it until 1808, when the *Gazette* refers to the commencement of a lighthouse on Gibraltar Point:

"It is a pleasure to inform the public that the danger to vessels navigating Lake Ontario will in a great measure be avoided by the erection of a lighthouse on Gibraltar Point which is to be completed in compliance with an address of the House of Assembly to the Lieutenant-Governor."[5]

The address referred to was dated March 9, 1808, and on April 6th the Lieutenant-Governor personally visited Gibraltar Point and chose the spot for the lighthouse. Work commenced immediately, and the lighthouse was completed in 1809. Funds were provided by the House to defray the cost, and it was stipulated that the collections made under the terms of the Act of 1803 (a levy of 3d. per ton on all vessels entering the harbour) should be used to repay the amount advanced. The ship *Mohawk* was employed to haul limestone from Queenston, and John Thompson was one of the masons engaged in work upon the structure. The lighthouse was 54 feet in height to the floor of the lamp room, and a wooden cage encircled by a balcony was used by the keeper to signal the approach of a vessel. The continual change in form of the peninsula owing to the forces of nature is well shown by the comment of Captain Thomas Smith in 1854: "I have lived in Toronto for over forty years, and been connected with sailing the greater part of the time. . . . . When the lighthouse was built by my grandfather and uncle the materials for building it were landed within 25 feet of where it stands; but the land extends now over a quarter of a mile to the south and three-quarters of a mile to the west of the lighthouse."[6]

In 1833 the height of the lighthouse was increased to 66 feet, and an improved light installed. The unsatisfactory flag signalling method was replaced by the use of canvas balls or spheres coloured red, white and blue, and as this means proved inconvenient it in turn gave way to signalling

[5]*Upper Canada Gazette*, 1808. (The exact date of the issue is not available.)

[6]Cited in J. E. Middleton: *The Municipality of Toronto, a History*. 1923. Vol. I, p. 456.

from a new flagpole a short distance to the north-west. In 1878 the old stationary light was replaced by a flashlight, one of the largest in Canada, which revolved every thirty seconds and could be seen for fourteen miles. It is of interest to know that the light still shines during the period of navigation, though petitions by the City Council were necessary to prevent the government from discontinuing it in 1907, and again in 1911.

Another important lighthouse in the harbour was on the Queen's Wharf, and was constructed in 1861 of wood, with a metal lamp housing. It was on the north side of the old Western Channel and remained in effective use until 1911, when the new channel was opened about 1,100 feet to the south. The original lighthouse has been preserved a short distance from its former site, though the harbour reclamation work has left it several hundred yards from the present waterfront. A lighthouse on the piers at the Eastern Gap, together with fog-horns at both entrances, completes this part of the equipment of the harbour.

Before outlining the first improvement of Toronto harbour by the Esplanade development, some account of the means of approach to the wharves in the days of sailing-ships will be of value. Special signals were used in York when the King's Ships of the Provincial Marine were ordered to sail. They were to be flown from the masthead of the vessels, and repeated at the blockhouse near the Don, as the following announcement issued from the Lieutenant-Governor's office shows:

"Notice is hereby given that when the King's Vessels have received their orders to proceed from hence to Niagara the following signal will be hoisted at the Foretop Gallant Mast Head, and repeated from the Blockhouse in town, viz.: To Niagara, a White Flag; to Kingston, a Blue Flag."[7]

The usual method of announcing to intending travellers that a vessel was about to leave port was to blow repeated blasts on a long tin horn, which was sounded at intervals previous to their casting loose and at the moment of departure.

The earliest Lake Ontario steamship was the *Frontenac*, which first entered the harbour of York in 1817. For some

[7] *Upper Canada Gazette*, June 5, 1802.

years steamships were operated under considerable difficulties, as but few harbours had been constructed. It was usual for a ship to anchor at some distance from shore while passengers and goods were transferred by bateau or Durham boat. The wharves at York were approached by early steamships only with great difficulty, the vessel being brought to a standstill some way out in the harbour, and boats lowered from the fore and aft gangways; these craft carried hawsers, and when they had reached shore the ship was solemnly hauled to the wharf, the onlookers evincing surprise that the feat could be successfully accomplished.

Maitland's Wharf (formerly Cooper's) long continued to be the landing-place of most steamships, though in the early forties it was becoming rather the worse for wear. In 1841 Sir Richard Bonnycastle travelled up the lake on the *Great Britain*, one of the most popular steamships of the time, and landed at Toronto on this wharf, which he calls "a narrow decaying pier". He writes that he was "jostled almost into the water by rude carters plying for hire on its narrow bounds, and pestered by crowds of equally rude pliers for hotel preferences". The aristocratic Sir Richard found other ports similar to Toronto in these respects, however; and he also noticed the inconvenience caused by the fact that all the boats, "for some unaccountable reason", preferred to start upon their voyages at night.[8]

Some interesting memories of waterfront activities, honest and otherwise, are built up by John Ross Robertson around one Michael Masterson, whose official occupation in 1846 was razor-grinder, but who was versatile enough to include in his repertoire anything from smuggling to renting boats, from sailing his own schooner to praising publicly someone else's steamship line:

"In the *Directory* of 1846 we find 'Masterson, Michael, razor-grinder, Bay Shore, near York Street'. His house was at the foot of Bay Street, about a hundred feet from the south line of Front Street, for in those days, in fact till the time the Esplanade was built, the shore ran up to the edge of the bank, the line of which would be a little south of the front doors of the warehouse in the Iron Block. The

[8]Sir Richard Bonnycastle: *The Canadas in 1841*. 1842. Vol. I, pp. 146-7.

John Ross Robertson Collection. William Armstrong.

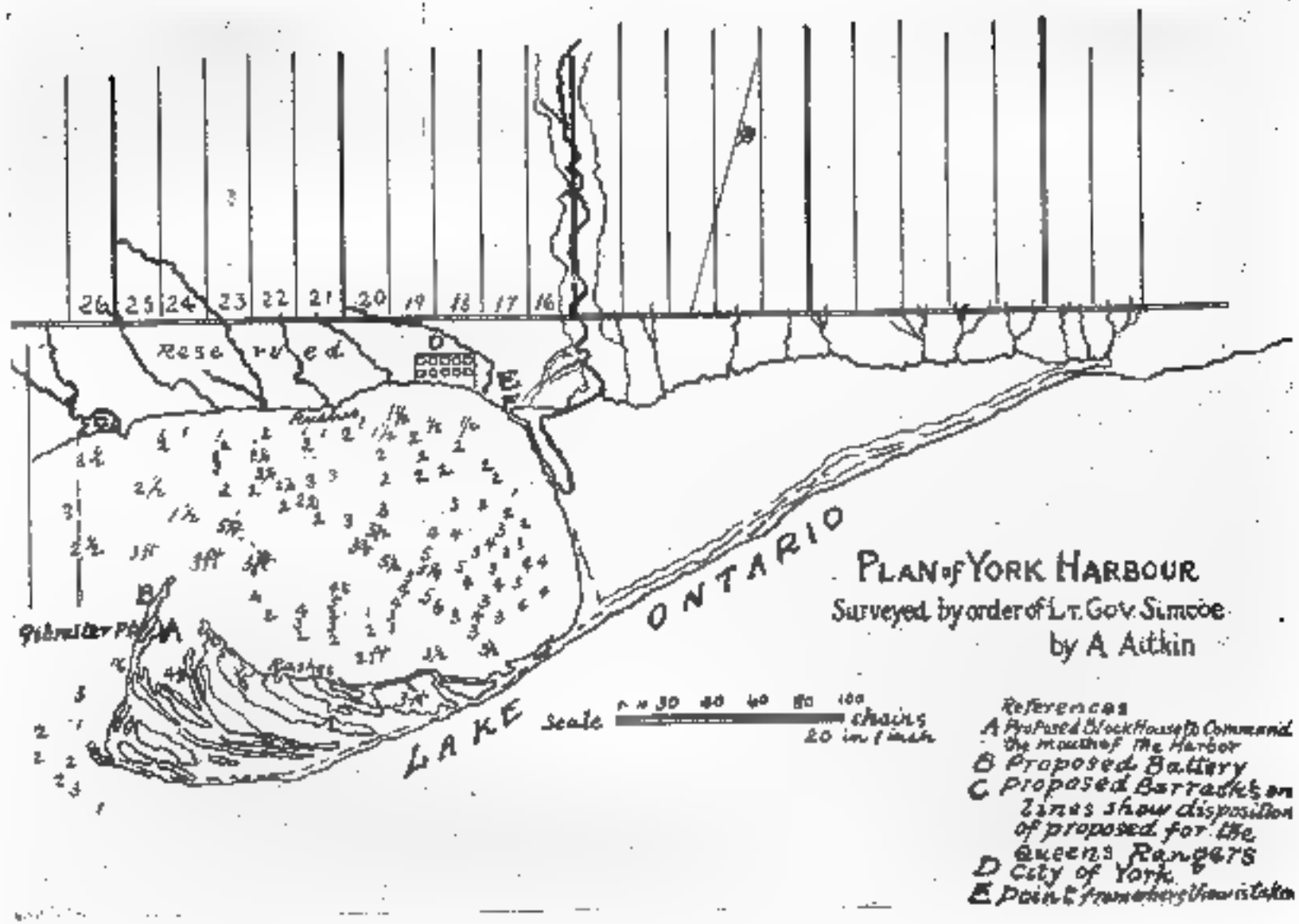
THE LIGHTHOUSE ON THE PENINSULA, 1851

This landmark was completed in 1809, and was 52 feet high. In 1832 twelve feet was added to its height, but the structure has not otherwise been materially altered since its erection.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

MICHAEL MASTERSON'S COTTAGE ON THE BAY SHORE

Sailor, smuggler, renter of boats, "Fisty" Masterson was later a razor-grinder. His home was situated near the foot of Bay Street, and he and his wife took a kindly interest in the schoolboys who were often to be found around their boats.



John Ross Robertson Collection.

ALEXANDER AITKIN'S PLAN OF YORK HARBOUR, 1793

York was originally intended to be an arsenal, but was later chosen as the capital of Upper

writer has bathed within a few feet of the back of the old Custom House on Front and Yonge which was burned down in 1870.

"Masterson was a city character. In the early days, from about 1825, he was a sailor. Through a mishap his left arm was shot off when quite a young man. A wooden arm with an iron hook did good service in lieu of the genuine article. His wife was a most estimable and motherly woman, and in later years when Masterson kept boats for hire at the foot of Bay Street, Mrs. Masterson always had a kindly eye for the welfare of the school and U.C. College boys who were her patrons. Long before this era, Michael, or, as he was popularly named, 'Fisty', had a small schooner which he ran across the lake, and it is said that he did quite a lot of smuggling. His vessel was two-masted and about forty feet long. He called his craft the *Christina* after his wife, who, by the way, was a Scotchwoman and a zealous Presbyterian.

"When Carfrae was Collector of Customs he attempted to seize the vessel on account of a lot of tea that had been smuggled for a King Street grocer, now a wealthy man in Toronto. 'Fisty' did not believe, as he said, in having 'the broad arrow' on his deck, so he, one-armed and all as he was, grasped Carfrae about the neck, and jumping overboard attempted to drown him, but fortunately both were rescued, and Masterson was heavily fined. On another occasion a couple of hogsheads of wine were captured by the Customs. It was removed uptown to Mossley's auction rooms on King Street, near the market. The sale was fixed for a certain date. The crowd assembled and the auctioneer directed that the wine be tested, when, to the amazement of the audience, it was found that the wine had turned to water by some mysterious process.

"In those days there was a great deal of smuggling carried on. The farmers on the lake shore used to connive at many a cargo of stuff being run in from the States, and large amounts of money were made. An old carter named Handy used to secrete tea in his stables and keep it there for weeks till a prominent King Street establishment was ready to receive it. Masterson, however, gave up his bad tricks, and with a grinding machine went about town earn-

ing a good stipend. He also kept boats for hire from about 1847, at the foot of Bay Street. At a later period Mr. Darby Finch and Mr. Millard, two popular boatmen, kept boats for hire at Rees' Wharf, foot of Simcoe Street. Mrs. Masterson ran the boat department and her house was kept as bright as a new pin. Her charge for boats was seven pence half penny an hour, and the patronage was very liberal.

"The Mastersons had one son, a clever fellow, who was educated at Upper Canada College. His name was Charles Michael, and he was a phenomenal musician. He could play the violin with much ability. Mrs. Masterson was, in after years, an employee of the Boys' or Girls' Home. Her son went out west. Michael, the father, was a man of about 5 feet 9 inches in height, stout and burly, sharp and keen. In the summer months he was a runner for the steamer which ran from Toronto and Hamilton to Rochester. It was amusing to hear him shout out the advantages of this particular steamer and route he was working for as he stood at the corner of Yonge and Front Streets, while his rivals in the business would be doing as well on another corner."[9]

The harbour carries other memories, too. At the middle of the century, and earlier, the curlers of the city were to be found playing "the roarin' game" on rinks kept free of snow between the wharves. There was a skating rink at the foot of Yonge Street, and the best figure-skater of the day was Principal F. W. Barron of Upper Canada College. The officers of the Garrison and the young bloods of the city outdid one another in tearing about in their gay carrioles and cutters, and the Bay in winter wore a picturesque and typically Canadian aspect. In summer the swimming that is now centred in the Island and eastern and western beaches took place in the more central portions of the Bay. The days of salmon-spearing by jack-light from birch canoes had passed, but pike, bass, perch, sunfish and an occasional maskinonge could still be caught off the wharves, though lunge were, of course, more plentiful in the Don and Ashbridge's Bay. Many a citizen, too, enjoyed an hour's sail on the horse-boat which long conducted the ferry service to the Peninsula; while those who could afford sail-

[9]John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*, 1894-1914, Vol. I, pp. 334-5.

ing yachts of their own competed in the regattas which were prominent sporting events on its waters.

The incorporation of York into the city of Toronto in 1834 had no effect on the condition of the harbour, for the city had no jurisdiction in the matter. The harbour front at that time followed the "Windmill Line", extending from Old Fort Point to Gooderham and Worts' Mill on Trinity Street. In 1837 the first preparations looking towards the construction of the Esplanade were taken when the city commenced to secure all land along the waterfront not already in private possession. The patent of such lots from Berkeley to Graves (Simcoe) Street was granted in 1840, and in 1853 a license of occupation was secured for those westward from Graves Street to the Queen's Wharf. A map in the Surveyor-General's office shows the projected Esplanade to be 100 feet in width and from 150 to 330 feet from the existing waterfront.

During the thirties and forties wharves additional to those already named were built from time to time. In 1836 John Cull made use of a large scow, which operated under the name of "The Royal Floating Bath." The *Toronto Directory* of 1837 gives an interesting description of the establishment:

"These baths have been erected by Mr. Cull of this City; they are 110 feet in length and 21 feet in width, and contain two warm and ten cold baths, with vapour and shower baths. One end is exclusively appropriated to ladies, with a private entrance from the gallery outside and leading to an elegant drawing-room adjoining a promenade deck 80 feet long with a dome roof, and trellis work guards all round. It is capable of accommodating 200 persons, and so constructed that the additional weight of 300 will not depress the bath one inch. There are reading and refreshment rooms for both ladies and gentlemen, fitted up in the best possible style. These baths are highly creditable to the city from point of appearance, and not less so as to their utility."[10]

Some eight or ten years later the baths were not being

[10]George Walton's *City of Toronto and Home District Commercial Directory and Register, with Almanack and Calendar for 1837*, p. 6.

used except as dressing-rooms for the Baptists, who were usually immersed in the Bay at the foot of Bay Street. By 1847 there was a total of eighteen wharves in the harbour, though some were showing signs of extreme old age.

Among the early regulations of the Port of Toronto are a number which recall the days of sailing-ships, and still others which existed because of the bad condition of the waterfront. It was ordered that all obstructions to navigation, such as sunken wharves, should be removed, and that no vessel should add to the refuse in the harbour by discharging ballast.[11] It appears, however, to have been expected, that this regulation might be "more honour'd in the breach than the observance", and that the sunken wharves might not all be removed, for it was provided that they should be marked with beacon lights, and, if not so marked, the owners of the wharves would be liable for any damage to vessels. A regulation notable for its seamanly language stipulated that "all schooners, square-rigged vessels or steamers lying at wharves shall top up their lower yards, or brace them fore and aft; also rig in their movable bumpkins and davits, lower all or house all boats hanging over the stem or quarter or any way outside the vessel". On foggy days precautions were to be taken by all vessels to warn others by ringing their bells, blowing off steam, sounding horns, or in some other way attracting attention to their location in the harbour.[11]

In 1860 schooners still predominated in lake trade. J. E. Middleton[12] gives a list of twenty-nine Toronto schooners engaged in that year in the carriage of grain, and remarks that "the combined burden of all these little sailing craft would about fill one hatchway of the modern Upper Lakes steamer". The largest of these schooners, the *Omar Pasha*, could carry 14,000 bushels, the smallest, the *Echo*, only 2,000. In the autumn of 1933 "the last sailing-ship on the Great Lakes" was to be burned off Sunnyside to provide a novel spectacle for Toronto's thrill-seekers, but was tempor-

[11]Seventeen regulations may be found in the small printed pamphlet, *Rules, By-Laws and Regulations of the Port of Toronto, passed by the Commissioners of the Harbour of Toronto the 24th day of December, 1850.* For many valuable suggestions concerning the history of the harbour the writer is indebted to V. M. Roberts, Esq., Librarian of the Harbour Commission.

[12]Middleton, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 272.

arily saved from this ignominious end by public disapproval of such a wanton act. Nearly half a century earlier the steamship had won the competition for lake traffic, and had, in turn, suffered greatly from its land rival, the railway.

Meanwhile merchants and shippers were dissatisfied with the manner in which the government was operating the harbour, and a campaign instituted by the Board of Trade succeeded in effecting, in 1850, the passage of "An Act to Provide for the Future Management of Toronto Harbour". A Commission of five men was placed in charge of the Queen's Wharf and of navigation in general, but had no jurisdiction over privately-owned wharves, and the development of the harbour under such divided control was hardly to be exected. Railways were in the air, however, and in 1853 the public quay or Esplanade was commenced, C. S. Gzowski & Co., contractors for the Grand Trunk Railway, being awarded the contract, which carried an agreement to sell the Railway a right of way forty feet wide along the entire Esplanade for $10,000. Tenders, contracts, disagreements and delays characterised the next ten years, but in 1863 the work was finished at a cost of about $750,000. During the course of the improvements several wharves were filled in, and the others were connected by a macadamised roadway of which the Torontonians of that day were quite proud.

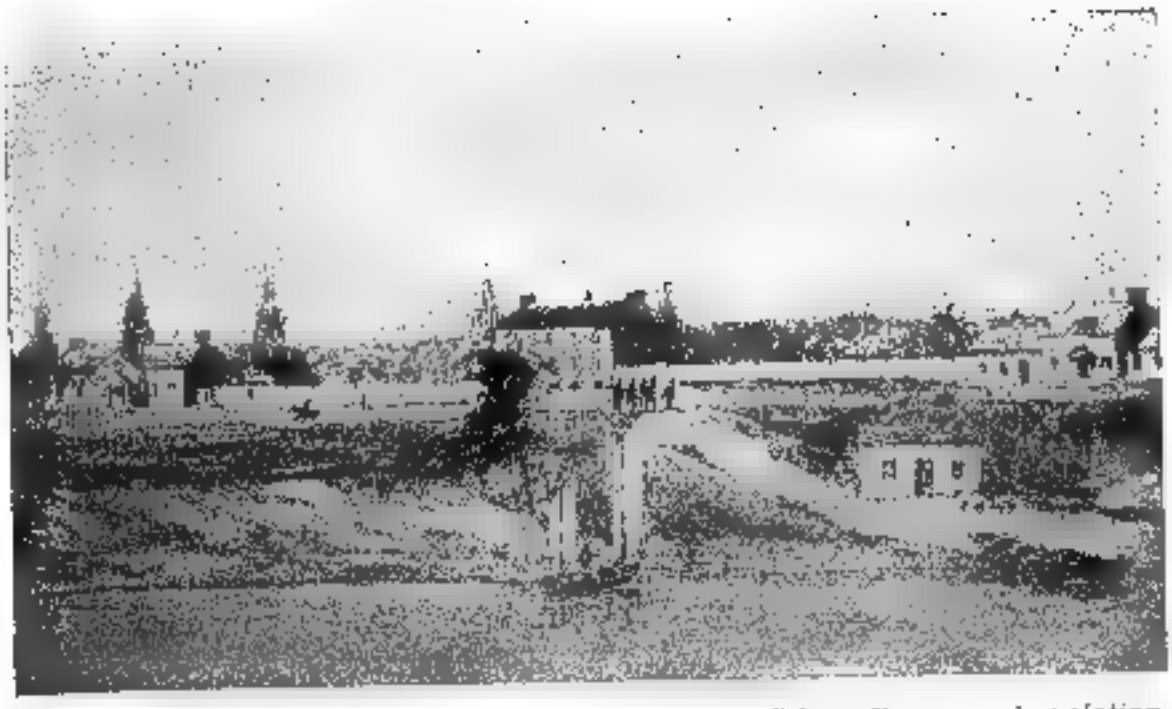
As the years passed, other improvements increased the wharfage facilities of Toronto harbour. In 1863 Shedden's Wharf and elevator had been built at the foot of Peter Street, but in the next year it was destroyed by fire. In 1870 the Northern Railway Company's wharf at the foot of Brock Street (now Spadina Avenue) was a notable addition, and it remained until fire destroyed it in 1908. In the eighties and nineties the old Windmill Line was twice extended southward, the total distance being 644 feet and the last extension being known as the New Windmill Line; many of the wharves were consequently pushed farther into the Bay. Towards the close of the century the city constructed several additional wharves between Yonge Street and York Street; and by 1908 there were no less than forty between Bathurst Street and Parliament Street. At that time, however, the condition of the waterfront was deplorable, only

a few of the docks being in good repair, and the slips between them so full of silt and sewage that vessels drawing as little as twelve feet of water frequently grounded. The harbour was sadly in need of a comprehensive scheme of development as commensurate with the modern city as the old Esplanade had been in the Toronto of the fifties and sixties.

In January, 1852, the lake had made a breach in the peninsula at the narrows, and again in February, 1853, a storm formed a channel at that point three feet deep. Storms and low water in the spring of 1854 closed the beginnings of the Eastern Gap, however, and a protecting breakwater was erected at a cost of £1,389. On April 13, 1858, a storm battered the locality with such force that the breakwater and Quinn's Hotel were completely carried away and a permanent eastern entrance some 500 yards in width created. On May 31st the schooners *Eliza* and *Highland Chief* left the harbour by way of the new channel, and by 1859 steamers and other craft were using the Eastern Gap. Nothing was done to prevent further erosion, and by 1862 a channel three-quarters of a mile in width and from five to eight feet deep had been formed. Buoys were placed to guide traffic, but some twenty years passed before anything further was done.

Bars outside the eastern channel continually interfered with its use, and the western entrance retained its supremacy, though it was difficult to navigate during seasons of low water. The City Council and the Harbour Commission petitioned the Dominion Government to take some action which would preserve the harbour from destruction by storms, and in 1879 an expert, J. B. Eads, reported in favour of closing both eastern and western channels, as well as all connection with Ashbridge's Bay, and, in place of the existing entrances, the opening of a channel across the north end of the island. In 1882 harbour improvements totalling $250,000, of which the city paid $100,000, were commenced, but the recommendations of Mr. Eads were not acted upon; on the contrary, both channels were improved, and a dyke was constructed separating Ashbridge's Bay from the harbour, but leaving an opening to the Don River.

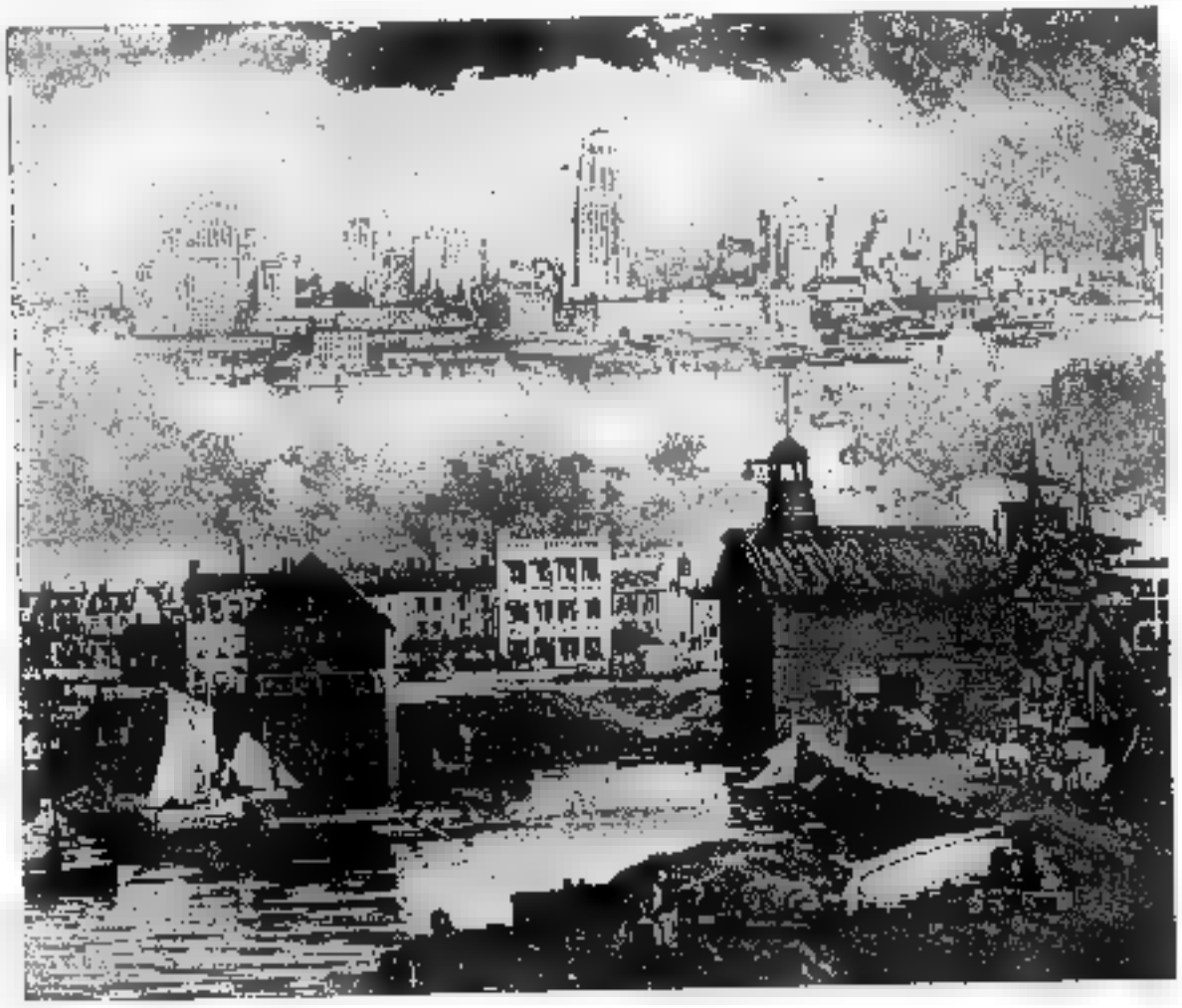
The germ of modern developments along the waterfront



John Ross Robertson Collection. W. Wyly Grier, after an early painting.

FRONT STREET BETWEEN PETER AND JOHN, 1810

Home of the Hon. George Crookshank — Home of John Beikie — Commissariat Storehouse — The Halfway House



Reproduced by Courtesy of the Canadian Bank of Commerce.

TORONTO WATERFRONT, 1834 AND 1934

The lower illustration is based upon Bartlett's sketch of 1840. In the foreground is Maitland's Wharf; and the white building in the rear centre is the Ontario House, later the Wellington Hotel, on Palace (Front) Street.

Reproduced by Courtesy of the Toronto Harbour Commissioners.

EASTERN HARBOUR TERMINALS, 1914

"Where swamps and flocks of wild fowl were characteristic sights."

Reproduced by Courtesy of the Toronto Harbour Commissioners.

EASTERN HARBOUR TERMINALS, 1933

The remarkable developments of a few years are apparent when one compares the two photographs. The plans were approved in 1912-13, but the outbreak of the Great War delayed the work. A clean and attractive waterfront now forms a pleasant approach to the Queen City.

is in one respect afforded by an idea which Dr. Beaty had when Mayor in 1880. Referring to the low land at the mouth of the Don he planned "to fill up the marsh with dry earth" (we can appreciate his use of the word *dry*!) "from the hills north and east of the city. I examined this question when in Council 15 years ago, and I then had a plan to make alternate canals and streets in the marsh, and fill up the intervals or let the lots to manufacturers at a nominal rental, under conditions that they fill up a certain acreage each year. The time had not come then to demand it, and I abandoned it for the time being".[13] When many years later the land was reclaimed as part of the harbour development the filling material was not carted from the hills but was excavated by hydraulic dredge and pumped 6,000 feet from the bed of the lake and from parts of the harbour.

In 1902 the eastern channel was deepened, and concrete piers were placed on either side of the entrance. In 1909 a new western channel south of the original one was built, but time had proved the utter impossibility of ever establishing any permanent policy of waterfront development as long as the magnificent resources remained under divided control. The Board of Trade inaugurated a campaign to induce the City Council and the Dominion Government to place all the city's waterfront properties and waterlots in Toronto Bay and Lake Ontario, including the whole of Ashbridge's Bay, into the hands of a permanent Commission for development. In December, 1910, the ratepayers expressed their approval by an overwhelming majority, and as a result "The Toronto Harbour Commissioners' Act" was passed on May 19, 1911, ushering in a new era in the development of the city.

In the autumn of 1912 the final plans of waterfront improvement were approved by the City Council, and in June, 1913, by the Dominion Government. The scheme included the reclamation of Ashbridge's Bay for industrial purposes, and the construction of a harbour head line 1,100 feet south of the New Windmill Line, the region north of it being filled in as the development proceeded. The harbour was to be deepened to 30 feet, and some 900 acres of park lands to the east and west of the harbour and on the Island were to be

[13]James Beaty: *Civic Relief*, 1896. p. 44.

reclaimed. The estimated cost of the entire scheme was $25,000,000.

The Great War interfered with the progress of the improvements, but in later years the work was pushed forward, and almost all of the plans have now been carried to completion. Toronto boasts one of the best harbours on the Great Lakes, and adequate provision has been made for her industrial and commercial expansion. At the same time the Toronto Grade Separation, which elevated the railway tracks, and the construction of the Queen's Quay, Fleet Street and similar roadways, have provided for the development of rail and motor transportation; while storage warehouses and manufacturing plants exist where swamps and flocks of wild fowl were, until recently, characteristic sights.

A unique feature in connection with the improvements has been the combination of recreational with industrial development. The breakwater forms adequate protection for canoes and other small boats, while the amusement resorts at Sunnyside and the Island provide countless thousands of people with summer pleasures unsurpassed anywhere. Life-saving has consequently developed greatly since the first official lifeboat was purchased in 1857 to aid mariners shipwrecked in or near the harbour. Until 1912 there was no permanent life-saving and police patrol service, and in earlier years it had long been necessary, when a wreck occurred, for the one boat, which was kept in Tinning's boathouse, to be manned by volunteers. As time passed, arrangements more satisfactory were gradually effected, but the modern waterfront development has necessitated a greatly enlarged service to provide adequate protection—not so much for mariners, as in days of old, but for bathers and boaters along the numerous beaches. "Toronto Harbour" implies much more than it did formerly, and the modern appearance of ten miles of clean and attractive waterfront affords a remarkable sight to all who can recall the conditions of but a few years ago.

CHAPTER III

THE ISLAND AND THE FERRY SERVICE

TORONTO ISLAND, even in Indian days a favourite place for the holding of native councils, was from the earliest years of the town of York a pleasure resort enjoyed and appreciated as a centre of recreation. A peninsula until 1858, it was approached on foot, on horseback or by canoe in early times. In commenting on the necessity of a bridge across the mouth of the Don in order to facilitate approach to the Peninsula, the *Gazette* noted that there might be found land which would "answer every purpose of an extensive common to the owners of cattle; to those who might use it for purposes of recreation it furnishes a most delightful walk or ride; as a race ground or place for field exercise we know not its equal; the sportsman will find a constant and easy access to the best shooting ground; and the convalescent might find health in an occasional excursion to the opposite beach".[1]

While John Ross Robertson dates the establishment of a hotel on the Island, and of horse-boat transport to it, from the conversion of Lord Sydenham's residence into a hotel in 1843-4 by the Privat brothers, yet there was both a hotel and a horse-boat in operation as early as 1833. Michael O'Connor was proprietor of the hotel and owner of the horse-boat named in the following announcement in Mackenzie's *Almanac* for 1834:

"Horse-boat to the Island. A boat propelled by four horses runs every day from the Steamboat Wharves to the Starch Factory on the peninsula or island across the Bay—her trips regulated to suit public convenience. Fare to and from the island, 7½d. A hotel has been opened on the island to accommodate sportsmen, parties of pleasure, etc."[2]

[1] *Upper Canada Gazette*, April 1, 1808. Fourteen years later the Magistrates petitioned the Lieutenant-Governor to grant "a lease or otherwise in trust for the use of the inhabitants of the town as a commons for the pasturage of cattle on the Peninsula in front of said town".

[2] [W. L. Mackenzie's] *New Almanack for the Canadian True Blues*. 1834, p. 15. The fare given is evidently one way only.

From another source[5] we are able to state that the inn was known in 1833 by the appropriate name of The Retreat on the Peninsula; and furthermore that 1s. 3d. was the fare charged to convey a passenger to and from the resort on the *Sir John of the Peninsula*, for this was the grandiloquent name of the first horse-boat. The ferry made three trips daily from the foot of Church Street to the eastern end of what is now called Ward's Island, leaving York at 10, 2 and 4 o'clock and returning at 11, 3 and 6. On Sundays a trip was made at [redacted] a.m., and the return at 9; and commencing at 10 o'clock there was a continuous service with 15-minute stops at each side of the Bay. G. Roe was the enterprising operator of the TEAM BOAT, as it was often called. In naming the boat and hotel, Michael O'Connor, evidently an old soldier, was thinking of the Spanish Peninsular War; and particularly was Sir John Moore in his mind—that famous leader of the disastrous retreat to Coruna, who died in the moment of victory and was buried with melancholy solemnity just before the embarkation of his troops.

Steamships were becoming common on Lake Ontario in the early thirties, and on April 1, 1835, George Heathcote submitted [redacted] proposal to the City Council suggesting that he would build a steamboat to ply to the Peninsula. In May of the same year the first steam ferry—the newly-built *Toronto*—was operating regularly on the Bay, and the *Courier* of July the 9th states that the construction of a new road and bridges on the eastern end of the island enabled those who crossed the Bay to take [redacted] pleasant drive.

John Ross Robertson wrote that the Peninsula Hotel was originally erected in 1839 by Mr. Poulett Thompson (later Lord Sydenham) as [redacted] residence during a visitation of cholera; but there is every reason to believe that it was the same building opened as an hotel by Michael O'Connor in 1833, and later operated by Joseph Palin. It was 50 feet by 40, and was built upon a layer of 4-inch planks sunk two feet in the sand, since it was difficult to lay a brick foundation. The lower storey was built of brick, and the second

[5] *George Walton's York Commercial Directory for 1834*. 1833. p. 147. A detailed announcement of the opening of the hotel appears in the *Courier of Upper Canada*, October 5, 1833, and may be found in Chapter XVII, page 313.

and third of wood. In 1843 Louis (Peter) Privat (pronounced Prevs at the time) purchased the house, and, with his brother Louis Joseph, commenced therein the operation of the Peninsula Hotel. While Peter undertook to run the hostelry, Louis Joseph endeavoured to attract customers by running a horse-boat across the bay. The *Peninsula Packet*—called merely "the horse-boat" by the inhabitants of Toronto—had formerly operated as a steamship below Queenston, and was sixty feet in length by twenty-three in width. A waterwheel on either side was set in motion by two horses who trod on a circular table set flush with the deck in its centre. As the table revolved it worked upon rollers which, being connected with the shaft, set the paddles in motion. The horses were, of course, in position practically stationary, the table on which they trod being fitted with ridges of wood radiating like spikes from the centre. In 1845 the vessel was lengthened and the front pointed, enabling a better rate of speed; five horses were employed instead of two, and they walked round and round the deck, propelling the boat in a manner similar to the working of an old-fashioned threshing machine or French-Canadian grist-mill.

Some account of the people early connected with the peninsula will be of interest. The first inhabitants of the *Presqu'Isle de Toronto* were fishermen. At least as early as the eighteen-forties William Strowger erected the first house on the eastern sandbar, now called Fisherman's Island. This primitive cabin was constructed of logs and other loose timber which had been washed up on the beach. Mary Anne Strowger, widow of William, recalled in 1908 that her eldest son was probably the first child born on the island. In those days Ashbridge's Bay and the Lake abounded in fish, and the Strowgers, Wards, Laffertys and Durnans, the only residents on the island, were all fishermen. At various times, also, fishermen established themselves on what is now called Hanlan's Point, the Hanlans being the first to locate there.

In later years William Geddes bought out the five or six fishermen at Hanlan's, and William Strowger removed thither to become his foreman. His family lived on the shore of Centre Island, and Mrs. Strowger recalled that

fourteen men were employed in netting whitefish, while trout were frequently caught by hook and line. For a time the Strowgers occupied the former summer home of Lord Sydenham, which they operated as a hotel previous to its use for the same purpose by Peter and Louis Joseph Privat. Other buildings in the vicinity of the Peninsula Hotel are described as follows:

"To the east of it was another small dwelling, occupied by the keeper of the lighthouse, James Durning, while about one hundred yards to the west was a third house, known afterwards as Parkinson's Hotel. These, the huts we have before mentioned, and the lighthouse, were, until 1853, the only dwellings upon the Island. Between where now is Island Park, and the Eastern gap, were a great many trees, chiefly pines and Balm of Gilead. Exactly opposite the present Albert House is one of each of these trees, and this spot was a favourite rendezvous for picnic parties. To the east are several other scattered pines, much the same now as then, and from them one of the adjacent villas takes the very appropriate name of 'The Pines'."[4]

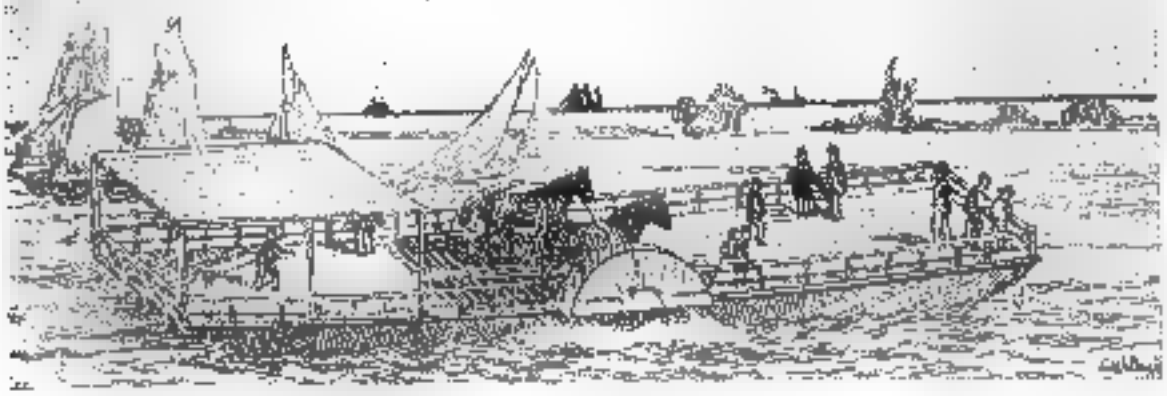
The first careful survey of the peninsula was probably that of J. G. Howard, who wrote that in 1846 he "made a survey of the Toronto peninsula, and laid out 283 acres in fifty-seven two-acre lots on Trafalgar Marine Parade, or Fitzroy Street, going north from the lighthouse, Vernon Street at right-angles to it; also Rodney and Duncan Streets."[5]

The Privats developed a small pleasure resort around their hotel, swings and a merry-go-round, etc., providing entertainment for children, and bowling alleys, pigeon-shooting and similar diversions attracting the men. John Ross Robertson's description of Privat's amusement park shows that the sports of earlier generations were frequently characterised by cruelty to animals which is now prevented by law:

"The Island afforded its visitors many other attractions besides the journey there, which, by the way, generally occupied thirty and sometimes forty minutes. Opposite the

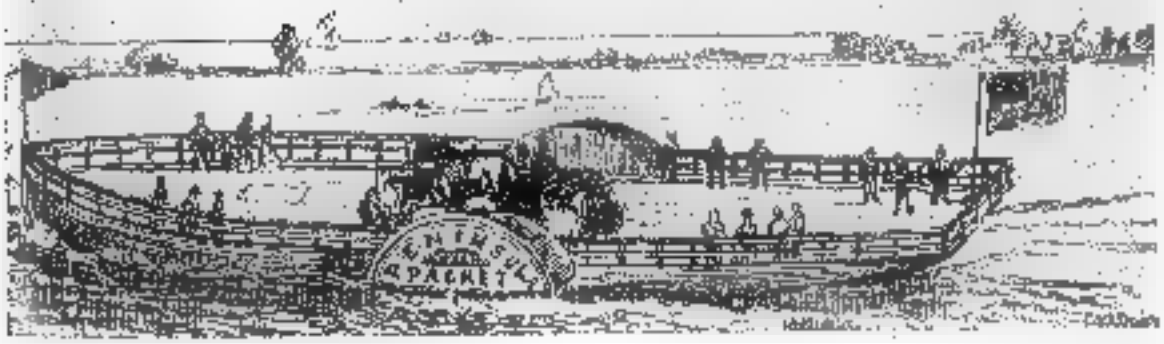
[4]See John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*. 1894-1914. Vol. II, pp. 764-7, for reminiscences of early days on the island. "Durning" is obviously an error for "Durnan".

[5]J. G. Howard: *Incidents in the Life of J. G. Howard*. . . . 1885. p. 22.



John Ross Robertson Collection. C. H. J. Snider.

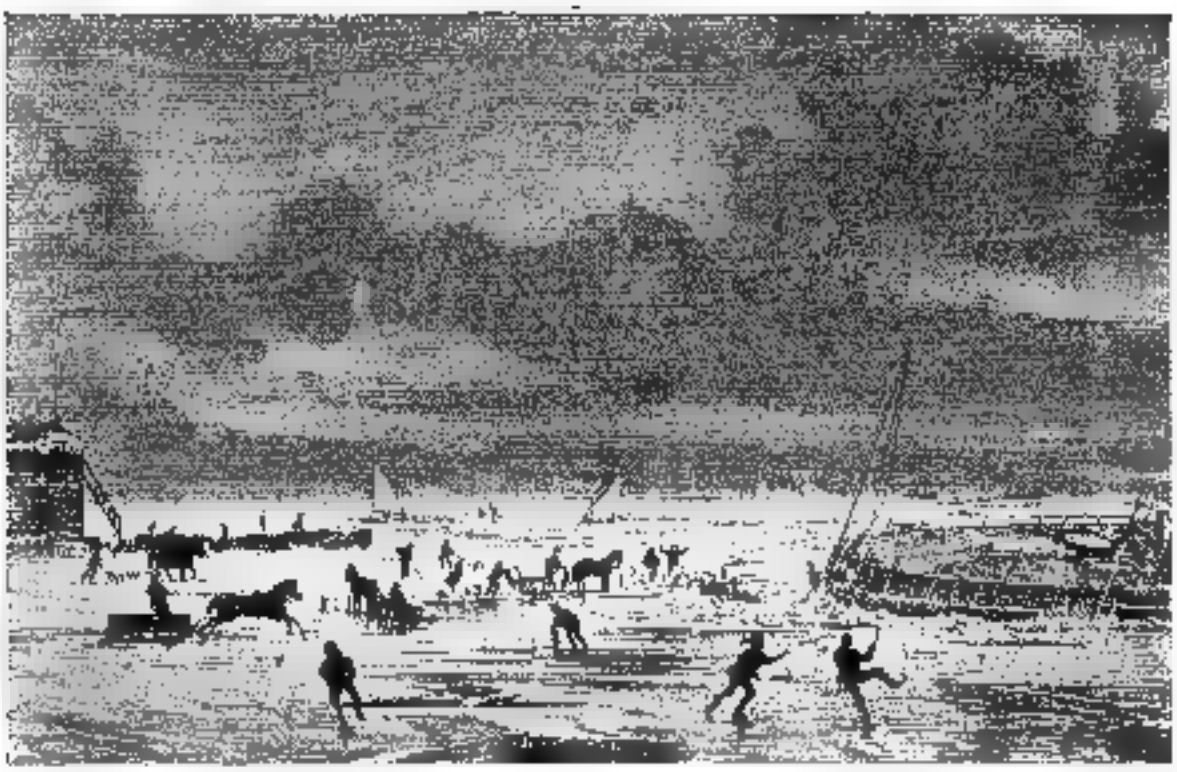
A TEAM BOAT



John Ross Robertson Collection. C. H. J. Snider.

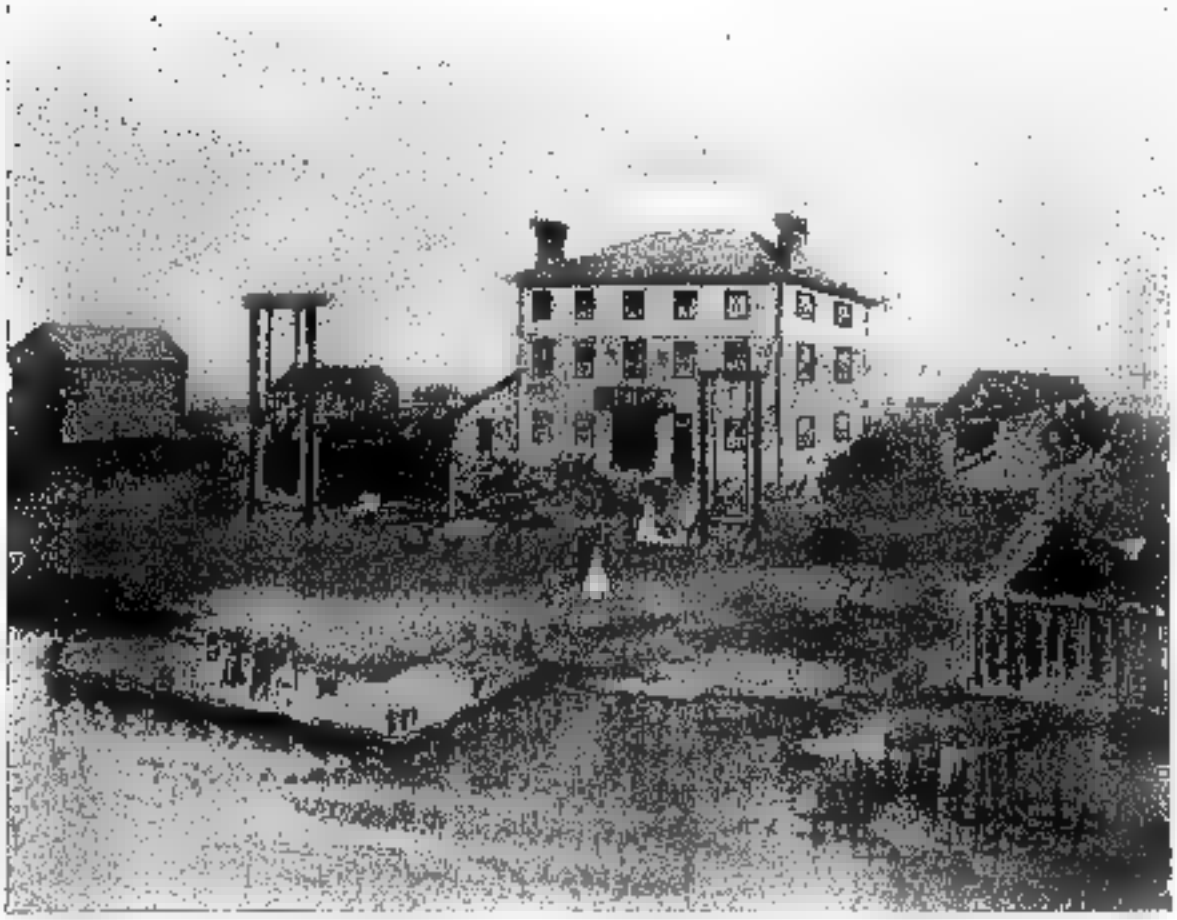
THE FIVE-HORSE BOAT PENINSULA PACKET

Horse-boats conducted a ferry service on the Bay from 1833 to 1851. The *Peninsula Packet* was 60 feet long and 23 feet beam, and ran to Privat's Hotel.



Canadian Illustrated News. W. Armstrong.

CUTTING ICE ON TORONTO BAY OPPOSITE THE UNION DEPOT, 1871



John Ross Robertson Collection.

PRIVAT'S HOTEL AND AMUSEMENT PARK ON THE PENINSULA

Swings, a merry-go-round and a small zoo may be distinguished. At the rear right is the Ten-Pin Alley. Visitors were transported to the park on the horse-boat *Peninsula Packet.*

hotel was a merry-go-round and two large swings, the one to the east, the other to the west of the merry-go-round. The first was eighty feet high, the second but thirty, and all three were largely patronized by the younger portion of the Island's visitors. For the elders there was a bowling alley, known as 'Ten Pin Alley', while to ensure instruction as well as amusement there was a small zoological collection consisting of a bear, a wolf, a white deer, several racoons and two or three eagles. There was also a good deal of amusement of a somewhat miscellaneous nature. Every Queen's Birthday many of the sportsmen of Toronto journeyed to the Island for blackheart shooting. These were birds of passage of the plover tribe, who invariably were making their annual migration at this period of the year. Another, though somewhat cruel pastime consisted of trap pigeon shooting, wild pigeons being netted by bird-catchers and sold to Privat for the purpose.

"Besides these contests to test the prowess of marksmen, there was turkey shooting. This, it must be confessed, was very sorry sport. A turkey was tied and placed on an elevation about fifty yards from where the sportsmen (?) stood. Everyone who chose to enter and pay a York shilling for each shot was allowed to fire at the poor bird; the first who hit it became possessor of the turkey. This amiable pastime continued until the supply of turkeys was exhausted. There was yet one other occasional diversion, equally reprehensible but perhaps not quite so cruel as the one just mentioned: this was shooting a bear with a candle. A bear was purchased, and forty years ago these were not difficult to obtain, and a man resident in Toronto used to give an exhibition of shooting this animal with a rifle ostensibly loaded only with an ordinary tallow candle. To see this performance a small sum was charged, and those who witnessed it went away believing the bear had met his quietus solely through the force of the candle striking him. They were not told, and probably would not have believed it had they been so, that when the candle was put in the rifle a bullet had preceded it; nevertheless such was the case. This 'sport' always took place in the winter, and there was from time to time an occasional fox hunt also, a fox being let loose the night before to furnish the

sport, and a very exhilarating amusement was the result."[6]

In 1850 the *Peninsula Packet* was still being advertised in the press. Under the head "Cheap Pleasure" L. J. Privat announces the horse-boat service in connection with his hotel, and the reference in this advertisement to pasturage for horses and cattle shows how close to rural life Toronto was at that period:

"That Safe and Convenient Horse-Boat, the *Peninsula Packet,* will leave Mr. Maitland's Wharf, foot of Church Street, every day at ten o'clock a.m., 12, 2, 4, and 6 p.m., for the Peninsula Hotel. Returning at 11 a.m., 1, 3, 5, and 7 p.m. precisely. Fare to and from, 7½d. Family Season Tickets $4 each. Swings and Merry-go-round, etc., for the amusement of Children. Dinners, Lunches, Teas, etc., to be had at the shortest notice. Good pasture for Horses and other cattle, which can be conveyed over by the first boat—not later."[7]

But horse-boats, long effectively used for short distance ferry services, were gradually being displaced by steam ferries, and the Toronto horse-boat was taken off the route in 1851. In the early fifties the chief steam ferry was the *Victoria,* built by James Good, Toronto ship-builder, and purchased by L. J. Privat. This boat of 25 horse-power ran throughout the season every hour between 10 a.m. and 7 p.m., and it was announced that she had "no connection with any other boat, or racing",[8]—which suggests that a race-track was in operation at the time, and was, perhaps, attracting unfavourable comment in some quarters. At the close of the 1853 season Privat sold the *Victoria* to George Tate, Superintendent of the Grand Trunk Railway, and continued to operate the boat for the Company until the autumn of 1855, when Privat and his family removed from Toronto to Bentinck, Grey County. During their residence on the Island the Privats rescued at least five men from drowning. Other steam ferries operating in the fifties included the *Bob Moodie* and the *Lady Head.*

[6]*Ibid.*

[7]Quoted in Robertson, *op cit.*, Vol. II, p. 884. A similar announcement in the *British Colonist* of May 18, 1849, contains the information that "children sent without guardians will be taken every care of".

[8]Any quotations in this chapter not otherwise credited are from Robertson, Vol. II, pp. 884-937.

John Quinn, who succeeded the Privat brothers in the hotel business on the Island, also operated a ferry while the *Victoria* was still running. In 1853 a newspaper item announces that "among the new projects for the season is John Quinn's new steamer, the *Citizen*, built to run between Toronto and the Island". Shortly afterwards the news appears that she "made her first trips to and from Toronto and the Island on Thursday, May 19th. The return fare was only 8 cents". The *Citizen* was a vessel of 350 tons and operated on the Bay for some years.

Before leaving the resort operated by the Privats and Quinn it is worth noting that the site of their summer hotel was, after 1858, under water. In the vicinity of the Eastern Gap which replaced the narrow neck of land where the hotel was located might also be found in the sixties the hulks of two steamships—the *Monarch*, wrecked in 1856, and the *Southern Belle*, a few years later. It may be mentioned, too, that the locality was not always the quiet resort of today, for in the eighteen-fifties the hundreds of Toronto grog-shops and taverns supplied no end of hard liquor, and among other "sinks of iniquity" where gambling, drinking and fighting were rampant was the Island. Conditions were usually at their worst on Sundays and holidays.

In addition to the hotel occupied by the Privats and Quinn, there was Parkinson's, which was incidentally mentioned previously. Some details concerning the history of this hostelry will be of interest. About 1850 Reuben Parkinson, a carriage-builder, erected the hotel at Maskelonge Point (Mugg's Landing), moving it a few years later to the west side of the Privat Hotel grounds. It was washed away at the time the Eastern Gap was created, and the following year (1859) Mrs. Parkinson built a hostelry in what is now called Island Park. Robert Mead took over the property in 1873, and his widow continued the business after his death. In 1887 the city purchased from Mrs. Mead the twelve acres of land surrounding the hotel, and the property became part of the park.

In April, 1858, what had long been called the Island became so in fact, for a heavy storm broke through the sandbar and created the Eastern Gap in that year. It was on this occasion that Quinn's Hotel was carried away and

the site covered with water. Evidently a deep channel was made, for on April 19, 1859, the steamship *Bowmanville* passed through the gap, and it soon became commonly used by vessels.

In 1859 occurs the first announcement of moonlight excursions on the bay. In addition to her regular trips to and from the Island, the *Fire Fly* advertises moonlight voyages on Tuesdays and Fridays, and "for the accommodation of the dancers there will be music on board. Fare only one York shilling". In 1861 Captain Robert Moodie announces the recommencement of the service, and makes the rather unhygienic suggestion that citizens of Toronto "can get a mouthful of fresh air" by patronising the *Fire Fly* on one of her hourly trips.

During the sixties several other ferries were employed on Toronto Bay. The *Watertown*, a vessel of 175 tons built in 1864 in Kingston, entered the service immediately afterwards, and in 1865 it is announced that "the miniature little steamer, the *Ripple*, with her jaunty rig and obliging boy captain, runs half-hourly between the city and the Island, and is well patronised by our citizens and young folks desirous of enjoying a sail".[9] On August 22nd of the same year the *Princess of Wales*, John Walsh, captain, is advertised to leave Tinning's Wharf "every day at noon, and every half hour afterwards throughout the day until 7 p.m". Tinning's Wharf was built in 1831, and was located on a small part of the site now occupied by the Union Station.

In 1866 a new steamer, the *Bouquet*, was advertised to run to the Island, and season tickets were for sale at "W. & J. Strachan, Front Street; Saulter's wood-yard; Church Street Wharf; R. W. Parkinson, Esq., corner of King and Yonge Streets; and from the captain on board". James Saulter was the master of the *Bouquet*. Two years later Captain William Parkinson was in charge of this ferry, and advertised that "the steamer has been furnished in a tasteful style and in such a manner as to ensure comfort combined with safety to persons wishing to visit this favourite place of resort. The most liberal arrangements will be made with excursions and picnic parties".

In 1867 the *Princess of Wales* commenced a service in

[9] *The Globe*, July 27, 1865.

opposition to the *Bouquet*. It appears that there was a move in that year to award the exclusive right to conduct the ferry service to friends of certain aldermen, and the *Globe* adopted a characteristic and praiseworthy attitude:

"We understand that a project is on foot in the Council to lease the privilege of carrying passengers to the Island. The city has full power in this direction, and it is felt that they might justly exercise it, while the result will be a better control over those to whom the privilege is given. Some talk exists of giving the exclusive privilege to some intimate friends of certain members of the Council, without tender. We trust such favouritism will not be attemped. Undoubtedly the only just plan will be to let it out by tender."[10]

Among other ferries in operation in the late sixties were the *Ada Alice* and the *Prince Arthur*, both of which went on the route in 1868. In 1870 the *Perry*, under Captain Thomas Lundy, operated under the same management as the *Bouquet*, and the two boats provided a quarter-hour service. On May 24th, the opening of the season, 5,000 people, a large crowd for that period, journeyed to the Island.

The development of Hanlan's Point and the other portions of the Island was particularly noticeable in the seventies. A contemporary publication suggests that "what 'the mountain' is to the Montrealer, 'the island' is to the people of Toronto. Until recently it was regarded simply as a fine natural breakwater, and the occasional resort of a few sportsmen. Now, it has become—to borrow a phrase from the sea-coast watering-places—'a great marine resort' of the townspeople, thousands of whom, all summer long, throng the ferries to its shores to enjoy the cool breezes of the lake. The once flat and featureless marsh is to-day a waterside suburb of rapidly increasing interest. From Hanlan Point—the island-home of Toronto's noted oarsman—a beautiful view of the city may be had. The features of the island itself, moreover,—the stretches of water-meadow, the hotels, promenades, and quaint summer residences on its shores—present a picture of varied and pleasing outline. Lakeward, stretching out

[10] *Ibid.*, May 5, 1867.

beyond Gibraltar Point,—the site of an old French blockhouse—is the great basin from which the city derives its water supply. The water is pumped up through sunken mains, laid across the bay and island, by powerful engines situated on the Esplanade. To the east is the fine, airy building of the Royal Canadian Yacht Club, a flourishing organisation designed to encourage amateur yachting and to supply the means of luxuriating in the adjacent lake. Still farther east, on a modest section of the peninsula now encircled by the lapping waves of the lake, the Wiman Baths may be seen, their outline sharply mirrored in the sunny expanse of gleaming water in the bay."[11]

The same writer envisions some of the modern development of Toronto's waterfront, noting that "the purposes to which the Island and water-surroundings of Toronto may be put, in affording the means of rest and enjoyment to its jaded citizens, are yet almost undreamt of. The whole of the lake-front of the island, and much of the Esplanade, might be converted into a continuous promenade or drive, with floating pontoons and occasional jetties thrown out lakeward, and the necessary adjunct of commodious hotels, at modest charges, for individual and family resort. The preservation of the island, meantime, is a pressing duty, and the municipal authorities of the city will be criminally responsible if they continue to neglect it. The existence of the bay and harbour is imperilled by indifference. No time should be lost in protecting the island from the encroachment of the lake."[12]

As time passed, other ferries appeared on the bay. During 1876 the *Princess of Wales, Bouquet* and *Watertown* were the chief vessels providing a ferry service. The *Watertown* also ran from time to time to the Humber. Two years later the *Princess of Wales* and *Bouquet* and four new ferries—the *Transit, Golden City, St. Jean Baptiste* and *Juliette*—were operating on the Bay. In 1883 the *Princess of Wales* sank near Queen's Wharf, but was raised, taken to Oakville, and rebuilt under the name *General*

[11]G. M. Grant (Ed.): *Picturesque Canada*. 1879. Vol. I, p. 407. The suggestion of a French blockhouse on Gibraltar (Hanlan's) Point is evidently an error, though there was a British blockhouse on that site in the early years of the town.

[12]*Ibid.*

Wolsey; soon afterwards she was burned at Fire Island. There appears to have been no objection to the operation of horse-boats or steam ferries on Sunday in earlier times, but there were attempts to prevent the use of commercial "pleasure boats" in the late eighteen-seventies. In the *Globe* is reported the case of three men who had been arrested for running steamers on the Sabbath, but the Magistrate dismissed the case on the ground that the boats should be construed as ferries rather than pleasure boats.[13]

During the eighties several new ships entered the service. Old inhabitants of Toronto will recall the *Canadian*, launched in 1882, the *Luella*, the *St. Jean Baptiste* (later *Sadie*), and *Prouvette Beyer*, all under Turner's management, and the *Mascotte, Arlington, Jessie McEdwards, Kathleen, Gertrude* and *Island Queen*, the last five of which were operated by A. J. Tymon. Almost all of them became the property of the Toronto Ferry Company when it was formed in 1890. Most of these boats were small screw steamers, but the *Canadian* and *Sadie* were two-decked paddle-wheelers, and carried 340 and 370 passengers, respectively. In 1890 were constructed the *Mayflower* and the *Primrose*, which incorporated the latest conveniences and improvements, including electric lights—then rather a novelty. They are steel-built, two-decked, double-bowed paddle steamers, and are the only boats in use in 1890 and still remaining in the ferry service. In the nineties these vessels left the Yonge Street Wharf for Hanlan's Point and Island Park, and the wharves at Dufferin and George Streets were also used to a lesser extent. The service extended from April to October, and from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. daily except Sunday, when it was more limited.

When the Toronto Ferry Company commenced operations in 1890 it purchased the steamers hitherto operated by the Doty Ferry Company, and two years later those belonging to the Island Park Ferry Company. In the late nineties the new company was operating twelve ferries. The *Luella* was long most popular with Island residents, and her captain was once presented with a set of colours by the City Council in recognition of her services in saving a number of people from drowning. A commendable custom

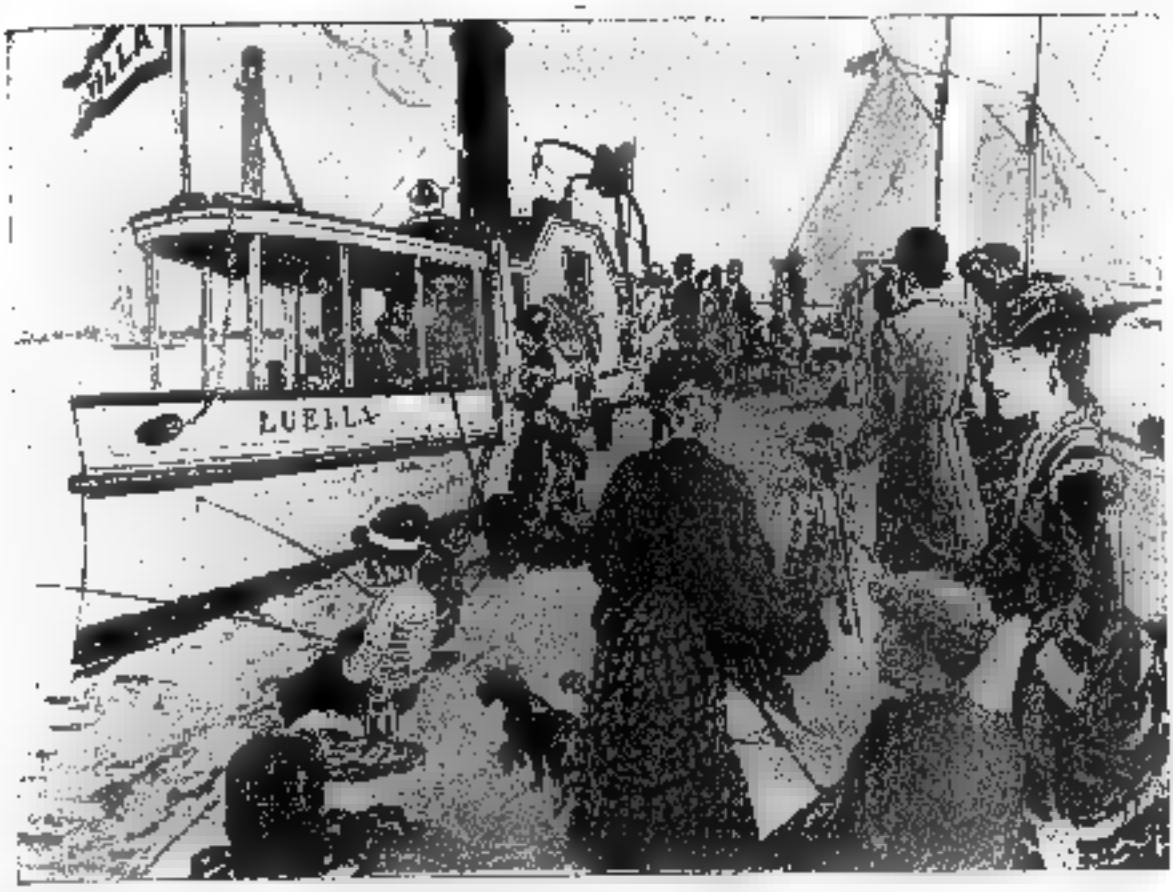
[13]The *Globe*, October 29, 1879.

in connection with the Toronto Ferry Company's service in the nineties was the frequent free excursions provided for many hundreds of inmates of the various charitable institutions of the city.

From time to time new boats replaced old ones. The *Island Queen* and *Kathleen* were destroyed by a fire at Hanlan's Point on February 12, 1918. In August of the same year the rate of passage for adults was raised from 10c. to 15c., and many were the complaints of citizens. In 1923 the Bay Street Docks were becoming unsafe, and removal to the new slips at the foot of York Street was suggested. But L. J. Solman, owner of the Toronto Ferry Company, objected to doing so unless car tracks were laid to the new docks. At that time the greater part of the patrons of the ferries were those who attended ball games at Solman's stadium on Hanlan's Point, and, as the Harbour Commission stated that the York Street Bridge could not carry street cars, Solman threatened to discontinue his ferry service and to build a new stadium within reach of the cars. The latter part of this policy he proceeded to carry into effect, but the ferries were operated with a steadily decreasing patronage until April, 1926, when the city decided to buy the ferry service for $337,500, eight boats comprising the fleet at that time.

In February, 1927, the service, which for a year had been conducted by the Ferry Company for the city, was transferred to the management of the Toronto Transportation Commission. Hanlan's Point, for generations the "Sunnyside" of Toronto citizens, had almost faded from the picture under the competition of Scarboro Beach and, latterly, of Sunnyside, but it secured a new lease of life under the enterprising management of the Commission. Street car tickets are used for the ferry passage, and the number of visitors to Centre Island, Hanlan's Point and Ward's Island is greater than ever before.

The present equipment of the ferry service includes six ferries, four of which—the *Mayflower*, *Primrose*, *Bluebell* and *Trillium*—are large paddle-wheelers, and two—the *T. J. Clark* and *Lucila*—are small screw steamers. The old *Jasmine* (formerly *Ojibway*) was in service until 1927, and ended her days in flames off Sunnyside on August 2,



Reproduced by Courtesy of the T.T.C. Rowley Murphy.

THE LUELLA, 1880-1917

This ferry was long among the most popular on the Bay.

Reproduced by Courtesy of the Toronto Transportation Commission.

FERRIES AND FERRY DOCKS, 1927

The construction of several notable buildings has greatly altered the appearance of the waterfront since the T.T.C. assumed control of the ferry service in 1927.

John Ross Robertson Collection. J. G. Howard.

WINTER ACTIVITIES ON THE BAY, 1835

The Parliament Buildings may be seen in the right background.

From the Ontario Curling Association *Annual*, 1877.

THE TORONTO RED JACKETS ON TORONTO BAY, 1873

T. McGaw is at the "hack", having just delivered his stone. J. Gray and D. Walker are the sweepers, the former with his broom in the air. Captain Perry is the skip with one knee on the ice. It is a good "end", for all the stones are "in the house". In later *Annuals* the whiskey bottles at the lower right-hand corner were covered by a black cloth—presumably in deference to temperance sentiment!

1929. The *Clark Bros.* and *John Hanlan* were similarly burned to provide a spectacle for amusement seekers. Two sightseeing gasoline launches, the *Miss Simcoe* and *Miss York*, and two freight boats, the *Aylmer* and *Buttercup*, comprise the rest of the equipment. All boats now run from the New Queen's Quay instead of using several wharves as formerly. In 1931 passengers to the number of 2,172,558 were carried on the ferries, over 101,000 making the trip on the record day, July 1st of that year. Even during the winter anyone who wishes to cross may do so on the tug *Ned Hanlan*, which sails from the foot of John Street to the island filtration plant.

Just previous to the arrangements under which the city took over the ferry service from the Toronto Ferry Company there was considerable discussion relative to bridging the Eastern and Western Gaps so that motor and trolley cars might proceed to the Island. Fortunately these plans, which would have ended the ferry service and destroyed much of the charm of the pleasure resort, were terminated by the agreement conveying the property to the City of Toronto, and it is to be hoped that future generations may long be able to approach the restful Island on ferries larger but not greatly dissimilar to the old horse-boats.

CHAPTER IV

THE DON AND ITS EARLY BRIDGES

IN the pioneer period it was usual to carry on transportation by water whenever possible, for such roads as had been blazed were mere trails through the forest. The canoe and the bateau were long familiar on Canadian waterways, and the Don River, first mapped by the Frenchman, Raffeix, in 1688, was part of a trade route which was early of great importance. Soon after Yonge Street was opened in 1796 by Augustus Jones, the North-West Company, which had formerly sent brigades of canoes to the west *via* the Ottawa River, diverted much of the traffic to the Yonge Street route. Bateaux travelled in fleets up the St. Lawrence and the Bay of Quinté, and by a portage at the Carrying Place entered Lake Ontario, along the shore of which they proceeded to York. Crossing the Peninsula at the point where the Eastern Gap now is, they made their way by oars and poles up the Don, and by one of its forks to Yonge Street. The flat-bottomed boats were then loaded on trucks or wagons and hauled to the Holland River, down which they proceeded to Lake Simcoe and thence to the North-West. Some years later the boats frequently used Yonge Street all the way from the shores of the Bay, the more difficult hills being ascended by the aid of a windlass or capstan.

Transport by dug-out canoe was developed by a picturesque resident on the Don—Joseph Tyler, hermit-squatter from New Jersey, who lived on the west side of the river, just north of the site where was later erected the Don Street bridge. He is described as having fine, sharp, shrewd features, set off by an abundance of white hair and beard; in fact, in every way "the counterpart of an Italian artist's stock model". Almost all that is known of him and his more than locally famous canoe is recorded by Dr. Scadding:

"The mystery attendant on his choice of a life of complete solitude, his careful reserve, his perfect self-reliance in regard to domestic matters, and, at the same time, the evi-

dent wisdom of his contrivances and ways, and the propriety and sagacity of his few words, all helped to render him a good specimen in actual life of a secular anchorite. He had been, in fact, a soldier in the United States army in the War of Independence, and was in the receipt of a pension from the other side of the lakes. He was familiar, he alleged, with the personal appearance of Washington.

"His abode on the Don was an excavation in the side of the steep hill, a little way above the level of the river-bank. The flue of his winter fireplace was a tubular channel, bored up through the clay of the hill-side. His sleeping-place or berth was exactly like one of the receptacles for human remains in the Roman catacombs—an oblong recess, likewise carved in the dry material of the hill. To the south of his cave he cultivated a large garden, and raised, among other things, the white sweet edible Indian corn, a novelty here at the time, and very excellent tobacco. He, moreover, manufactured pitch and tar in a little kiln or pit dug for the purpose close by his house.

"He built for himself a magnificent canoe, locally famous. It consisted of two large pine logs, each about forty feet long, well shaped and deftly hollowed out, fastened together by cross dove-tail pieces let in at regular distances along the interior of its bottom. While in process of construction in the pine woods through which the 'Mill Road' passes, on the high bank eastward of the river, it was a wonderment to all the inquisitive youth of the neighbourhood, and was accordingly often visited and inspected by them.

"In this craft he used to pole himself down the windings of the stream, all the way round into the bay, and on to the landing-place at the foot of Caroline Street, bringing with him the produce of his garden, and neat stacks of pine knots, ready split for the fishermen's lightjacks. He would also on occasion undertake the office of ferryman. On being hailed for the purpose, he would put across the river persons anxious to make a short cut into the town from the eastward. Just opposite his den there was for a time a rude causeway over the marsh.

"At the season of the year when the roads through the woods were impracticable Tyler's famous canoe was employed by the Messrs. Helliwell for conveying into town,

from a point high up the stream, the beer manufactured at their Breweries on the Don. We are informed by Mr. William Helliwell of the Highland Creek that twenty-two barrels at a time could be placed in it, in two rows of eleven each laid lengthwise side by side, still leaving room for Tyler and an assistant to navigate the boat."[1]

Most of the early transportation problems of York centred at the mouth of the Don River. The swampy shores of the stream long remained a great place for muskrats, and in the upper reaches the wary trout lured the disciples of Izaak Walton; while in York's earliest years sea salmon used to run up the Don. But these sporting activities neither aided nor hindered the development of transport. Apart from the fallen butternut tree which provided a precarious foot-bridge in 1794, the first structure supplying more than a temporary crossing appears to have been constructed by Asa Danforth's road-builders when they opened the first road from Kingston to York in 1799-1800. The original Danforth Road entered York along the present Kingston Road, and additional bridges were built over the Don from time to time to replace log structures which were continually rotting away or being partially washed out. In 1803 the minutes of the Court of Quarter Sessions carried the item that "John Vanzante and Thomas Humberstone, Overseers of the Highways in the Town of York, represented the impossibility of passing the Don Bridge in its present state". It was thereupon ordered "that a copy of the Assessment Roll be furnished to each of them, and that they unite their strength to make a causeway uniting the road to the Bridge".[2]

For some time men forded the river on horseback, or crossed by means of a scow which was worked back and forth by the help of a rope. This service was maintained by a schedule of tolls, and it may be presumed that they were similar to those in force at the Humber and the Credit, of which we have some particulars of interest. On April 14, 1802, the Court of Quarter Sessions[3] authorised Richard

[1]Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old.* 1873. pp. 228-9.
[2]Minutes of April 18, 1803, *Report of the Archives of Ontario, 1932.* p. 45.
[3]Minutes of April 14, 1802, *ibid.*, p. 30.

Willson to collect the following amounts from persons who used his ferry at the mouth of the Humber:

For every Waggon, Cart or Sleigh	1s.	3d.
Every Person		7½d.
Every Horse		7½d.
Every Horned Cattle		7½d.
Every Sheep		3d.
Every Hog		3d.

The same rates were laid down in April, 1806, for Thomas Ingersoll's ferry at the River Credit, inaugurated at that time.[4] On July 15, 1807, the Court considered these rates too high, and instituted a new schedule with charges of from one-third to one-half of the former rates. An interesting item lays down a "return fare", stating that "every Foot Passenger and every single Horse with Rider returning the same day before sunset shall be ferried over without charge".[5] Again, in 1810, it was believed that, "from the increased population of the Country, and also of travellers on the said road, the rates established on the 15th July, 1807, are at present too high, and that less rates would support a ferry very well"; accordingly a new tariff was drawn up for the Humber ferry, then in charge of James Cranford, though the reductions were not great.[6]

For many years the marshes and deltas at the mouth of the Don prevented easy access to the town from the Bay. A channel was early made, but it appears to have been of little use. "A Country Subscriber" writes to the *Gazette* in 1807 as follows:

"To the Printers of the *York Gazette*: It cannot have escaped the observation of any person acquainted with the River Don that at times, and in all high winds, it is impossible to get to or from the town with craft of any description through the present channel. Whereas, if nature's hint was improved—I mean the break which took place three years ago—the navigation would be made safe and practicable at all times, and, without any of the inconveniences attending the old, the new channel would shorten the distance from York to the Don Mills upwards of a mile. It would also, by being properly opened, do more towards

[4]Minutes of April 8, 1806, *ibid.*, p. 88.
[5]Minutes of July 15, 1807, *ibid.*, p. 109.
[6]Minutes of April 13, 1810, *ibid.*, p. 157.

draining the marsh than a large sum of money laid out in any other possible way. If permission could be obtained from the Governor and Council for the purpose, the few feet to be cut for opening the new channel would be done by subscription. Added to its other general advantages, it would be a great object to the owners of cattle and others who do not possess pasture ground in the neighbourhood."[7]

The *Gazette* was heartily in accord with this, and commented favourably on much-needed improvements in transportation facilities:

"The editors agree perfectly in opinion with this correspondent, and if permission could be obtained, which they think ought to be applied for by petition, they will gladly contribute towards accomplishing an object of such obvious utility. Seeing all the advantages which would result from the execution of the proposed plan, they will cheerfully second with their best endeavours everything tending to local improvement or public advantage. They would be happy to see some public-spirited person set on foot a subscription for the purpose of erecting a bridge over Frank's Creek, and the repair of the causeway leading to Yonge Street."[8]

Another difficulty which long existed was the lack of a bridge across the mouth of the Don which separated the town and the peninsula. As early as 1806 a bridge or float had been built to enable the inhabitants of York to take a pleasant ride or walk on the Peninsula, but the *Gazette* of June 18th of that year suggests that people should not draw sand or haul loaded waggons over it. In 1808 Parshall Terry attempted to ford the river on horseback, and though the horse reached shore its rider was drowned. The obituary notice gives some details of the condition which caused the unfortunate event:

"Departed this life on the 20th, Mr. Parshall Terry. His death was occasioned by his getting into the River Don on horseback. By this misfortune an exemplary wife and large, helpless family are left to the care of the all-disposing Providence, and a resistless appeal is made to the benevolence and sympathetic generosity of a virtuous public. The particular situation of the road near the Don Bridge calls

[7]*York Gazette*, July 4, 1807. [8]*Ibid.*

imperiously upon the commissioners appointed by his Excellency for the particular care of the roads and employing the voted money for immediate repairs, as many lives are seriously threatened with danger by its present state, in consequence of the causeway being removed by an excessive flood. The place, when seen, suggests the nature of the required improvement, and as a part of duty we earnestly recommend to public attention."[9]

In an earlier issue the *Gazette*, in announcing a meeting to consider ways and means of constructing a bridge, stated that several lives had been lost because of the lack of a causeway. The development of recreational and sporting activities on the peninsula is also mentioned:

"The editors having been called upon by a number of gentlemen to request a meeting of such persons as might wish to subscribe towards erecting a bridge across that part of the River Don which separates the town and the peninsula, give notice that it is desired such meeting should take place to-morrow at Campbell & Deary's Tavern at 3 o'clock in the afternoon. They should be wanting in themselves and in their duty to the public were they not to give every encouragement and assistance in their power to so desirable an object. Humanity is interested in the laudable undertaking, and it may promote a more general subscription to state that for want of a bridge several lives (within their knowledge) have been lost. When completed the peninsula will answer every purpose of an extensive common to the owners of the cattle; to those who may use it for purposes of recreation it furnishes a most delightful walk or ride; as a race-ground or place for field exercise we know not its equal; the sportsman will find a constant and easy access to the best shooting ground; and the convalescent might find health in an occasional excursion to the opposite beach—and travellers or persons coming to market from below would at all seasons find the town accessible, which to them at present frequently is not, but at the imminent hazard of life."[10]

The project appears to have been well received, for on April 15, 1808, the *Gazette* contains the following item:

[9] *Ibid.*, July 23, 1808.
[10] *Ibid.*, April 1, 1808.

"We have been favoured with a list of the sums subscribed for the purpose of erecting a bridge across the Don, and have the pleasure of informing those who wish to patronise the undertaking that the subscription already exceeds one hundred pounds. From the liberal sum given by Mrs. Gore an example is offered to other ladies, and we may infer that His Excellency permits that part of the demesne (the peninsula) to be rendered useful to the community, whilst unappropriated to the particular purposes for which it was reserved. When the requisite sum is made up we will publish the names of the donors with pleasure."[11]

Whatever bridge was constructed at this time, it may be presumed to have been, like all others at that period, merely a crude corduroy causeway, built with little or no engineering advice. In 1813 the bridge was burned by the British Regulars to prevent pursuit as they retreated eastward. In later years the renewed bridge was frequently in a bad state of repair. From time to time efforts were made to construct satisfactory bridges across both outlets of the Don, but the subscriptions were never great enough to complete them. Finally in 1834-35 the works were finished, but only after Lieut.-Governor Sir John Colborne provided a subsidy from the military chest. On August 22, 1835, the bridges were ready to be presented by the military authorities to the City of Toronto. Dr. Scadding well describes the old-world formalities which characterised the occasion:

"The civic authorities approached the new structure in procession; a barricade at the first bridge arrested their progress. A guard stationed there also forbade further advance. The officer in command, Capt. Bonnycastle, appears, and the Mayor and Corporation are informed that the two bridges before them are, by the command of the Lieutenant-Governor, presented to them as a free gift for the benefit of the inhabitants, that they may in all time to come be enabled to enjoy the salubrious air of the peninsula; the only stipulation being that the bridges should be free of toll forever to the troops, stores, and ordnance of the sovereign.

"The mayor, who, as eye-witnesses report, was arrayed

[11] *Ibid.*, April 15, 1808.

in an official robe of purple velvet lined with scarlet, read the following reply:

'Sir—On the part of His Majesty's faithful and loyal city of Toronto, I receive at your hands the investiture of these bridges, erected by command of His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, and now delivered to the Corporation for the benefit and accommodation of the citizens. In the name of the Common Council and the citizens of Toronto I beg you to convey to His Excellency the grateful feelings with which this new instance of the bounty of our most gracious sovereign is received; and I take this occasion on behalf of the city to renew our assurance of loyalty and attachment to His Majesty's person and government, and to pray, through His Excellency, a continuance of royal favour towards this city. I have, on the part of the corporation and citizens, to request you to assure His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor that His Excellency's desire and generous exertions for the health and welfare of the inhabitants of this city are duly and gratefully appreciated; and I beg you to convey to His Excellency the best wishes of myself and my fellow-citizens for the health and happiness of His Excellency and family. Permit me, Sir, for myself and brethren, to thank you for the very handsome and complimentary manner in which you have carried His Excellency's commands into execution.'

"'Immediately,' the narrative of the ceremonial continues, 'the band, who were stationed on the bridge, struck up the heart-stirring air, *God Save the King*, during the performance of which the gentlemen of the Corporation, followed by a large number of the inhabitants, passed uncovered over the bridge. Three cheers were then given, respectively, for the King, for His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, for the Mayor and Council of the City of Toronto, and for Capt. Bonnycastle. The gentlemanly and dignified manner in which both the addresses were read did credit to the gentlemen on whom these duties devolved; and the good order and good humour that prevailed among the spectators present were exceedingly gratifying.' "[12]

Many years later ferrymen were necessary at the Don owing to the destruction of the bridge by floods, of which

[12]Scadding, *op. cit.*, pp. 86-7.

one of the most disastrous occurred in 1850. The circumstance recalls a peculiar boat of the late forties and its use as a bridge:

"A very peculiar vessel plied at this time on the bay between Toronto and the Island opposite, known as the 'Cigar Boat' from the peculiar nature of its construction. The hull consisted of three hollow cylinders, bolted well together and pointed at each end like a cigar. She was a steam side-wheel vessel, the property of Mr. R. Tinning, the wharfinger. She was anything but a success and in the spring of 1850, owing to the floods that had occurred both at the east and west of the city, whereby the Don and Humber bridges were swept away, Mr. Tinning leased the vessel, her machinery having been removed, to the Toronto City Council, for use as a pontoon bridge over the Don until the bridge was repaired. Of course all the upper portion of the vessel had been taken away as well as her machinery. The very first night she was moored at the Don the ferrymen who, when she arrived, found, like Othello, 'their occupation gone', sank her, and she had, of course, to be raised. Nevertheless, she was again placed in position, and guarded each night by special watchmen to prevent further outrage. When the bridge was repaired, the old 'Cigar', or what was left of her, was not used for any other purpose, but laid by, and was eventually broken up."[13]

[13]John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*. 1894-1914. Vol. II, p. 884.

CHAPTER V

Toll Roads

THOUGH toll roads have but little application within the confines of old York, yet the main highways entering the town and passing through the villages which are now within the city limits were characterised by numerous toll-gates. In common with those of many other parts of the province most of the important roads of York County passed, at various times after the first quarter of the nineteenth century, from the control of the pathmasters appointed at the township meeting or by magistrates into that of road companies, which agreed to maintain the highways in return for the right to collect toll from those who used them. The reason for the change lay in the difficulty of enforcing statute labour on the roads, as a result of which the condition of many was impassable; the amount of money available for road development in many municipalities was at the same time very small, and the central government supplied but little to supplement what could be raised by local taxation. In the eighteen-forties and fifties numerous roads were planked, usually by road companies; while before and after that time efforts were made to macadamise some of them, though the macadamising was frequently more imaginary than real. Twelve miles of Yonge Street, for example, underwent the process in the early thirties, but the road was in such a bad condition in 1837 that pursuit of the rebels after the battle of Montgomery's Farm was almost impossible—even on horseback.

Throughout the province many fair roads were provided by road companies, though they were frequently no better than those upon which no toll was paid. This system of highway management, thoroughly disliked by everyone, lasted nearly a century in some districts, a number of survivals resisting the trend of the times until long after the introduction of the motor-car rendered their continuance a nuisance. What was commonly called "the first" toll-gate

on Yonge Street was that at Yorkville, said to have been in operation as early as 1820. There were at least two others farther south, however,—one at the corner of King and Yonge, and the other near the intersection of College and Yonge. The former was the earlier of the two, and was the first toll-gate in the town. It was at one time kept by William Heighton, who, in the eighteen-fifties, was transferred northward to the Yorkville gate.

Whether or not there were toll-gates on Yonge Street prior to that date, on January 14, 1830, a petition was laid before the Legislative Assembly of Upper Canada praying that the signatories might be incorporated as a turnpike company, with power to raise money by loan upon the security of their tolls. Seneca Ketchum, James Hogg, and seventy-two other inhabitants of Yonge Street signed the document, and they hoped that His Majesty's government would provide the initial loan. Messrs. Jesse Ketchum, Cawthra and Mackenzie were appointed a committee to consider the matter, and the evidence of witnesses called before them was preponderantly in favour of the scheme, since there appeared to be no other effective means of keeping the road in condition. Recognising the value of the highway leading to York, the committee reported that "it might be worth while at some period not far distant, as an experiment, to allow a sum sufficient to macadamise four miles of that road to be expended, and afterwards to place a toll-bar with moderate rates of toll for two years, within a mile of York, the tolls to be let by auction and the proceeds applied to keep the road in repair under the direction of the freeholders on or near the line of road. If found not advantageous it might be done away with at the expiration of the Act."[1]

The Yorkville toll-gate originally occupied the north-east corner of Bloor and Yonge Streets. A small three-room house of characteristic type reached the edge of the road, and a gate stretched across the roadway. There were also a couple of wooden turnstiles through which travellers on foot passed. Between 1840 and 1850 one Monkman

[1]A full account of the Yonge Street gate-keepers, and related data, may be found in John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto.* 1894-1914. Vol. V, pp. 343-4.

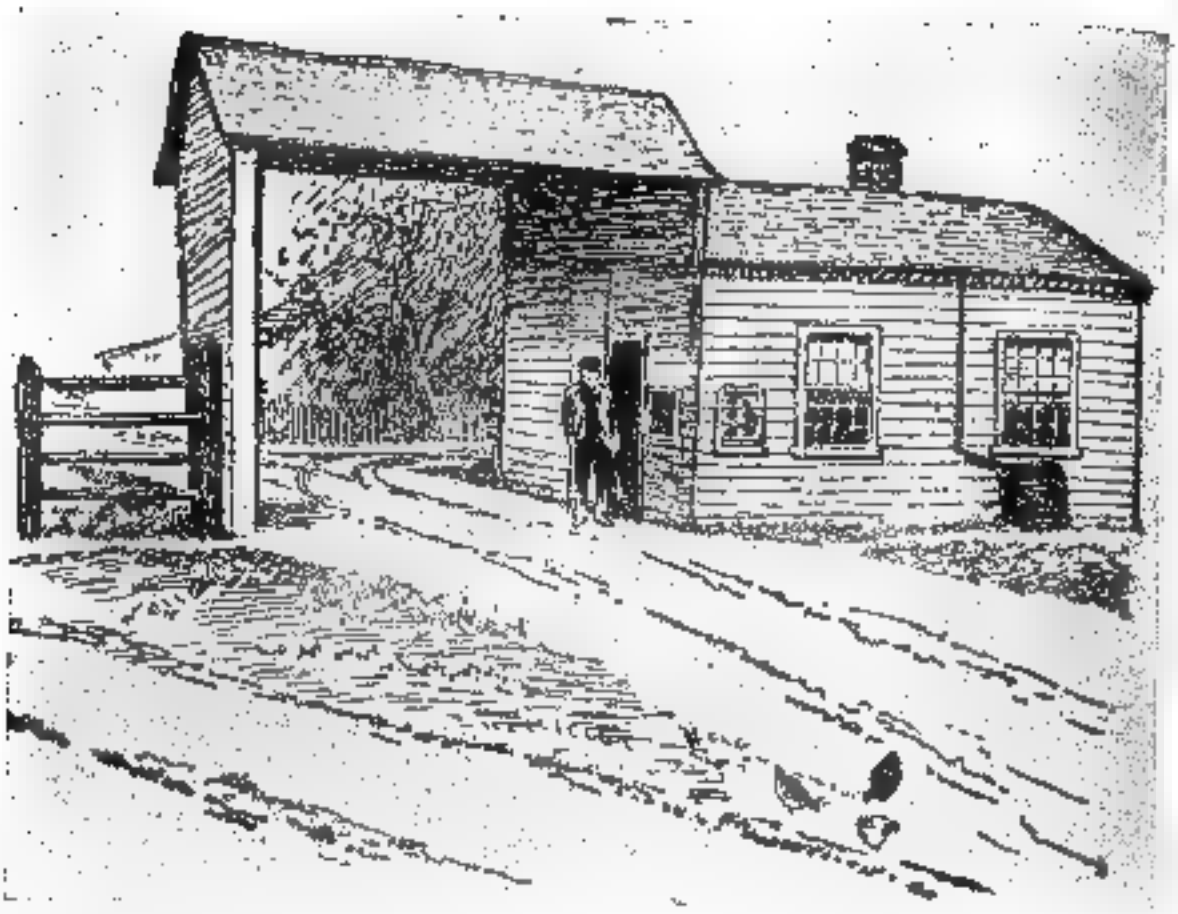
Cornelius Krieghoff.

RUNNING THE TOLL-GATE

A trick which many enjoyed during the heyday of toll roads.

THE CHECK TOLL-GATE, DUNDAS AND ST. CLAIR, 1857

The Lambton Check Gate was one of four on Dundas Street within ten miles of Toronto, but travellers paid toll at only two of them.



John Ross Robertson Collection.

THE YORKVILLE TOLL-GATE IN THE EIGHTEEN-FIFTIES
Originally at Bloor and Yonge, it was later moved northward.

John Ross Robertson Collection. J. W. Cotton.

THE BROCKTON TOLL-BAR, DUNDAS STREET, 1852
The old Brockton Town Hall still stands on the south-west corner of Dundas Street and Sheridan Avenue.

was custodian of the gate, and in the latter year the toll-house was moved northward to the north-west corner of Davenport Road and Yonge Street. A few months later it was moved across the road and two rooms were added, and the covered way shown in the accompanying illustration was erected. William Heighton was gate-keeper between 1850 and 1864. In 1865 the gate was again moved northward, this time to the north-west corner of Wyckham (now Cottingham) and Yonge Streets. E. Y. Crown succeeded Heighton as keeper, and for some years had a small store at the corner, where also there was an entrance to Deer Park. An old resident of the district recalls that "one of our amusements as children was to see equestrians gallop up to the gate and, before the keeper was able to get out to collect the toll, jump the gate and dash up the road; but the keeper never worried: he always got them when they came back!"[2]

About 1870 gate-keeper Crown was followed by one Mowat (or Moat), the toll-house being removed northward in the same year to the top of Gallows Hill, just below the present St. Clair Avenue. The name of the hill appears to have originated from the falling across the roadway at that point of a huge tree which stood in early times on the west side of the street. The tree did not break, and did not block the road, but for several years remained in a peculiar position, resembling the beam of a gallows; and of course it was nobody's business to remove it!

In 1865 the "York Roads" within the united counties of York and Peel—consisting of Yonge, Dundas, the Kingston and Lake Shore roads—were purchased by the counties from the Canadian Government. Arbitrators fixed the price at $72,500. The annual revenue at that time was about $32,000, but it must be remembered that road companies spent (or were supposed to spend) a good deal of money to maintain the roadways in passable condition; though the general impression appears to have been, with reference to toll roads throughout the province, that road companies were groups of capitalists who built toll-gates

[2]Reminiscences of an anonymous correspondent, quoted in Fred Williams: *Do You Know?*, Toronto *Mail and Empire*, January 23, 1933.

every few miles and exacted toll from all users of the road no matter how bad it was.

The toll-gates on Yonge Street within York County at the time of the purchase were six in number. No. 1 was at Yorkville village; No. 2 at the head of the southern hill at York Mills; No. 3 at Cooke's Corners, a mile and a quarter north of Thornhill; No. 4 a mile and a quarter north of Elgin Mills; No. 5 was the Aurora gate, near the cemetery; and No. ■ was at Cady's Corners, ■ mile and a quarter north of the township line between East Gwillimbury and Whitchurch.

The Hogg's Hollow toll-gate was known to travellers on Yonge Street as "the second". The roof of the structure crossed the entire roadway, and the house of the keeper was on the east side, while at the west was ■ small lean-to used as a storehouse. The first keeper of whom we have any record was one Penock, who collected toll there in the eighteen-thirties; and Charles Snider and George Lee were among the keepers in later years. The public attitude towards toll-gates—"relics of barbarism"—was never characterised by fond memories, but it is of interest that the keepers of this gate appear frequently to have been chicken fanciers. There was a saying current in the district that "If you want the freshest of fresh eggs just go to the keeper of 'the second'. He's got 'em"; and consequently many city people were numbered among his patrons.[8]

During the heyday of toll roads there were four gates on Dundas Street within ten miles of Toronto. There was No. 1 at Brockton, on the north side of the street, about half way between Sheridan and Brock Avenues; No. 2, always called "the blind toll-gate", on the north-east corner of Bloor and Dundas Streets; No. 3, the Lambton check gate, at the intersection of Dundas Street and St. Clair Avenue; and No. 4, the Mimico gate, ■ short distance west of St. George's Church, Islington. Concerning the collection of toll at these gates John Ross Robertson writes:

"Teams proceeding to Toronto from beyond the fourth gate paid toll at the fourth and the first, being free of the two intermediate ones; but those who came from places between the fourth and the third paid at the latter and also

[8]See Robertson, *ibid.*

again at the first. The 'blind' toll-gate never exacted a toll from teams proceeding direct along Dundas Street, but was built for the purpose of catching those people who, coming from Toronto, drove along Dufferin Street north to the concession, thence proceeding west to Dundas Street, thus avoiding the Brockton gate. It often happened that a teamster going to the city would turn out of the way and proceed east along the concession, so as to escape—or in the hope of escaping—Brockton toll. The keeper of the 'blind' gate rarely missed noting the occurrence, and looked out for the return of this man. If he came by himself he was all but certain to find the bar down and passage impossible. Then would follow a war of words, and 'langwidge' flowed that would be extremely forcible even from a London cabby's point of view. Sometimes even blows were struck, which occasionally resulted in a meeting before the magistrates, with sometimes a conviction for assault. As a pretty general rule, though, the toll-taker settled his own quarrels. Neither he nor his employers had much liking for Police Court proceedings. They knew that to a great extent they were Ishmaelites: every man's hand was against them. Precisely such scenes as have been described as happening at the 'blind' gate took place over and over again at No. 3 gate, with delinquents who tried to dodge the toll by going along St. Clair Avenue."[4]

The "blind" gate at the Bloor Street intersection was a peculiar two-storey structure, with a covered way extending across Dundas Street. The check toll-gate stood for forty years, but disappeared in 1897. The Brockton toll-bar, kept for many years by James Kerr, was located about one hundred yards west of the "Appii Forum" or "The Three Taverns"—Collard's, Church's Brown Bear and the Queen Street Hotel. Numerous rails fixed between the fence and the bar prevented vehicles from passing when the gate was closed, and pedestrians had either to wait or climb over. Near by, Mrs. Larkin, postmistress of Brockton, kept a small general store. Both the Brockton toll-bar and the "blind" gate were removed considerably earlier than the check toll-gate, for they were much closer to the city, and of necessity

[4] *Ibid.*, Vol. III, pp. 274-6.

came to an end when the boundaries were extended in their direction.

On Queen Street, near its junction with Ossington Avenue (then part of Dundas Street), was a toll-gate which led to the naming of Rebecca Street, originally a lane running from the eastern side of Dufferin Street to open fields, by which Queen Street might be approached. John Ross Robertson says:

"The reason it obtained this name was that the land it crosses was purchased by a contractor who supplied wood to the Garrison. He disputed the right of the road trustees to exact toll from his teams at the gate. This dispute caused a great deal of ill-feeling between the contractor's men and the keepers of the gate, and constant quarrels ensued, and sometimes blows were interchanged. Owing to these quarrels the lane got locally known as Rebecca Street, after the Rebeccaites, who in South Wales in 1843 systematically destroyed toll-gates and bars. The reason they took the name of Rebeccaites was in allusion to the reference contained in Genesis xxiv, 60."[5]

Dundas and Yonge Streets were by no means the only toll roads leading into Toronto. Queen Street, and the Lake Shore Road which extended westward from it, had their share. A correspondent of the *Mail and Empire* recalls that in the late seventies "there was a toll-gate at Queen Street and Brockton Road (now Brock Avenue), and a check toll-gate at the junction of King and Queen Streets. This latter was opened when King Street was extended west at Dowling Avenue through Beaty's Bush to meet Queen Street. The Brockton Road toll-gate was shortly afterwards moved to the site of the check toll-gate and tolls were collected by Mr. Eveleigh, who had a farm on the west side of Roncesvalles Avenue, about a quarter of a mile north of Queen Street."[6]

Concerning the Sunnyside gate, and a check gate farther west, S. H. Howard writes to the same paper:

"Surely you have not forgotten the toll-gate at Sunnyside that stood just west of Roncesvalles, on the south side

[5] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, pp. 745-6.

[6] "W. J. G." quoted in Williams, *op. cit.*, *Mail and Empire*, January 21, 1933.

just by the big oak tree? Every horse-drawn vehicle of the early days, the days of my boyhood in the 80's and 90's, coming into town from the Lake Shore Road or leaving town from the west *via* that old thoroughfare, was required to pay toll, and the gate was there to stop traffic till he did, though I cannot remember that this gate was ever actually closed. The toll-keeper's cottage was close beside the gate. Cottage, oak tree, field, road, railway track, the very ground of the site, are gone now, being replaced by the Sunnyside bridge over the railway track and the new railway grade, now one of the busiest highway intersections in Canada.

"A catch gate was also maintained further out on the Lake Shore, opposite the second entrance gate to High Park, the Howard Park stop for street cars to-day. This gate and a shelter hut for the gate-keeper stood under the shade of the gnarled old Balm of Gilead trees, the trees that, doubtless, Etienne Brûlé saw when he, first of white men, paddled down the Humber and out into Humber Bay, and which the City of Toronto, in its incorporated wisdom(?), permitted to be cut down when the boulevard was planned. They are replaced now with a spindley row of Lombardy poplars!

"This catch gate was to catch those who sought to evade the toll at Sunnyside by driving around through High Park and coming down to the Lake Shore Road beyond the Sunnyside toll-gate. The toll was taken in those days by a family named Atkinson, any one of whom, male or female, was likely to step out into the road with hand outstretched. I went to school with Curly Atkinson, the eldest son of the family, who was frequently stationed at the Howard Park catch gate, and learned, as I remember, from passing teamsters to chew tobacco at an early age. Where is he now?"[7]

North-east and east of Toronto the main arteries had each its quota of toll-gates. There was one on the Kingston Road between the city and Norway, and another on the Danforth Road between Little York and the city. There was once a gate at the corner of Avenue Road and Davenport Road, and a check gate where Davenport crosses Bathurst Street; while old inhabitants remember two toll

[7]S. H. Howard quoted *ibid.*

lodges just west of Osgoode Hall, and one to the east of the intersection of College and St. George Streets.

During the thirty years that the toll-gates were under the control of the county they were leased to the highest bidder at public auction, at first annually, and later for three years at a time. The rates of toll as charged in 1875 for various types of vehicles and animals may be taken as typical:

Loaded vehicle drawn by one horse or other beast	7c.
Loaded vehicle drawn by two horses or other beasts	10c.
Unloaded vehicle drawn by one horse or other beast	5c.
Unloaded vehicle drawn by two horses or other beasts	7c.
For each additional beast	4c.
For each saddle horse or other beast with rider	4c.
For every horse, ox, cow, etc., unattached	2c.
For every sheep, pig or goat	1c.

The toll-gates continued to be operated by the county until 1896, though several of them had disappeared prior to that time. W. J. Hill of York Township moved in the County Council in that year that tolls be abolished, and the motion carried. The by-law putting an end to toll-gates went into effect on December 31, 1896, a strong compensating factor being the abolition at the same time of the fees previously charged to farmers participating in the Toronto market. Twenty years later there were still a number of toll roads in Ontario, notably around the town of Cobourg. But they were becoming a great nuisance as motor traffic increased, and the construction of the King's Highways put an end to any remaining on the main routes of travel. Toll roads had served their purpose in only a semi-satisfactory manner, and it may safely be said that each and every one departed this life "unwept, unhonour'd and unsung".

CHAPTER VI

Streets and Sidewalks

York, in common with other municipalities, was originally governed by officials appointed by the citizens at the town-meeting, together with some regulation, particularly in the licensing of taverns, etc., and in the enforcement of laws, by the Court of Quarter Sessions. The most important offices to be filled were those of clerk, collector and assessor, but there were also pathmasters or overseers of the roads, fence-viewers, pound-keepers and a town warden. One of the early pathmasters of York, John McDougall, was publicly complimented in the *Gazette* for his "great assiduity and care in getting the streets cleared of the many and dangerous (especially at night) obstructions therein".[1] Three weeks later, on July 20, 1799, Mr. Clark, pathmaster for the west end of the town, was similarly congratulated.[2]

The mud and the numerous stumps in the streets added greatly to difficulties of transport. One man wrote to the Niagara *Canada Constellation* in 1799 that "if any gentleman will come forward and pledge his honour (he being perfectly sober at the time) that he will introduce a bill in the House of Assembly for the purpose of a Stump Act for the city of York he shall have my vote at the ensuing general election".[3] This type of law appears to have been effective in Vergennes, Vermont, where each drunk was forced to remove one stump from the streets. In the following year a "Stump Act" was in force in York, and many a root was removed by topers, who might be sentenced to eradicate one or more stumps from the highways of the town. Since, however, such knowledge as we have of this innovation emanates from Niagara, York's rival, we may assume that its importance was considerably exaggerated.

Yonge Street, the first great highway in the province, was blazed in 1793-96 by the Queen's Rangers under

[1] *Upper Canada Gazette*, June 29, 1799.
[2] *Ibid.*, July 20, 1799.
[3] Niagara *Canada Constellation*, December 14, 1799.

Augustus Jones, and led from York northward to Lake Simcoe. Almost immediately after the original survey, however, that portion from Toronto Bay to a point some distance above the first concession line (Bloor Street) fell into disuse, traffic from the north approaching the town by way of a trail along Parliament Street. The inconvenience resulting from this detour led to the reopening of that part of Yonge from Lot (Queen) Street to the three-mile post. The York *Gazette* of December 20, 1800, gives an account of a meeting held to consider the matter:

"A number of the principal inhabitants of the town met together in one of the Government Buildings to consider the means of opening the road to Yonge Street, and enabling the farmers there to bring their provisions to market with more ease than is practicable at present. . . . The Hon. the Chief Justice (Elmsley) was called to the chair. . . .

"A paper was then produced and read, containing a proposal from Eliphalet Hale to open and make the road, or so much of it as might be required, at the rate of twelve dollars per acre for clearing it where no causeway was wanted, four rods wide, and cutting the stumps in the two middle rods close to the ground, and 7s. 6d. Provincial currency per rod for making a causeway 18 feet wide where a causeway might be wanted. Mr. Hale's proposal was accepted; . . . . and a petition of the Legislature lies for signature at Mr. McDougall's Tavern, and subscriptions will be received by Messrs. Allan and Wood."[4]

This work was completed in June, 1802, and was for some years known as "the road to Yonge Street". Traffic from the north then proceeded east on Lot Street to the Market and the business section of the town.

Eliphalet Hale appears to have considered himself the loser by the opening of this stretch of roadway, for in the spring of 1803 he "presented a memorial to the Court of General Quarter Sessions stating the injury he had received by the continuation of Yonge Street through his Town Lot, and praying the land to the east and north of his House, formerly part of Toronto Street, in lieu of what has been taken from him to the west of his House".[5] On May

[4]*Upper Canada Gazette*, December 20, 1800.

[5]Minutes of April 18, 1803. See *Report of the Archives of Ontario, 1932*, p. 45.

2nd he was permitted "to fence in and occupy for this Summer and the ensuing Fall *only*, that part of the Old Road . . . . which lies to the eastward and to the northward of his House".[6] From Lot Street to the bay Yonge Street remained unopened for some years longer.

The Court of Quarter Sessions was in charge of the enforcement of statute labour on the roads, and from the proceedings of this body we learn many details of early highway development in York and vicinity. In April, 1810, Jordan Post, Pathmaster for the eastern portion of York, reported "that he had money in his hands unexpended, being the fines levied upon such persons as had not performed their Statute labour for the last year, and he desired the Court to point out to him the road whereon he shall lay it out. The Court then ordered that he should expend the said money on the road leading past Jesse Ketchum's towards Yonge Street".[7] Ketchum lived north of the corner of Yonge and Adelaide Streets, so that the road named was the lower part of Yonge Street, or, as it was called at that time, "the road to Yonge Street". The low and marshy nature of parts of the land over which it passed made it necessary that a bridge or causeway be constructed, and we find two years earlier that "D'Arcy Boulton, Esq., the Elder, be permitted to do his Settlement duty by erecting a new Bridge at the Entrance of the road leading from the Town of York to Yonge Street". At the same meeting Samuel Ridout was allowed to perform his statute labour on that part of the same road "between the poplar plain and the Blue Hill Creek".[8]

The difficulty of enforcing statute labour was always present. In July, 1810, the pathmasters of Scarboro' reported that ten men had refused or neglected to do their work; whereupon the Magistrates "ordered them either to work their Statute duty on Danforth's Road in Scarboro' as soon as the said Pathmasters shall again warn them, or else pay the sum of five shillings for every day they are rated at, with all expenses".[9] It was worth while for the pathmaster to get all statute labour done, for the Court might charge

[6]Minutes of May 2, 1808, *ibid.*, p. 46.
[7]Minutes of April 19, 1810, *ibid.*, p. 160.
[8]Minutes of June 30, 1808, *ibid.*, p. 122.
[9]Minutes of July 11, 1810, *ibid.*, p. 166.

him with all work which had not been completed. For example, D'Arcy Boulton, Pathmaster of York, appeared before the Court in 1810 "to shew cause why the remainder of the Statute duty of his division due for the last year should not be charged to him by reason of his neglecting the duties of said Office".[10] He was, however, given another chance to get the work done.

In addition to the rather general evasion of statute labour the Magistrates were not infrequently bothered by interference with the course of drains or by encroachment upon road allowances. In 1811 letters were sent to eleven persons ordering them to remove buildings or fences from the highway, or to widen the roadway to the statutory 66 feet. Five years later a regulation was adopted for the improvement of King Street, the resolution stating that, "in order to render the most commercial street (King's Street) passable, the Pathmaster shall open water-courses on each side which have been arrested in their natural course either by negligence, inattention or indifference, not to say worse". In the same year (1816) it was stipulated that the footpaths on either side of the street should be eleven feet wide, and that "no person shall presume, in front of their premises, to raise the footpath so as to occasion a step unless the Magistrates in session approve. The carriage way shall be formed by a gentle descent to the bottom of the water-course adjoining the footpath, so as to have the appearance of a segment of a circle or what is known by a barrelled or turnpike road".[11]

The Lake Shore Road west of York was originally opened by British Regulars and militia. Dr. Scadding's account of its construction contains some details of interest:

"The early line of communication with the Head of the Lake was by the Lake Shore Road. The cross thoroughfare between the park lots of Mr. Bouchette or Col. Givins and Mr. David Burns was opened up by Col. G. T. Denison, senior, with the assistance of some of the embodied militia. The work of opening the road here, as well as further on through the forest, was at first undertaken by a detach-

[10]Minutes of May 12, 1810, *ibid.*, p. 162.

[11]J. Edmund Jones: *Pioneer Crimes and Punishments in Toronto and the Home District*, 1924, p. 139.

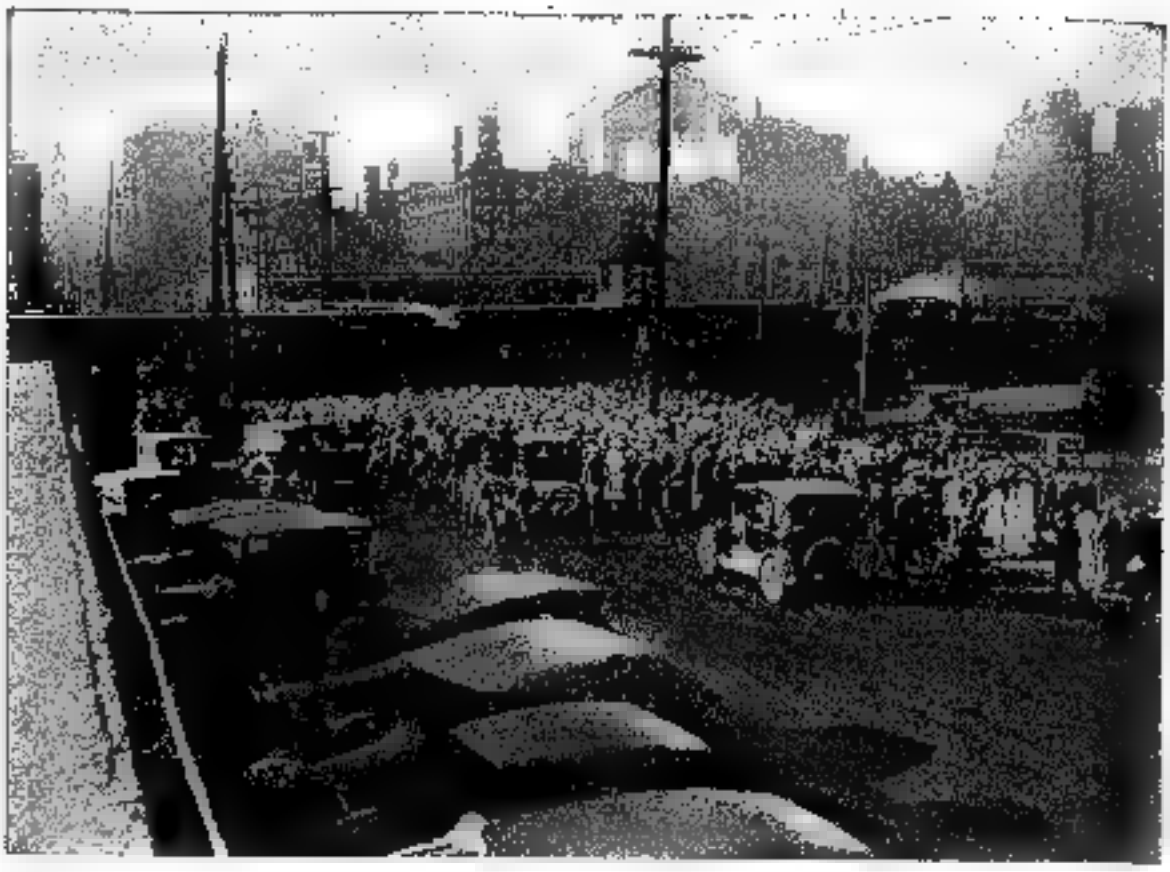
John Ross Robertson Collection. William Armstrong.

THE FIRST UNION STATION, 1858

This station stood at the foot of York Street and until 1871 was used by the Grand Trunk, Great Western and Northern Railways.

THE UNION STATION, 1934

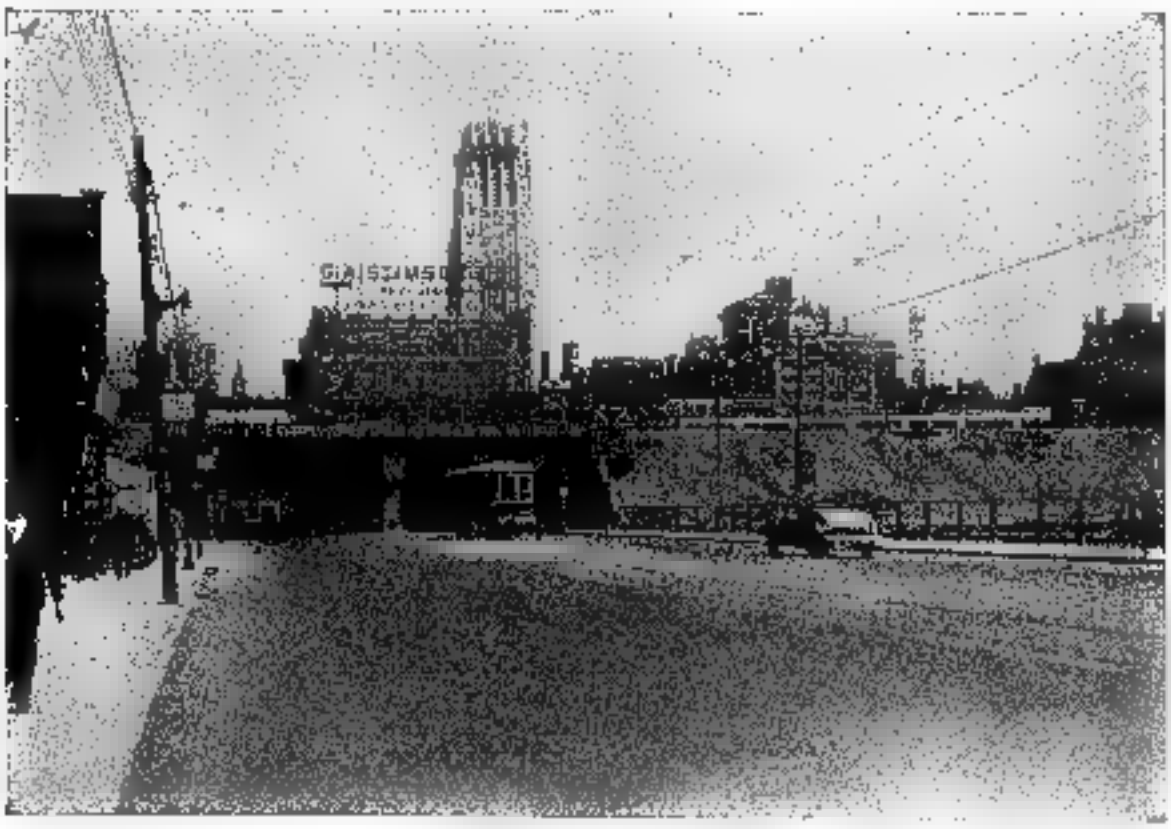
This magnificent station, which affords such a striking contrast with the first, arose out of the ruins of the great fire of 1904.



Reproduced by Courtesy of the Toronto Harbour Commissioners.

THE SOUTHERLY EXTENSION OF BAY STREET, 1924

This traffic condition was usual when crowds were returning from ball games at the Island Stadium.



Reproduced by Courtesy of the Toronto Harbour Commissioners.

LOWER BAY STREET, 1933

The changes made by the Grade Separation are apparent when one compares the two photographs.

ment of the regulars under the direction of an officer of the Royal Engineers. The plan adopted, we are told, was first to fell each tree by very laboriously severing it from its base close to the ground, and then to smooth off the upper surface of the root or stump with an adze. As this process was necessarily slow, and after all not likely to result in a permanently good road, the proposal of Colonel (then Lieutenant) Denison to set his militia-men to eradicate the trees bodily was accepted—an operation with which they were all more or less familiar on their farms and in their new clearings. A fine broad open track, ready, when the day for such further improvements should arrive, for the reception of plank or macadam, was soon constructed."[12]

It appears that subterranean springs and quicksand greatly interfered with effective road construction on Yonge Street between Lot Street and the village of Yorkville. Not until about 1830 was any attempt made to macadamise the roadbed, but some years previously a wooden tramway or narrow plank road over a short distance of the worst part was an interesting experiment. Sheriff Jarvis was the chief promoter of this temporary expedient, but it was first suggested by Rowland Burr. In later years plank roads became very popular in Upper Canada.

King Street, the most important thoroughfare in the town, was usually in somewhat better condition than the others. Previous to the War of 1812 an effort was made to pave, though rather crudely, some few yards of the footpath around Jordan's York Hotel, and here and there elsewhere. The paving material consisted of flat flagstones from the lake beach, but as they were of irregular shape and small size the resulting pavement was very coarse and uneven.

On April 26, 1823, however, the magistrates of York, assembled at Quarter Sessions, ordered that "£100 from the Town and Police Fund, together with one-fourth of the Statute Labour within the Town, be appropriated to flagging the sidewalks of King Street, commencing from the corner of Church Street and proceeding east to the limits of the Town, and that both sides of the street do proceed at the same time".[13]

[12]Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old*. 1873. pp. 371-2.
[13]Minutes of the Court of General Quarter Sessions, April 26, 1823.

We have no knowledge of the extent of sidewalk provided through this grant of £100, but it is improbable that the entire business section of even this one street was improved by stone paving. In fact three years later the *U. E. Loyalist,* in commenting upon the marked improvement in the streets, suggests that the sidewalks are in need of repair:

"The great improvement which has been made within a few years in the streets of the town reflects the highest credit on the York police. The whole extent of King Street is well gravelled and affords a good carriage road. Many others are undergoing the same process, and several are prepared for it by being first turnpiked and allowed time to settle. Some regulation with respect to the improvement of the sidewalks may be considered as necessary."[14]

An old inhabitant recalled that when he came to York in 1828 "the roads on all thoroughfares of the town were like most village roads in dry weather, fairly good. No material, however, was used to improve them, in consequence of which in the fall and in rainy weather they were almost impassable for vehicles. The winters set in generally early, and the frost made the roads better; and as sleighing could be looked for almost to a certainty through the winter months up to the end of March, there was not much to complain of. So far as locomotion was concerned, the sidewalks, except in dry weather, were in no better state than the streets. This state of affairs, however, did not last long, as shortly after 1830 improvements on the street and sidewalks commenced, and on the latter some flagging and plank walks were laid down. Quite a number of our wealthiest men, merchants, professional men and government officers, kept their carriages. The most in use by the merchants was a kind of four-wheeled light waggon or waggonette, made for one or two seats, and strongly made for rough roads".[15]

It is interesting to know, however, that even in the days of mud streets and oxen there was a speed law. In the Police Regulations of 1817, as amended in 1823, it is

[14]The *U. E. Loyalist,* June 24, 1826.

[15]"A York Pioneer" quoted in John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto.* 1894-1914. Vol. I, p. 26.

stipulated that no person shall "gallop, or ride or drive a horse or horses at an unreasonable rate" (delightfully indefinite!) "in the Streets of the Town or on the Bank or Beach in front of the Same; . . . . nor to ride on the Footpaths". To prevent encroachment upon the footpaths it was usual to place posts at short intervals.

There were even anti-parking laws and restrictions as early as 1817, for it was laid down that "no Waggon, Cart, or Carriage of any description" was to be left standing in the street for longer than 24 hours. Similarly, it was against the law to leave on the street for a period exceeding 24 hours "any Firewood, Timber or other incumbrance, ... except in cases of building, when one-half of the Street in front of the Lot to be built on will be allowed to be occupied for a reasonable time by the materials required in building, leaving a clear passage on the footway".[16]

For many years streets went unlabelled and houses unnumbered, but in 1830 the Magistrates ordered the Clerk of the Peace "to take steps to get the names of the streets painted and put up wherever there is a corner house". Two years later an appropriation not to exceed 50s. was made for the numbering of houses, the plan being that "those running east and west commence to be numbered from the east end, and those running north and south to commence from the south end".[17]

Among the many improvements effected in the newly-created city in 1834 by borrowing money and increasing the tax rate was the construction of 2,618 rods of two-plank sidewalks at a cost of about 7s. per rod. There were not previously any wooden sidewalks in the town, and these were laid on only one side of the street, where pedestrian traffic was greatest. J. G. Howard was city surveyor at the time, and the first walks—consisting of two eleven-foot planks laid lengthwise—were put down on King Street under his direction. At the same period Jesse Ketchum, tanner, whose benefactions to the citizens of York reached large proportions, kept the footpaths in the vicinity of his home and tannery on Yonge Street clean and comfortable by a thick coating of tanbark. Ketchum's home stood

[16]*Regulations for the Police of the Town of York*, 1828.
[17]Jones, *op. cit.*, pp. 148-9.

where the Holt, Renfrew clothing store is now located, and high stacks of hemlock bark faced Yonge Street in front of his tannery, which was situated on the south-west corner of Yonge and Adelaide Streets. The streets, too, were being improved at that time, for a contemporary description of the city notes that they "are wide and well laid out, and owing to the indefatigable exertions of George Gurnett, Esq., are now well drained, alike enhancing the health and comfort of the inhabitants".[18]

Perhaps a short digression will be pardoned to enable reference to a man who not only laid the first plank sidewalks but whose good works in many fields of activity provide mute yet eloquent evidence that he loved Toronto. The city's first mayor, William Lyon Mackenzie, appointed John G. Howard city surveyor, and a more versatile engineer could hardly have been found. He should always be remembered for his notable gift of High Park to the city, but his contribution to Toronto's development in other respects was outstanding. A writer well summarised his life work in the *Globe* of February 19, 1934:

"He was, as it were, this youthful city's Universal Provider of Amenities. He provided amenities in line, wash and India ink, in plank, clapboard, brick (both red and white), and plaster; in cast iron, cut stone, macadam, and at last in more enduring stuff of beauty. Sewer, college, church or jail; barn, bank, patent bridge or cemetery; racquet court, coach house, wharf or villa residence; turnpike road, ballroom, market or tavern, court house, lunatic asylum, Masonic hall or hay scales, store, monument or warehouse; printing office or picture gallery; whatever the city's need, John Howard had a design ready to serve it. If he hadn't he could make one. And did."[19]

In 1835 a motion before the Council suggested "that the crossings of this city be done with stone, four feet wide". In general, however, not much money was expended upon the roadways, the cost of clearing and repairing them being only £750 ($3,000) as late as 1848. The usual condition of

[18]Thomas Rolph: *A Brief Account . . . . of the West Indies and the United States: . . . . together with a Statistical Account of Upper Canada.* 1836. p. 178.

[19]The *Globe*, February 19, 1934. Howard's journal may be found in his *Incidents in the Life of J. G. Howard . . . .* 1885.

streets and sidewalks in the early forties is described by one who lived in the city at the time:

"The streets were wretchedly paved, or not at all, and were generally in a very bad condition. All the sidewalks were of wood, and in the principal streets were from eight to ten feet in width, the planks being laid crosswise, and on many of the private streets not more than four planks (four feet) in width, laid lengthwise. The nails frequently became loose, causing the ends to tilt, making it somewhat risky for pedestrians. These sidewalks had to be frequently renewed."[20]

The characteristics of city travel are further described by another writer:

"Few who now stroll down the well-boarded sidewalks of King Street reflect upon the inconvenience attending this recreation to their sires and grandsires and granddames, who were compelled to tuck up their garments and pick their way from tuft to tuft and from stone to stone. It was no unusual sight to behold the heavy lumber waggon sticking fast in the mud up to the axle in the middle of King Street, opposite to what is now McConkey's refectory. The party-going portion of the citizens were content either to trudge it, or to be shaken in a cart drawn by two sturdy oxen. The fashionable cry then was 'Mrs. McTavish's cart is here', and the 'Gee up' resounded as clearly among the pines and elms as the glib 'all right' of the modern footman along the gas-lit street."[21]

Apropos of conditions of travel C. C. Taylor tells the following story, which went the rounds in the days of bad streets:

"A gentleman, walking on the loose planks forming a sidewalk on King Street, espied a good-looking hat in the middle of the street. Curious to see and pick up the hat, he managed to reach it, and, on removing it, discovered to his surprise the head of a living man underneath. This individual at once appealed for help and deliverance, urging as a special plea, that, if prompt assistance was not rendered, his horse, which was underneath, would certainly

[20]W. H. Pearson: *Recollections and Records of Toronto of Old.* 1914. pp. 122-3.

[21]C. C. Taylor: *Toronto Called Back.* 1886. pp. 59-60.

perish. The usual mode of extrication by the use of shovels and oxen was soon applied, and man and horse excavated. This being the climax of exaggeration on this muddy question, it must now be dismissed."[22]

The so-called macadamising of Toronto streets was ineffective in providing a good roadway—excepting the main street, King, which was usually kept in satisfactory condition. A better macadam roadbed was laid in 1861 on Yonge, on King Street between Yonge and St. Lawrence Hall, and on Queen west of Yonge, when the horse railway was inaugurated on these streets. The agreement made with Alexander Easton, builder of the railway, included a provision that he was to maintain the roadway between his tracks and for eighteen inches on either side, the city being responsible for the rest. On other streets the macadamising consisted largely of piles of rocks in the centre of mud streets, most vehicles religiously avoiding the centre of the road on that account; while such horses and waggons as travelled there kicked rocks to the side of the road, where they provided excellent ammunition during Orange parades, elections, or other activities of a partisan nature.

In the late sixties cedar-block paving was introduced by the Street Railway Company, the blocks, six inches deep and cut from poles, being placed on sand between the ties on which the rails were placed. Apart from the railway roadbed this type of paving appears to have been first applied to the streets of the city when King Street, between Yonge and Bay, was so paved in 1869 or 1870. Yonge Street from Bloor to King was paved with cedar blocks in 1881, and so remained until 1904 when it was asphalted, the sidewalks being similarly paved the same year. The first brick paving in Toronto was also on the street railway track allowance, the sections which introduced the use of bricks in 1893 being Dundas and College from Lansdowne Avenue to Dufferin Street, on Bathurst from College to Queen, and on College from Bathurst to Dufferin.[23] As in the case of the cedar blocks, the city soon extended the use of brick pavements to many other streets, and numerous examples of

[22] *Ibid.*, pp. 60-1.

[23] For several items of information concerning early paving the writer is indebted to R. C. Harris, Esq., Commissioner of Works, City Hall.

both types are still to be found in the older portions of Toronto.

The appearance of streets just before the era of asphalt paving is worthy of mention. Those who have memories extending back to the eighties can recall the main streets of Toronto with high board sidewalks, deep gutters on either side, and bridge-like crossings over them. Hitching-posts were prominent at store entrances in the days when cabs and carriages unloaded customers. And one need only observe the mud in unpaved portions of North Toronto to be able to visualise the condition of such streets as were not dignified by cedar-block paving—which was itself not of the smoothest.

Though Portland cement was first manufactured in 1824, it was the late eighties before anything in the nature of concrete paving was attempted in Toronto. The first sidewalks of this type were known as "granolithic", and were six inches thick, the wearing surface consisting of Portland cement and granite chips. At first, in 1886, merely a few short strips were paved, their location being on either side of the Rossin House at the south-east corner of King and York Streets, and at the corner of Yonge and Front Streets, opposite the Bank of Montreal. At that time the sidewalks of even important streets like King were of wood, and their development from footpath to flagstones to planks and then to cement has been more or less contemporary with similar improvements in the surface of streets, in which the first use of asphalt occurred in 1888 on Bay Street from King to Front. In 1889 the use of concrete under the ties was inaugurated by the Toronto Street Railway, and in later years the employment of such materials for sidewalks and streets became more common. In 1895 it was announced with evident pride that "many of Toronto's main streets and private thoroughfares are asphalted";[24] and so, with its trolley street car service, improved water supply, and more effective police and fire departments, Toronto had definitely assumed many of its modern characteristics, though sky-scrapers, incandescent street lights and motor-cars had not yet made their *début*. By March, 1934, the mileage of paved streets in the city was 542.5 out of a total of 574.7;

[24] *Official Programme for Canada's Great Industrial Fair, 1895.*

while there were 900.4 miles of concrete sidewalks. Of the street paving most is, of course, of asphalt, but a considerable mileage of the older types still remains; and in the city may be found about ten miles of old wooden sidewalks to remind one of the first of that variety which were laid when Toronto was inaugurated exactly a century ago.

CHAPTER VII

Cart, Pleasure Waggon, Cab and Omnibus

In the early years of the town the inhabitants of York either walked, or rode in their own carriages or waggons. There were, of course, plenty of carters, but until after the creation of the city, in 1834, its area was not large and there was but little demand for vehicles of passenger transport. There were, however, two livery stables in the town in the early thirties, an announcement appearing in Walton's *1834 Directory* that "Hackneys, Coaches, Gigs, Pleasure Waggons, Sleighs, etc., can be had upon reasonable terms at Barnard's Livery Stables, Market Street, near the Ontario House Hotel, and at Black's Livery Stables, Neptune Inn, New Street"[1] By 1835 the use of hired vehicles was great enough to suggest that their drivers should be licensed and the business regulated, and an Act was passed for the purpose by the City Council on May 30th of that year; but the "Cartmen's Act" of that date makes no mention of passenger vehicles, its terms being confined exclusively to the regulation of "any Sled, Cart, Truck, Dray or other Carriage for the transportation of any Goods, Wares, Merchandise, Firewood or any other Thing whatsoever", including such good old-time items as "hogsheads of sugar, puncheons of rum, and pipes (*i.e.*, 105-gallon casks) of wine".[2]

Supplementing the pleasure waggons and gigs that one might hire in the city at that period were the stage lines, which operated in all directions and were of special value for longer trips. The first stages entering York appear to have commenced about 1816-17 on the Kingston Road eastward, and on Dundas Street westward. At least as early as 1828 Playter's Stage Line was running on Yonge Street; while from the thirties to the coming of railways in the late fifties numerous stages were leaving and approaching Toronto at all hours. In 1850, for example, four stages

[1]George Walton: *York Commercial Directory for 1834*. 1833. p. 147.
[2]The original document may be seen at the City Hall.

left for points east each day, two or three for the west, and four or five northward up Yonge Street, the macadamising of which in 1847 induced several new lines to commence operations. In 1841 ninety four-wheeled open or closed carriages and 130 gigs and pleasure waggons were returned upon the assessment rolls of the city, and if the public vehicles of various types were added the total would be quite large.

The first vehicle to be denominated a "cab" in Upper Canada is said to have been the *City*, built in Toronto in 1837 by Paul Bishop, a French-Canadian whose name had originally been the French equivalent, L'Evêque. It was constructed for Thornton Blackburn, a negro who had obtained a pattern of a type of vehicle then in use in Montreal, whither it had been introduced from London, England. Blackburn, who had come from the United States in 1834, lived at 54 Eastern Avenue, east of Parliament Street, in a very small one-storey frame building, and had found employment for some years as a waiter in the dining-room at Osgoode Hall. Bishop was a skilful mechanic and an expert lockmaker, and built the new vehicle in his shop at the north-east corner of Sherbourne and Duke Streets. Yellow and red in colour, the *City* was drawn by one horse and accommodated four passengers, who entered from the rear; the driver sat on his box in front. For a short time Blackburn had a monopoly of the cab business in Toronto, and over half a century later his pioneer cab was to be seen in the York Pioneers' log house at the Exhibition Grounds.

Since cab-driving proved to be a remunerative business, others soon entered into competition with Blackburn. Concerning these later cabs and their builders and drivers, John Ross Robertson collected a large amount of interesting information, which is best rendered as he wrote it:

"One Monday morning Owen, Miller & Mills, carriage-makers on the south side of King Street, a little west of York Street, turned out for Guest & Griffin, the proprietors of a livery stable on King Street East, about the site of Hugh Miller's drug store, six cabs. These were like a little dark-coloured sentry box mounted on wheels. They were drawn by one horse and carried two persons. The driver sat in front. They were called after the names of the

An Act

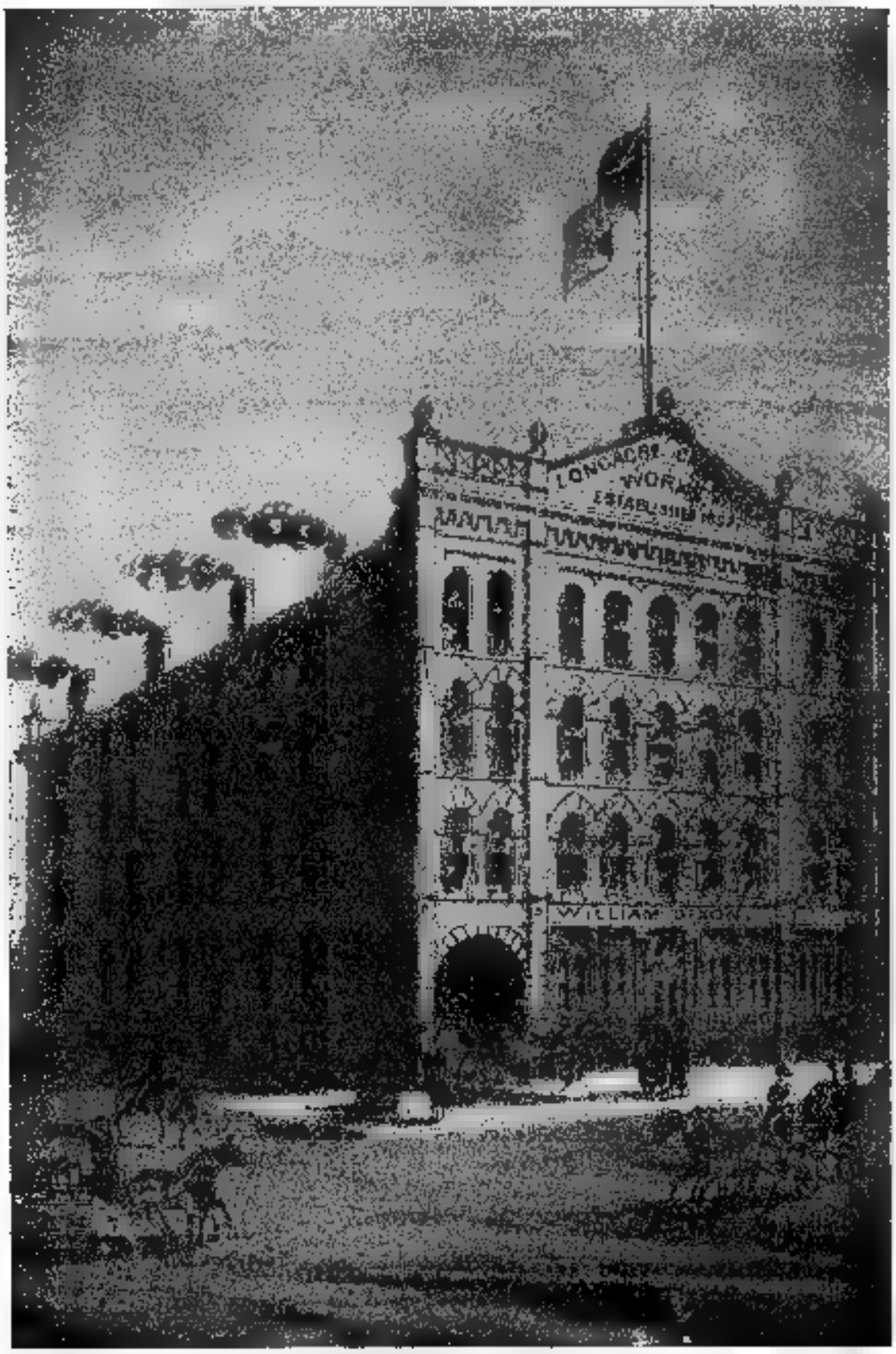
to regulate and ascertain the Duties and Charges of Common Carriers in the City of Toronto.

Be it enacted by the Mayor, Aldermen and Commonalty of the City of Toronto in Common Council assembled -

Section 1

That if any Person shall drive any Cart, Truck, Dray or other Carriage for the Transportation of any Goods, Wares, Merchandize, for Hire or Wages or any other thing whatever within the Boundaries aforesaid City for Hire or Wages without being licensed as a Cartman to drive the same by the Mayor and Aldermen for he shall forfeit and pay for each Offence the sum of the Second Sum Shillings, and if any Person who has been licensed as a Cartman shall be suspended or displaced by the Mayor and therafter shall drive any Cart, Sled, Truck, Dray or other Carriage for Hire or Wages aforesaid he shall forfeit and pay the Pounds for each Offence.

THE FIRST PAGE OF THE "CARTMEN'S ACT", 1835



Timperlake's *Illustrated Toronto*. 1877.

Dixon's Longacre Carriage Works

This manufactory, established in 1857, was long one of the most prominent in Canada. It was situated at 53-55 Adelaide Street West.

principal lake steamers: the *Chief Justice Robinson, Britannia, Queen, Transit, Niagara* and *Princess Royal.* Other cabs built by Owen, Miller & Mills, a few years after Mr. Blackburn's initiation of the movement, were called after the saints who had furnished names to the wards of the city. At first there were no fixed rates, but later, as these public conveyances increased in number, certain fares were fixed for one, two or more persons, according to the distance, and also by the hour. For ordinary distances the fare was one shilling for one person and one shilling and sixpence for two. The cab stand was on Church Street, at the west side of St. James', where it now is. At first no license was paid. Then a tax was fixed, varying from six to twelve dollars a year. Of late years this has been somewhat increased. The numbering of the vehicles also came into practice at this time.

"The first cabman made so much money that soon the business was overdone. Many servants left their masters and went into the new occupation. Amongst these were Charles Abbott, a servant of William H. Boulton, at The Grange; James Alexander Fitzpatrick, and Judge Hagerman's coachman. George Davis, who had been in the service of Lord Tullamore, built a cab which he named after his old master. Later two brothers, John and William Newell, went into the business, and about the same time Robert Paul. Mr. Joseph Hazleton is an old Toronto cab-owner. His life in one respect is remarkable. He has never travelled in any vehicle but a cab. He was never on a steamboat, a railway train or a street car. He came out to this country in a sailing-ship.

"Some of the cabmen, finding the competition too strong, abandoned cabs altogether and went into the livery business. The first two-horse cab was driven by Louis Walker. Like Bishop, he was a French-Canadian, and like him, too, his name was changed from the French La Marche into Walker. He lived on the north side of Duchess Street, a few doors east of Sherbourne Street. From this time onward cabs, stages, busses and public conveyances of every kind increased with the growth of the city. Mr. Blackburn, the first cab-driver in the city, retired from the business with a competency a score of years ago, but he is not forgotten,

for grey-haired men now (1888) frequently greet him with the exclamation, 'Ha! It is you who drove me to my wedding,' or 'You are the man who drove my eldest boy to his christening'."[3]

A number of the early cabs in use in Toronto were constructed in John Bell's Carriage Factory on Victoria Street, and named after prominent generals. The first three made there were called *General Wolfe, Wellington,* and *General Brock*; but the custom of naming the vehicles passed away when their numbers so greatly increased. In 1850 Toronto had 68 licensed cabs, though a man who lived in the city at that time recalled in later years that "the number of horses and vehicles of all kinds was so small as to make it an easy matter for any inquisitive person to know the owner of every particular turnout in the town. The only city omnibus at this time was one that ran to Yorkville every hour, and a ride in this was not very exhilarating at certain seasons, especially when the frost was breaking up. The jolting was terrific, but, as few or none of the Toronto people lived in Yorkville, there was not much travel up or down. An hourly omnibus started from the Market to Parliament Street, but it did not pay and was soon discontinued."[4]

Reminiscences are, of course, limited in accuracy, and cannot be expected to include anything outside the scope of one's experience and knowledge. It is very unlikely that Mr. Taylor or any other "inquisitive person" was familiar with all the vehicles on the streets at the middle of the century; and in addition we are informed by a *City Directory* published at the time that apart from the service on Yonge "every half hour from 7½ o'clock a.m. to 8 p.m., ... omnibuses also run between the Blue Bell Tavern, corner of Queen and Dundas (Ossington) Streets, and the Market Square, and between the Garrison and the Clubhouse and various hotels, every hour".[5]

H. B. Williams is credited by John Ross Robertson with being the first to operate omnibuses on Toronto streets.

[3]John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto.* 1894-1914. Vol. II, pp. 677-8.

[4]C. C. Taylor: *Toronto Called Back.* 1886. pp. 55-6.

[5]Henry Rowsell: *City of Toronto and County of York Directory, 1850-1.* 1850. p. xxxiv.

The best evidence that there were others before him is afforded by the specific mention of omnibuses in the 1843 "Act to Regulate Common Carriers" in the city—six years earlier than the appearance of Williams' first omnibus on Yonge Street. We have also the statement in Francis Lewis' *Directory* of 1843 that "cabs and omnibuses ply to all parts of the city, at very moderate fares".[6]

Williams' first omnibus was built in his cabinet shop at 140 Yonge Street, near the present Loew's Theatre. In 1849 he inaugurated a bus line from St. Lawrence Market and from the corner of King and Yonge Streets to the Red Lion Hotel, Yorkville. Four omnibuses were in operation, running every ten minutes (later half-hourly) from both ends of the line. The fare was 6d., and the first buses were six-passenger vehicles with movable windows which could be closed in with leather curtains. In 1850, however, Williams built four large buses with a capacity of ten passengers. These he continued to operate for twelve years, and as Yonge Street was often in bad condition the travelling was frequently unpleasant.

When horse-cars were inaugurated on Yonge Street in 1861 Williams tried to meet the competition by narrowing the gears of his buses so that they would run on the street railway track; but after a year of opposition he gave up the fight as hopeless and sold out to the Company. One more type of transport had passed into the discard, and—as was to become so much more prevalent as the years passed—one more man saw his livelihood disappear.

When York assumed the dignity of city status in 1834 a large number of regulations were added to the by-laws of the Corporation. Among others was the first regulation of vehicles of public transportation. In 1835 "An Act to License and Regulate the Duties and Charges of Common Carriers in the City of Toronto" was passed by the City Council. In the following year an amending act was adopted, and in 1843 it was thought wise to combine all previous regulations in a new "Act to License and Regulate the Duties and Charges on Coaches, Carriages, Cabs, Carts, and other Vehicles, kept for Hire in the City of Toronto".

Section II of this Act required that all drivers of such

[6]Francis Lewis: *The Toronto Directory and Street Guide*, 1843, p. 110.

vehicles, and of sleds, carts, trucks and drays as well, must be licensed by the mayor or two aldermen. Proprietors of livery stables, whose vehicles did not "occupy any of the Stands hereinafter named and described", were omitted from this requirement. Any person over eighteen years of age who could give proper security might be granted a license on payment of the fee, which was as follows:

For every Coach, Omnibus or Carriage, drawn by two horses,—£3.

For every Cab or other such vehicle, drawn by one horse,—£2.

For every Cart, Truck, Dray or other such vehicle of transport,—£1 10s.

The security required from every driver upon obtaining his license was £30 in two sureties of £15 each, this being subject to use in payment of damages to other persons if accidents should occur, or for fines and penalties resulting from the neglect of his duties as driver. The renewal of a license from year to year cost from 10s. to 25s. per vehicle *per annum*.

Section VII of the Act named as follows the only stands where drivers might place their vehicles for hire:

"Number One,—that side of West Market-place adjoining the Market Buildings, provided that the vehicles on this stand be in single line, with the horses' heads toward King Street.

"Number Two,—the east side of Church Street, between King Street and Adelaide Street, provided also that the vehicles on this stand be in single line, with the horses' heads towards King Street, and north of the south Churchgate on Church Street.

"Number Three,—the southerly side of King Street, extending westerly from the west side of McDonald's Hotel, provided also that the vehicles on this stand be in a single line, with the horses' heads towards Bay Street."

The maximum charges which might be made for transporting persons or goods are elaborately detailed. The city was divided into three divisions—which recall the taxicab zones of today. There was, however, no tariff of minimum rates such as has been enforced in 1933 for

taxicabs. For the purpose of regulating the charges the divisions of the city were as follows:

"First Division—That portion between Simcoe Street on the west, Queen Street on the north, and Parliament Street on the east.

"Second Division—That portion between Simcoe Street and Brock Street on the west, the northern limits of the city on the north, and the River Don on the east.

"Third Division—That portion of the City and Liberties beyond the last-described division, and within the limits thereof."

The schedule of charges for passenger carriage was based upon these zones, together with the number of persons and the type of vehicle—whether two-horse coach or one-horse cab. There was also an hourly rate of 4s. for coaches and 2s. 6d. for cabs, with slightly lower charges for hours subsequent to the first.

It is stipulated that if a passenger had no more than five minutes' business at his destination he should, if he wished, be carried back to the point of departure without extra charge; if from five to fifteen minutes, for one-half additional; if from fifteen to thirty minutes, for two-thirds the original fare; and if beyond half an hour the driver might charge by the hourly rate. It is further provided that one-third additional to the schedule may be charged for night travel, *i.e.*, after 9 p.m. from May 1st to September 30th, and after 7 p.m. between October 1st and April 30th.

Among miscellaneous provisions of interest is that which stipulated that no driver might "wantonly snap or flourish his whip", nor use any "abusive, obscene or impertinent language of any kind whatever", the latter restriction being limited, however, to the time that he was in charge of his vehicle! Night travel was carefully regulated, and, "unless it be moonlight", each vehicle of passenger transport must have "two well-lighted lamps with glass fronts and sides", and on them must be printed in black paint in letters at least an inch high the number of the vehicle. At all times each cab or coach must carry a card with the owner's name and number and the tariff of rates.

Similar provisions, and a similar tariff of charges, were

laid down with respect to the activities of carters, of whom there were 57 in Toronto in 1843. Some of the more minute regulations of the entire Act may be assumed to have been, like many others before and since, ignored or evaded by the drivers, though the general spirit of the law was no doubt obeyed, for one's license might depend upon it.[7] Until 1867—and even later, on occasion,—the carters of Toronto might be seen racing with puncheons of water to help extinguish fires; it was, in fact, their duty to do so owing to an ineffective waterworks system, and prizes were offered by the City Council for the earliest arrivals.

In 1883 the *Globe* published, for the information of Exhibition visitors, the tariff of cab charges. It was still based on zones, though of course the zones were different. For the benefit of travellers it is stated that children over [redacted] and under 12 years are charged half price; and that "one trunk and articles may be placed inside the cab, free"; but each article placed outside added 5 cents to the cost.[8]

The "Act to Regulate Common Carriers" has been superseded by others designed to apply under conditions of motor transport; but for nearly a century the old order ruled, and the disappearance of the last livery stables has occurred within the memory of most adults. William Wilson's Livery Stable, in fact, still remains at 586 Yonge Street. "I still keep [redacted] couple of old horses around," says the proprietor, whose establishment is now largely a motor livery. And even yet one or two private carriages continue to appear on the streets in leisurely, if incongruous, progression,—objects of curiosity in a world of speed.

[7]The provisions of the 1843 Act may be found *in extenso* in William Brown's *Toronto City and Home District Directory, 1846-7*. pp. 7-17.

[8]*Globe*, September 15, 1883.

CHAPTER VIII

Horse Railway and Trolley Car

With the passing of stage-coach days and the coming of the railway, attention began to be focussed upon the provision of some type of rail transport on city streets. Steam locomotives were obviously unsuited to the purpose, but, in the absence of self-propelling carriages, the use of horses to haul cars suggested itself as the best available method of making use of the popular "rail-cars" for the purposes of passenger carriage. The advantages of such a service were undeniable, for the streets were in most cases not even macadamised; cabs and carriages consequently made their way slowly, and their employment was expensive. Omnibus services with comparatively cheap fares had, it is true, been available for some twenty years over a few main routes in Toronto, but in 1860 it was the opinion of one man at least that the time was ripe for the inauguration of a horse railway.

On October 1, 1860, Alexander Easton, an Englishman resident in Yorkville, but formerly of Philadelphia, applied to the City Council for the exclusive right to build and operate a street railway. His plans as outlined in the application provided for a double track on Yonge Street from King Street to Yorkville village; a single track on Queen Street from its junction with King, near the Don River, to the Lunatic Asylum; and a single track on King Street from the same junction to Niagara Street, and thence to Queen. He proposed to charge a fare of five cents on each line; and, in return for the franchise, offered to keep in good repair 14 feet of roadway where the track was double and 7 feet on single-track lines.

Although there were at that time no street railways in Canada, several were in successful operation in the United States. In 1832 one was opened between New York and Harlem, but its unpopularity led to its abandonment for some years, and it was not revived until 1852. The projector of the Toronto railway wrote in 1859 that "street

railways have been tested in New York, Boston and Philadelphia and are found to be 'the improvement of the age', being so successful in their operations as to excite the surprise of their most sanguine projectors, and the admiration of the community at large". Comparing the street car with the omnibus, Mr. Easton was a firm believer in the great superiority of cars. One of his strongest arguments was humanitarian, for he considered that the street car "can be enjoyed by none so forcibly as by the horse, whose loads, though increased in weight, require a minimum of tractive power."[1] In spite, however, of this enjoyment on the part of the horse, there stands the experience that the animals seldom lasted more than a year in railway service in Toronto.

The Council did not immediately act upon Easton's application. It was proposed to refer the matter to a special committee, but Alderman Moodie thought that the question was so important that it called for a public meeting of citizens; he wondered what would become of cab and omnibus drivers if a railway were built. Alderman Conlin thought the country already had too many railways, and, in addition, he objected to encouraging Yankee speculators; but he modified his remarks when he was informed that Easton was an Englishman. Alderman Carruthers was also in opposition, stating that the franchise was worth $100,000 and should not be given away. Legal doubts provided ammunition for opponents of the scheme, and subsequent meetings were frequently disorderly.

Petitions from citizens, the *Globe* and other newspapers, and public bodies, were sent in favouring the proposed railway, and finally, on March 14, 1861, a special committee brought in a report recommending the acceptance of the proposals under certain conditions. Several of these were the result of investigations into lines in operation in the United States. The following provisions were included in the agreement of twenty-four paragraphs which was executed:

1. That all work was to be substantially constructed

[1]Alexander Easton: *A Practical Treatise on Street or Horse-Power Railways: Their Location, Construction and Management* . . . . 1859. pp. 4 and 8.

under the supervision of the city surveyor to the satisfaction of the Council.

2. Easton was required to pave and keep in repair the track allowance; while the city could take up the pavement for sewer repairs.

3. The flat rail "as used in Philadelphia" was to be employed, and the cars must similarly be of modern type.

4. Each car was subject to an annual license fee of $5.

5. In place of the lines proposed by Easton the city suggested that the Yonge Street route be from King to Bloor, the Queen Street line from Yonge to the Asylum, and that on King from the Don to Bathurst Street. As a matter of fact, however, the six miles of track laid in 1861 was on Yonge Street from King to the Yorkville Town Hall, just below the toll-gate at Davenport Road; on King Street from the St. Lawrence Market to Yonge Street; and on Queen Street from Yonge to Dundas Street (now Ossington Avenue). In the future extension of service Easton was to be given the option first, and, if he refused, others might be granted rights on other streets.

6. During the summer the cars were to operate sixteen hours, and in winter fourteen hours per day; they were to run at intervals of not more than thirty minutes, the speed limit was to be six miles per hour, and the fare five cents.

7. Among other contingencies provided for in the agreement was the impeding of traffic by ice and snow. While "every effort" was to be made to clear the tracks it was recognised that drifts might prevent the use of the regular cars in winter, so it was stipulated that sufficient sleighs should be provided to accommodate the public.

8. Paragraph eighteen of the agreement was of great future importance, for it stated that the franchise should extend for thirty years, "at the expiration of which the Corporation may, after giving six months' notice of their intention, assume the ownership of the railways and of all real and personal property in connection with the working thereof, on payment of their value, to be determined by arbitration". If this right was not exercised at that time it might be after any five-year interval thereafter; and if the proprietor should default in operation of the lines for

a period of three months the property would be forfeited to the city.

Before this agreement was completed another proposal was laid before the council by H. B. Williams, omnibus operator, who offered to lease the Yonge Street line if built by the city, on the basis of one-third of the gross receipts, the fare to be three cents per passenger. The committee declined to consider this proposal, however.

When the street railway was inaugurated in 1861 Toronto had a population of 42,000, and was about nine square miles in extent. The Don River, Bloor Street, Dufferin Street and the waterfront were the boundaries, except for an arm which ran eastward some three miles along King Street. Associated with Alexander Easton when the Toronto Street Railway Company was incorporated on May 16, 1861, were Alexander Bleekley and Daniel Smith, who, with Easton, were named directors, while Easton was the first President.

At a meeting of the City Council on September 9, 1861, it was resolved that "as a courteous invitation had been received from the Reeve and Council of Yorkville to attend the street railway festival at Yorkville on Tuesday, that the same be accepted"[2] Long before one o'clock, the time set for the starting of the first horse-car, large crowds had made their way to the village, and all were bent on enjoying themselves. Yorkville presented a gay appearance with its flags and banners, and every window had its full quota of spectators. "Seldom," says the *Globe*, "has the quiet village seen such a bustle and excitement, and when the first car came out of the depot and was placed on the track a grand cheer arose from the assembled multitude." Some difficulty in clearing the lower part of the line led to a delayed start, and it was four o'clock before the car commenced its momentous journey. On board were the Reeve and Council of Yorkville and several members of the City Council, and on the roof was the Artillery Band playing spirited airs suitable to the occasion.

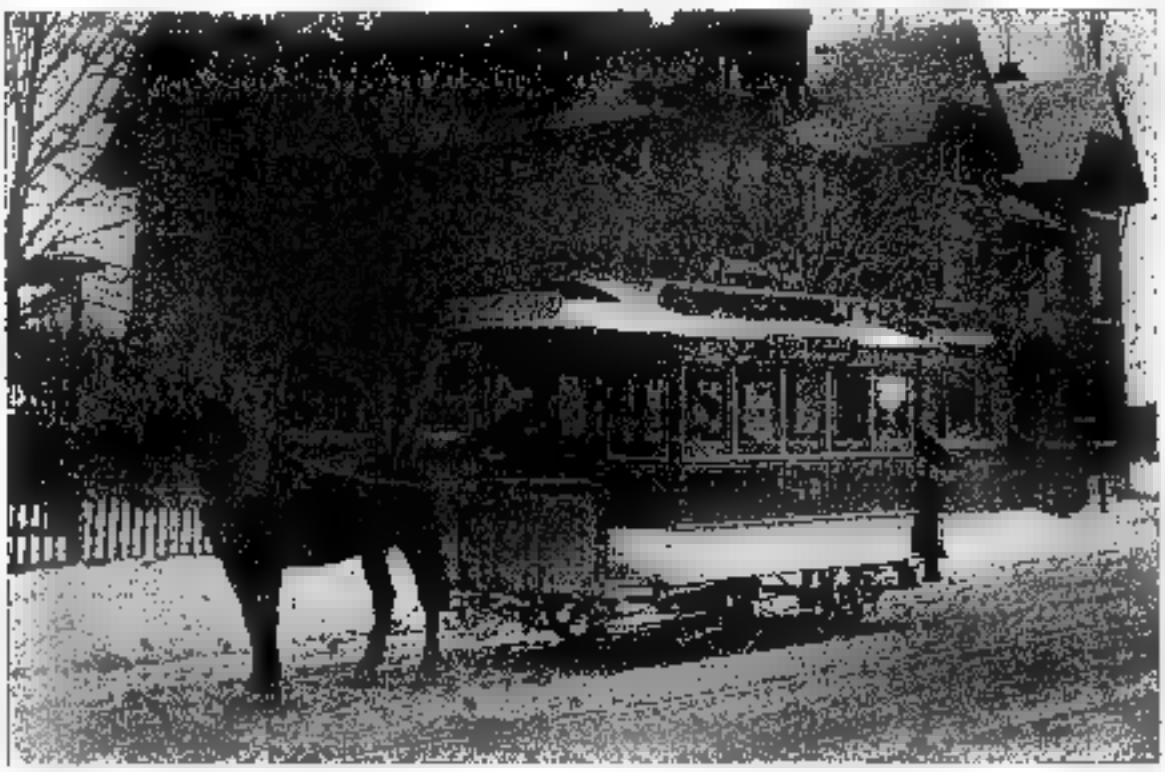
It was planned that only civic dignitaries and other invited guests should participate in the first trip; but a general rush enabled a large number of others to obtain

[2]See the *Globe* of September 10, 1861.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

H. B. WILLIAMS' BUS, AT THE RED LION HOTEL, 1850

Williams' omnibus line on Yonge Street served the public until it was displaced in 1862 by Easton's horse railway.



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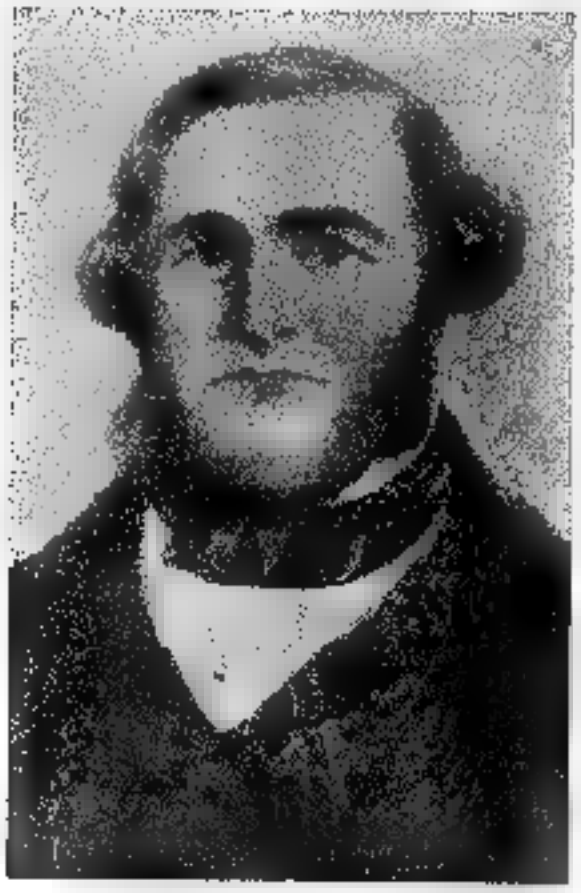
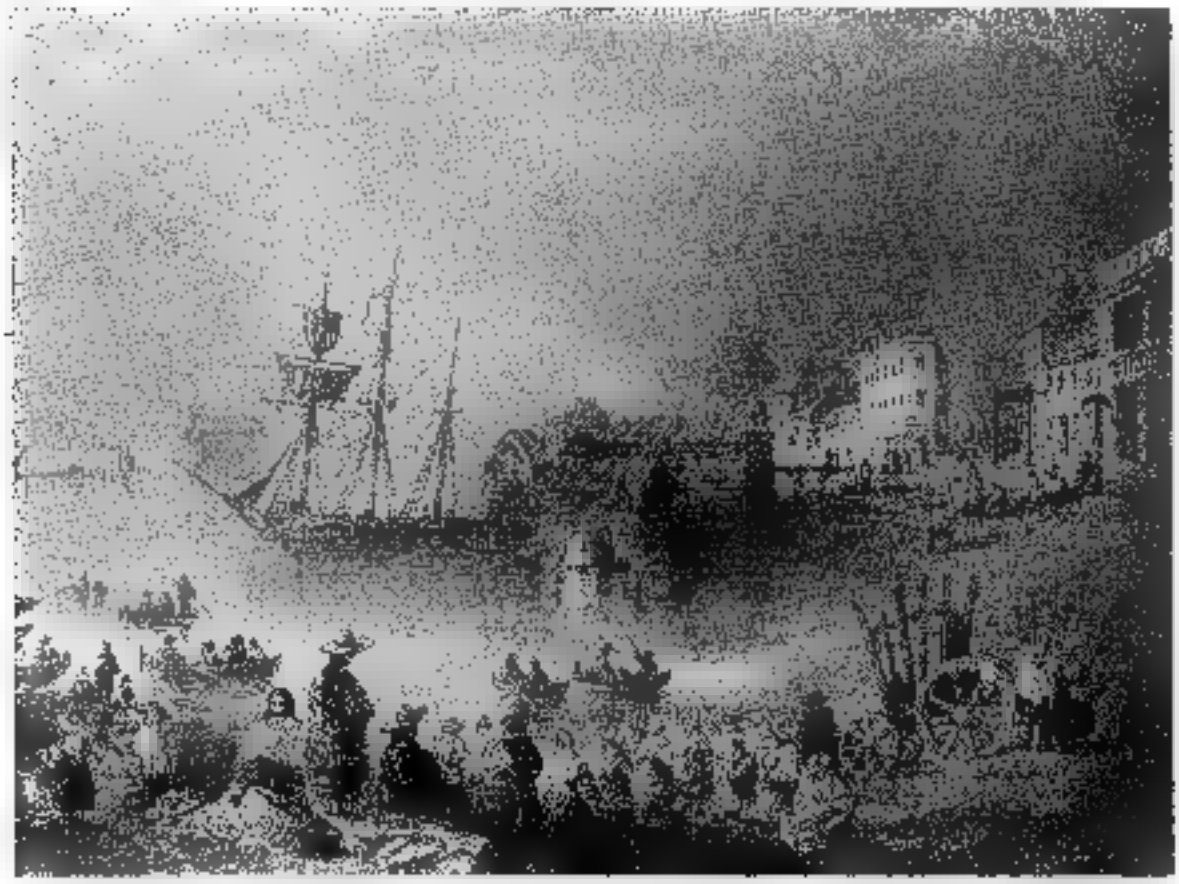
THE SEATON VILLAGE HORSE-CAR

Seaton Village centred at the Bloor-Bathurst intersection. Two horses were used on lines where traffic was greatest, as well as during rush hours and to surmount heavy grades.



WILLIAM WELLER
Famous stage proprietor.

H. B. WILLIAMS
Operator of an early omnibus line.



W. H. Bartlett.

THE FISH MARKET, 1840

Weller's Stage Office and the City Hotel (formerly the Steamboat Hotel) may be seen on Front Street, near Church. The fish market was directly south of the present St. Lawrence Market.

seats in the next three cars, and they held them "in spite of every remonstrance". After proceeding a few hundred feet to Bloor Street the first car ran off the tracks, but the passengers soon had it back in place. "This occurred several times with all the cars", says the *Globe*, "but the passengers treated the delay as a joke, and the crowd were always ready to give a shove or a lift to keep moving". The reason for these occurences is stated to have been that President Easton had not intended the opening to take place until two days later, but in his absence the wrong date had been announced; and though all was not in readiness he would not disappoint the public.

As the cars passed down Yonge the citizens who lined the streets cheered the advent of the new system of transport, and the members of the Independent Fire Company turned out *en masse* in front of Engine House No. 2. At St. Lawrence Hall the National Anthem and three cheers for the Queen welcomed the appearance of the cars, which were thereupon started on the return journey, though the rough state of the road prevented their running continuously during the evening as had been intended.

The *dejeuner* in honour of the auspicious event was held in Yorkville Town Hall at 5.30, when some 300 gentlemen "sat down to a very elegant entertainment, which was got up in a style exceedingly creditable to the skill of Mr. Steers, who was the caterer on the occasion, and to the liberality of the Yorkville Committee, under whose superintendence it was provided". Colonel W. B. Jarvis, long a leading figure in the development of Yorkville, presided, and most of the notabilities of the village and the city were present. The chairman incidentally referred to a projected railway between Yorkville and York thirty years earlier, when the magnificient sum of $50 was voted by the Corporation of York and entrusted to himself to expend on the line; which, needless to say, never advanced beyond preliminary plans. Among the speakers who responded to toasts were Mayor Bowes and Mr. Easton. The latter referred to his street railway activities in the eastern United States, and regretted that he had been unable to build any in his native England—where, paradoxically, an American was the chief promoter! He acknowledged the equitable

treatment he had been accorded by the governing bodies of Toronto and Yorkville, stating that all delays and doubts were merely the result of "due deliberation" before entering upon a pioneering project.

The festivities of the day were concluded by a Concert and Ball in the Yorkville Town Hall. A "very fashionable audience", including "the prettiest daughters and handsomest sons" of Yorkville, attended the entertainment. A heavy rain was considered a fortunate circumstance, for it prevented overcrowding. From eight until eleven-thirty a program "much superior to most entertainments of this description" was given. Mrs. J. Beverly Robinson, Miss Davis and Mr. Armstrong were the vocalists, and the band of the 30th Regiment rendered several selections. The only objection to the concert was in the nature of a suggestion that the "anxiety to get through the first part of the entertainment . . . . is scarcely fair to the singers"; while at the same time many dance-lovers "felt that too little time had been left for the dancing which was to follow"—an opinion characteristic of youth.

A rush to the supper room, followed the conclusion of the concert, and Mr. Coleman, King Street caterer, supplied with refreshments those who succeeded in entering. At midnight the ball commenced, and it "was kept up with vigour until the whole of the program was disposed of". A complaint often voiced before and since is playfully made by the *Globe* in suggesting that officers' uniforms at dances have a distinct tendency to catch maidens' eyes and monopolise their attention:

"Some of the officers of the 30th Regiment who were present have doubtless found out that their 'red jackets' are not unrivalled by the regimentals of some members of the Active Force. If these gentlemen would take a hint, the black-coated civilians who desire sometimes to dance with the fairest specimens of the better part of creation would be just as well pleased if the warlike attire were left at home."[3]

The railway so auspiciously inaugurated had been constructed in less than three weeks, the work on depot, stable and tracks being commenced on August 22nd, when 200

[3]*Ibid.*, September 11, 1861.

mechanics and labourers set to work under the superintendence of David Smith. The first cars were built in Philadelphia, and are described by the *Globe* as "having a neat and comfortable appearance, and are well lighted and ventilated. The larger ones are calculated to seat 24 passengers and the smaller 16. There are seven cars in all in the depot, but it is only intended to run four of them, the others being designed for Montreal". There is something pathetic in the statement that "Mr. Williams ran his 'busses' yesterday in opposition to the railway, and it is stated that he will continue the competition".[4]

In October the construction of the Queen Street line—the remainder of the project—commenced. The *Globe* of December 3, 1861, carries the following item with reference to the opening of this section:

"The Queen Street Railway was opened yesterday afternoon from Yonge Street to the Lunatic Asylum. Many persons, including several members of the Corporation, took advantage of the first free ride over the road. The cars were gaily decorated with flags, and although the novelty of a street railway has to a great extent worn off, the sidewalks were crowded with spectators as the cars passed along. The track has been admirably laid, and the cars moved very smoothly. This road promises to be very popular, and will, no doubt, prove a paying speculation. The double track is now completed from St. Lawrence Hall to Queen Street."[5]

The first report of the Company, dated December 31, 1861, shows that six miles of track were in operation, and that an average of 2,000 passengers daily used the lines, the service being at intervals of about forty minutes. Eleven cars, 70 horses, and several wagons and sleighs comprised the equipment of the railway. The roadbed for the railway track was originally macadamised rather than paved. The 30 lb. rails, placed on wooden ties, were laid on a gauge of 4′ 10⅞″, which is still the standard of the system, and were of the iron strap or "gutter" type. Not until 1889 was concrete placed under the ties. The technical details of the method of constructing the roadbed dur-

[4]*Ibid.*
[5]*Ibid.*, December 3, 1861.

ing the seventies and eighties is thus described in an official publication:

"A trench, twelve to fifteen inches deep, was dug along the single track right-of-way and 4″ x 6″ x 7′ 0″ sleepers were set every six feet on gravel ballast. Placed on the sleepers were 6″ x 8″ stringers fastened to the sleepers by spiked cast-iron angle cleats and extra long spikes passing through rail, stringer and sleeper. The strap rail, weighing thirty pounds to the yard, was laid on the stringers. This rail was a rolled section about 1¼ inches deep at the head and ⅝ inch deep on the flat part. The rail was 4½ inches wide and was fastened to the stringers by spikes through counter-sunk holes drilled at intervals of 18 inches. When the track structure was completed the trench was levelled to the bottom of the 6″ x 8″ stringers, and sufficient sand was spread to bring the level six inches below the finished surface of the track. As a paving surface, blocks 6 inches deep were cut from cedar poles, and these blocks, of varying circumference, were laid in a manner to allow minimum space between blocks on the surface. The space between blocks was filled with sand, and the surface of the block paving was levelled by pounding on boards laid across the blocks."[6]

The improved surface of that portion of the streets on which horse-cars were operated led to the interesting habit of jerking the cars off the track in case of fire, in order that the fire-engines might proceed with all possible speed. The introduction in the eighteen-seventies of cedar block paving resulted in the Company's being called upon, under the local improvement by-law, to contribute towards the new pavements. After paying some assessments the Company refused to pay more, on the grounds that they were neither permanent pavements nor suitable for street railway purposes. After considerable litigation it was finally agreed on January 19, 1889, to pay all overdue assessments, as well as $600 *per annum* per mile of single track, the city assuming the cost of all repairs and renewals during the remaining years of the lease.

The characteristics of horse-cars as they appeared to the citizens of that generation will be of some interest. In

[6] *Ten Years of Progressive Public Service*. 1931.

most respects they resembled omnibuses. The wooden bodies of the "single-truck" type were sixteen feet long, and there were no window panes to protect passengers during bad weather. At either end was an open platform, and the car might be entered at the front or the rear. The one-horse car was operated by the driver, who sat entirely in the open without protection from the cold of winter except that he had a box fitted with pea-straw in which to place his feet. No tickets were used at first, and, it is said, not even a fare-box, the driver being given some change at the commencement of the trip and handing in what he had accumulated at the end, without any check on his returns. In the days when six miles of railway served a population of from forty to fifty thousand, conductors frequently knew their passengers; it is even said that upon occasion a car would wait for a suburban citizen who was finishing a hurried breakfast! Certainly the service was slow, and the cars stopped with a sharp jerk whenever the bell was rung. No turn-tables or other elaborate equipment were necessary to turn the cars at the end of the line, this being effected merely by unhitching the horses and placing them in position at the opposite end.

The primitive method of collecting fares soon came to an end, and a fare-box was placed just inside the front entrance. Those entering at the front placed five cents in this box, while those from the rear were expected to come to the front to do so, and if they did not the driver would rattle the box and try to intimidate any who sought to avoid fares by a brazen countenance. To provide change for those who needed it there was a small wicket in the partition between the body of the car and the driver. Two-horse cars, which were generally used on the main routes, were operated by a conductor and a driver, and the former carried the fare-box and collected fares from the passengers after they were seated. The cars carried no stoves in winter, and the only protection from the cold was a deep layer of pea-straw on the floor.

In winter some outlying routes, such as McCaul Street and Spadina Avenue, were served by sleighs not greatly different from the cars. The entrance to these was usually at the rear, and it was consequently still more difficult to

collect fares from all passengers. The sleighs made their way through the snow-drifts, sometimes aided—as on the McCaul Street grade—by the male passengers, who frequently had to get out and push if any progress was to be made. Such help was rewarded by a free-and-easy attitude on the part of the drivers, who, on these routes at least, had no objections to stopping in front of one's house instead of the next corner.

The railway did not prove financially remunerative. Early in 1862 Easton assigned to the Company his contract with the city, and it was soon afterwards conveyed in trust to the Hon. William Cayley to secure certain indebtedness and mortgages. On January 23, 1869, "An Act for the Relief of the Toronto Street Railway Company" was obtained, and as a consequence the property was sold to William T. and George Washington Kiely on April 7th following, the price being $48,848, though the actual cash payment was only $7,500. A new Company under the old name was incorporated in 1873, and it commenced service with six miles of single track, 40 horses, 12 two-horse cars, 2 one-horse cars, and four or five buses. The first full year's business, 1869-70, showed that the street railway earned a net profit of $11,221.31.

The former Company had shown no disposition to extend its lines, but Mr. Kiely, when approached by the city, wrote in 1871 that further developments would be undertaken. A few years later the Toronto Railway Company, though finding that it inherited the obligations of its predecessor in the matter of upkeep of the roadway, secured from the legislature a peculiar amendment stating that, if the old block pavement was to be replaced by a more modern type, the city had to construct "that part of the street which the Toronto Street Railway is bound to repair". This intensified the strained relations which usually existed between the two bodies. As time passed, a more satisfactory profit was derived from the railway. In 1889-90 the net revenue was $242,983, an amount nearly half the total of $553,830.22 which represented the dividends, bonuses and salaries drawn from the Company by its proprietors between 1869 and 1890. The only revenue received by the

city, meanwhile, was the tax of $5 *per annum* per car—in 1871, for example, the paltry sum of $55.

In February, 1881, Toronto was considerably excited over a battle royal between the employees of the Street Railway and storekeepers, particularly along the Yonge Street route. During heavy falls of snow the cars carried snow ploughs to keep the track clear, and as a consequence the snow was piled high on either side, making the road impassable for all other vehicles. Shop hands turned out *en masse* and shovelled the snow back on the tracks, and in the ensuing battle the car-drivers were worsted, their cars, after a short defence, being blockaded and more or less buried in snow. A dozen of them, eight of which were piled up at one point, were temporarily rendered helpless by the determined assaults of shopkeepers and clerks.

By 1884 there were car lines on ten main streets, thirty miles of track serving a population of 105,211. The service at that time was on Yonge, Queen, King, College, Spadina, Church, Front, Sherbourne, Carlton and Parliament Streets. In the previous year the end of horse-cars was forecast when a practical electric railway, the first in Canada, was in operation in Toronto. The 1883 program of the Exhibition called for the "First Trip and Excursion on the Electric Railway" on Wednesday, September 12th. It was delayed a day, but on the 14th the press announced that "the locomotive and track having been completed yesterday, the trial trip of the electric railway was made. The wheels and bearings of the different parts of the locomotive were stiff, having never been in use before, and it was thought that some difficulty would be experienced in making this first trip. When the engine that generates the electricity was started and the lightning caught up by the little locomotive it started away at a good speed and ran from the little station near the ring to the terminus of the track at the road leading to the ferry wharf. The locomotive ran over the track several times, and once drew the car over it. The car is a neat little platform arrangement with ordinary back seats, affording accommodation for about 16 persons. It was thought by some that the electric railway would be a failure, and its ultimate success was not expected to come up to anticipations. The success of the

railway, its promoters say, may now be looked upon as certain, and the silent steed will be ready to do service for an admiring crowd of passengers to-day."[7]

On the 17th, however, it is stated that "the idea of attaching a passenger van to the engine on the Electric Railway has been abandoned owing to the non-arrival of a large dynamo machine from New York, and the engine in the main building not possessing a sufficiently strong motor to enable a car to be drawn behind the railway engine. The cap of the engine will be taken off, and the whole of the mechanism of the machine will be displayed to view, which will probably prove as instructive and interesting as the original scheme. On Saturday afternoon the engine made several trips with no car attached, and a few of the many persons who displayed an interest in the railway were enabled to enjoy the novelty of a trip along it".[8]

At the close of the Exhibition the *Globe* commented editorially as follows:

"The electric railway was not so great a success as the people expected. Enough was shown to demonstrate that electricity can be used for traction purposes, but those who witnessed the performance of the model must have left the grounds fearing that it would be their grand-children's time before electric railways would be of practical use. It is understood that while attending the Exhibition of Railway Appliances in Chicago some of the members of the Association saw the electric railway at work. They did not want to pay the large sum demanded for the use of this railway, so they came home and made one 'out of their own heads'. The confidence in their own ability thus exhibited was a manifestation of the very qualities which have made the Exhibition a success, but the failure of the Exhibition should not be imperilled by the use of 'attractions' which are partial failures."[9]

In 1884, however, failure was changed to success. The inventor, Charles J. Van Depoele, (usually called Vandepole or Vanderpool in the press), came from Chicago to superintend the arrangements, and, though there were "a thou-

[7]The *Globe*, September 14, 1883.
[8]*Ibid.*, September 17, 1883.
[9]*Ibid.*, September 24, 1883.

sand and one annoying causes of delay", he good-naturedly surmounted them all. The *Globe* notes that he did not stand on his dignity but went right to work as chief engineer and proved himself "the best mechanic among them". Early in the Exhibition, on September 5th, a trial was made, but the car did not go far, "as the belt attached to the engine running the dynamo flew off". On the 6th the Canadian Electric Railway, as it was called, was "in every way a complete success" as it performed before a large number of ladies and gentlemen invited by H. J. Hill, Manager of the Exhibition. The cars in use were "like small open street cars, and are nicely built and fitted up"; and on the 10th it was noticed that the train of cars went 15 miles per hour around the curves! The *Globe's* account of the invention and its awe-inspiring effect upon onlookers describes that "the electricity, which is generated by two large-size generators in Machinery Hall, is conveyed into two copper bars which run the whole length of the railway track between the rails. The bars are partly covered over, both for protection against shock and from the rain. Attached to the motor are two pieces of metal which run along the copper bars, and the electricity is thus carried to the dynamo on the car, which, when put in motion, drives the car wheels by means of a system of pulleys and belting.

"The electrician on the car has full control of the movements of this motor, just as if he were running a marine engine or a locomotive. By means of a handle he immediately reverses the motion of the dynamo on the car. He controls the speed of the cars by means of a governor, just as the amount of electricity given to a man from a galvanic battery is controlled. To stop the car he simply breaks the current of electricity through the car, and the motor stops. There is a heavy grade on the line of the track, but the cars climb that grade without the slightest difficulty. . . . The thought of a motor run by an invisible force and drawing a car with fifty people aboard seems almost an impossibility, but it is even so."

On September 12th, in fact, the *Globe*, which had been pronounced in its criticism of the failure of 1883, commented that the railway was "one of the principal attractions of the Exhibition". The cars were "under perfect

control and brought to a stop without jerking", providing "an exhilarating ride", as well as being "a perpetual delight to the small boys. . . . Nothing could be more satisfactory".[10]

As will have been observed, there was neither electrification of the rails nor a trolley wire in the early years of this line—at the time the longest in America. In 1885, however, the underground conduit was replaced by a rough trolley-pole. In an address given in Baltimore early in 1886 and printed in the *Electrical Review* of March 6th of that year Mr. Van Depoele stated that he entered into a contract with the directors of the Exhibition in 1885 to operate a train of three cars and a motor car:

"Having only a single track I had to prepare here for a light train and good speed. . . . We began placing poles, etc., on the 1st of September, and made our first trip on the 5th. From beginning till end not the slightest hitch occurred, running regularly from 8 a.m. until 10.30 p.m. without stopping a minute. On many occasions we carried from 225 to 250 people. . . . The distance was a mile and the round trip never exceeded eight minutes; so, including starting and stopping, we made, for part of the way, at least thirty miles per hour. During the last five days of the Fair we carried 50,000 people".

The small railway ran from the Exhibition entrance at Strachan Avenue through the grounds to the vicinity of Dufferin Street. It thus provided for a fare of five cents a service supplemental to the King Street horse-car line nearly half a mile distant. Its use was discontinued in 1892 when the King line was extended along Dufferin Street to the grounds. Meanwhile, in 1887, there was in successful operation the first large electric railway in Canada—between Thorold and St. Catharines—and it is said that all the watches within several miles had to be demagnetised!

The Toronto Street Railway, however, continued to use horse-cars, which provided a slow and inconvenient service. The experimental railway at the Exhibition grounds had aroused widespread interest, and thousands of people had patronised it; but, while the Company was willing to extend its system if the privilege were accorded them of using

[10]See the *Globe* of September 6, 8, 10, 11 and 12, 1884.

Canadian Illustrated News. W. N. Langton.

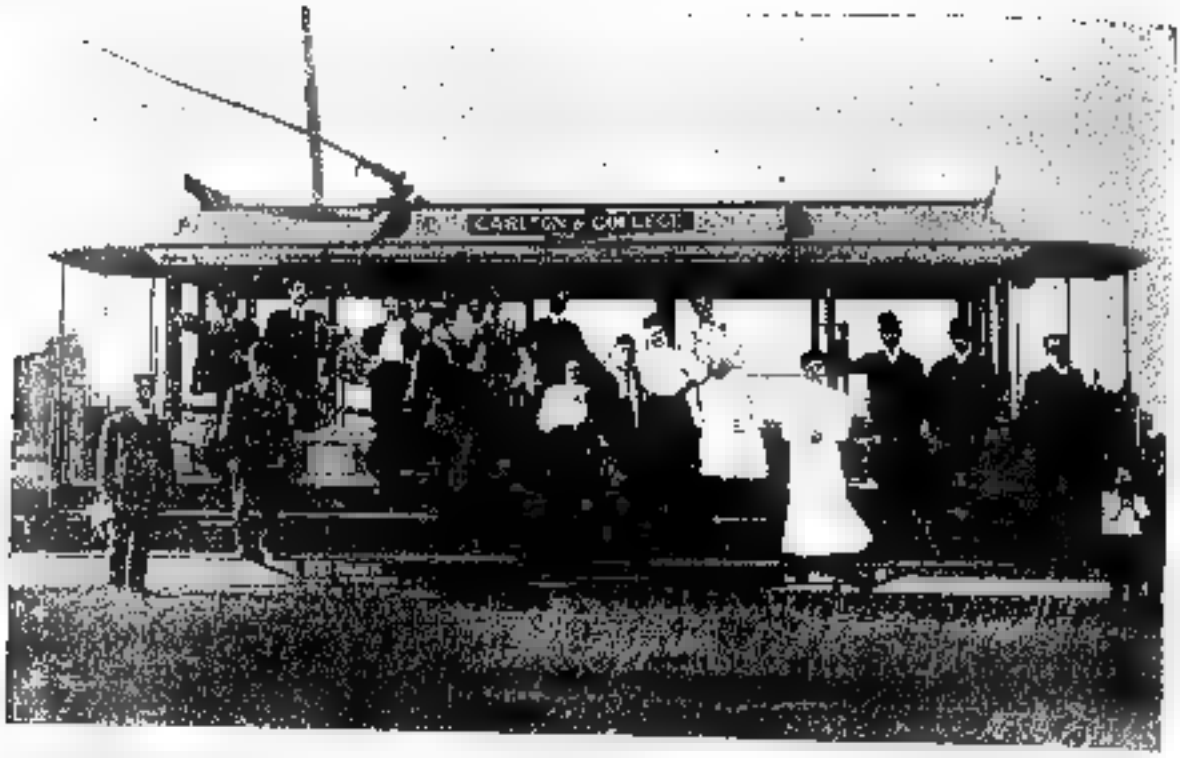
THE FIGHT BETWEEN THE STOREKEEPERS AND THE COMPANY'S EMPLOYEES

Canadian Illustrated News. W. N. Langton.

THE BLOCKADED CARS AFTER THE BATTLE

SNOWING UP THE TORONTO STREET CAR COMPANY, 1881

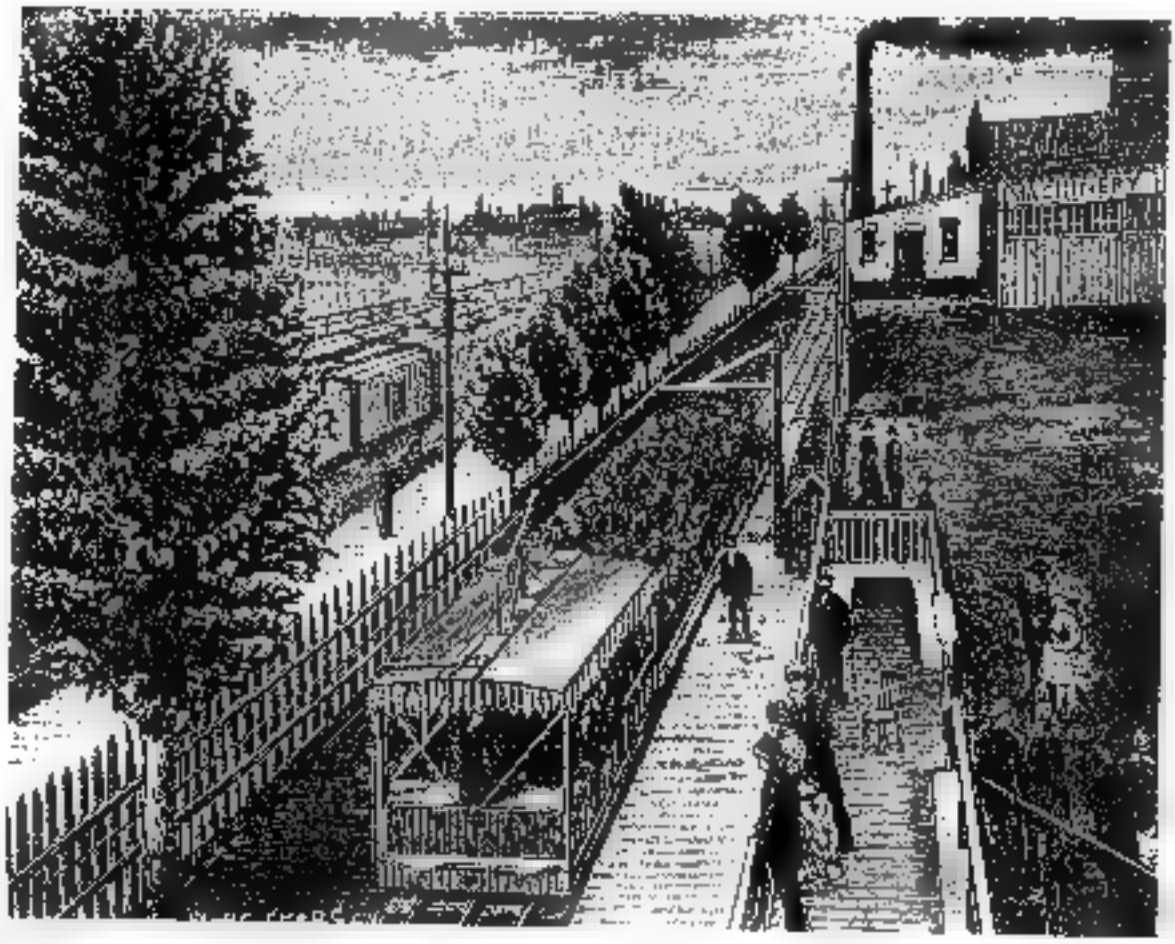
Twelve cars were temporarily rendered helpless by exasperated Yonge Street storekeepers when they found that the Railway employees had blocked the approach to their establishments.



Reproduced by Courtesy of the Toronto Transportation Commission.

AN OPEN STREET CAR, 1906

For many years open cars were used in summer, and closed cars in winter. Convertible bodies were later employed.



Electrical World, 1886.

THE EXHIBITION ELECTRICAL RAILWAY, 1883-92

A failure in 1883, this pioneer Canadian line was in successful operation in succeeding years. Two generators in Machinery Hall provided the electricity.

"electricity cables" or other motive power, there was no disposition to add to the horse-car lines or to replace obsolete equipment. The city, on the other hand, opposed the applications by which the Company tried to obtain from the legislature variations in the agreement, for the franchise was due to expire on March 14, 1891, and it was feared that legal rights might be prejudiced by any changes prior to that time.

The lack of effective street railway service was one reason for the promotion of the Toronto Belt Line Railway,[11] commenced in the "boom" times of the late eighties. This twenty-mile steam line followed the course of a series of ravines outside the city, passing up the Valley of the Don, crossing Yonge Street a short distance north of the boundaries of Mount Pleasant Cemetery, and returning southward *viâ* the Humber Valley—a section along the waterfront serving to connect the eastern and western sections. By 1891 the railway was ready for traffic. Not only did it become a fashionable diversion to take a trip on the Belt Line, but real estate brokers seized the opportunity to show clients the amazing possibilities of speculation in land in its vicinity. But after a few months the line closed down, its bonds being taken over by the Grand Trunk, to which it had been leased. Another "South Sea Bubble" had burst, and property values almost disappeared. As for the railway it became a pathway of rotting ties and tumble-down stations, a pleasant walk amid the quiet beauty of the ravines, and an example of the philosophy of Robert Burns:

> "The best laid schemes o' mice and men
> Gang aft a-gley."

At the expiry of the thirty-year agreement between the city and the Toronto Railway Company the population of Toronto was 170,000 and its area 17 square miles. The boundaries were, approximately, Greenwood Avenue, Danforth Avenue, the North Toronto line of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and the westerly limit of High Park. There was 68 miles of single track, and the assets of the Company, valued by arbitrators at $1,453,788, included 90 two-horse

[11]For a longer account of the history of the old Belt Line see an essay by the present writer, in the Toronto *Mail and Empire*, January 11, 1934.

closed cars and 56 open, 116 one-horse cars, 99 buses, 100 sleighs and 1,372 horses. The stable for the Company's horses was a large building, 444 by 68 feet, extending from the Esplanade to Front Street and from George Street to a lane. Apart from its size the building is of interest from the circumstance that on July 10, 1902, while it was the storage warehouse of P. McIntosh & Sons, five firemen lost their lives when its walls collapsed.

Valuable reminiscences of the circumstances attendant upon the transfer of the street railway to the corporation are given by Dr. Lockburn B. Scott, formerly a reporter on the staff of the *Empire*, and in that capacity in close touch with Mayor E. F. Clarke and the administration:

"For months prior to midnight of the 31st December negotiations were carried on, but with little satisfaction to the City. It was freely rumoured and quite generally believed that the Company would use every ruse in their power to prevent losing control, and all sorts of plans were considered and discussed in the public press and among the City's politicians; but nothing definite was given out by the Company. For a day or two previous to the 31st, and especially on that day, it was currently reported that the Company was going to mass its large force of employees and forcibly resist any attempt on the part of the City to take over the property. While the members of the Council were generally of opinion that the Company would not take such an evidently illegal position, yet there was much unrest among them. So much so, that without any public announcement the City Police Force was held in readiness to interfere in any untoward events. The City Fathers were firm in determination to put the thing through irrespective of any offered opposition. Bloodshed was freely prophesied by men on the street.

"It was planned that the Street Railway Committee of Council with the press representatives should gather at the City Hall at 10.30, where a luncheon was served and the latest developments (which were exceedingly meagre and uncertain) discussed. Having arrived a little late, I found the only vacant chair at the left of the Mayor, and we indulged in quite a little private discussion of the matter. Mr. Clarke, always optimistic, was inclined to think there

would be little or no trouble; but was not so sure of it as to fail in necessary precautions. When the clock pointed to a few minutes before midnight, he rose, told me to keep close to him, and the entire company, probably some 16 or 18, set out for the office of the Street Railway Company situated but a short distance from the City Hall, which at that time was located close to the old Grand Trunk Railway Station. The distance being so short we went on foot, scouts being sent out to warn of any impending danger.

"However, though there were crowds of citizens on the streets, we arrived at the office without molestation and entered a commodious room, where just before the stroke of the clock we were very quietly joined by Sir Frank Smith and several of the higher officials of the Company. As the big clock boomed out the midnight hour, Sir Frank stepped forward and in a neat little speech in which no jarring note was sounded, he formally handed over the Railway to the City and received a check for, as I recall it, some million and a quarter, but I am not sure of the amount. It was the largest check that most of us had ever seen, and had been previously photographed and was featured in all the city papers. After a very few words of friendly chat we all started for our homes in peace and harmony. The actual transfer, which did not take more than 10 to 15 minutes, was indeed a very peaceful function."[12]

Some people favoured public management of the Street Railway property which was taken over in 1891, but the consensus of opinion was that the risk was too great for a municipality to operate an electric railway—though the electric car was then a commonplace and practical apparatus. Mayor Clarke and his council decided, therefore, to lease the system to the highest bidder, the city managing the horse-car lines only during a four-months' interval between two franchises. The service during this period was irregular and deficient, and many were the protests of citizens. At times fares were refused and the passengers rode free; and the drivers themselves reflected the general uncertainty by showing a lack of interest in their work.

Four rather involved tenders were received by the city,

[12]Reminiscences of Dr. Lockburn B. Scott, Norfolk, Virginia, December 26, 1933.

the best being that of Messrs. George W. Keily, William Mackenzie and Henry A. Everett (of Cleveland), which was accepted. The new Company undertook to pay the award of nearly a million and a half dollars; to change the whole system to electricity or cable within three years; to heat all cars during the winter; to give transfers over main lines and branches for one fare; to run all-night cars; to give cheaper fares during rush hours; to pay $800 *per annum* per mile of single track; to uniform all conductors; to lay down a 70-lb. grooved girder rail in place of the light 30-lb. rail on timber stringers; and to restrict hours of work to ten per day, while paying a minimum wage of 15c. per hour. That the city secured a very favourable agreement is further shown by the provision stipulating that the Company should pay to the corporation percentages on gross receipts varying from 8% on the first million to 20% on amounts over three million dollars.

On the afternoon of Civic holiday, August 15, 1892, the electric railway was inaugurated in Toronto. Prominent citizens had been sent cards of invitation by the Company, and they began to assemble at the old City Hall, Front Street, long before 3 p.m., the time set for the event. The *Mail* describes the celebration in considerable detail under the head "A Successful Test":

"It was nearly 3.30 p.m. before the first electric car left in front of the City Hall on its way to the terminus of the Church Street route, at the upper end of North Sherbourne Street. Among the party on board were several aldermen and ex-aldermen and some prominent citizens in addition to several city officials. The progress of the car was watched by crowds at several intersecting points, and twelve minutes after a start had been made it reached the bridge at Sherbourne Street. The trip was made without a stop, the car slowing up occasionally at the crossings, and no incident of note occurred during the journey. After arriving at the terminus the party adjourned to a large marquee where they were welcomed by the officers of the Company. On the arrival of the second detachment of invited guests all were asked to partake of the hospitality of the Company, which had provided solid and liquid refreshments."

A long toast list was still fashionable at such events,

and the custom enabled a large number of men to express their opinions on various topics more or less related to the matter in hand. The report in the *Mail*, however, emphasises Mr. Grace's speech in behalf of the Company of which he was Secretary: he noted that men of the greatest integrity had been entrusted with the franchise, for which the city had been recompensed by remuneration unequalled in any other city on the continent; "and he begged to state that it was only by the united efforts both of the city and the Company that the earnings would be increased and the wants of the public satisfied". The proceedings terminated after five o'clock, "a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon having been spent by all".[13]

In the *Globe* appeared the delightfully whimsical "Impressions of Uncle Thomas" concerning the proceedings of the opening day. He commences by noting that "'Your trolley is off' has already obtained a recognised place in the slang of today", yet "the great inaugural was a success in every department from start to speeches. . . . The new cars are wider than the old horse-cars, and a man of ordinary dimensions can sit reasonably cross-legged in them without his boot on the shin of his travelling companion on the opposite side. They have a fresh store-like appearance and are as bright, inside and out, as the new paint on the City Hall door. The springs and padding in the cushions are in perfect order, and long rows of commodious and upholstered straps hang invitingly from the roof for the suspension of standing passengers. Everything connected with the trip was auspicious, even to the weather, and when the motorman, whose title has recently enriched the language, clanged his bell in front of the City Hall, the rows of distinguished personages that festooned the front steps foregathered into the cars. The binder-poles on top were fastened in their places with ropes, and as the motorman turned on the taps the cars started."

"Uncle Thomas" describes in lively style the trip up Church Street. The first part of the journey was made "at an easy jog-trot" and those on board had time to pass comment on "the artistic merits of the new pavement in front of the public library, and the extent and beauty of

[13]The *Mail*, August 16, 1892.

the King Street excavations". After passing Queen, however, the car bounded forward, "the trolley overhead struck up *Scots Wha Hae*, and I held my breath and the straps waiting for what tragic writers call the final plunge". Dogs barked, children screamed, and telegraph poles looked like rungs of a ladder as the car flew past. Horse-cars on the down trip went by at their best speed, "as if they were in dread of losing their job"; groups of smiling ladies on street corners were out of sight before one could smile back; the car "walked carefully around the corner at Bloor"; and finally "the conductor rang the bell to announce that we had arrived at the end of the Sherbourne Street track in Rosedale".

Everyone present at the ceremonies was impatiently anticipating the refreshments. "Good Mr. Webb had provided mountains of enticing sandwiches, olive-crowned salads, feather-weight cakes, watermelons carved to imitate gigantic tulips, oceans of lemonade, and bottles of liquid, stimulating and sedative. . . . Ex-Ald. Hewitt was there to witness the triumph of his statesmanship and diplomacy, and Senator Frank Smith was on hand to give away the bride. . . . Whatever may be said of the Company, every one present must admit that they provided an excellent lunch. And though the transfer of the franchise may produce 30 years of bickering and litigation, it has also yielded a most enjoyable celebration. And a free lunch covereth a multitude of sins."[14]

The introduction of the new type of transport was unfortunately not without accident. Charles Z. Zwick, of Rochester, a visitor at the St. James Hotel, was riding on a horse-car on Front Street, "and in his eagerness to note the progress of one of the new electric cars, which was approaching that in which he was seated, he stretched over too far, lost his balance, and fell in front of the electric car, which struck him on the shoulder and inflicted an ugly scalp wound. Dr. Garrett was called in, and the injured man was removed to St. Michael's Hospital, where he was reported to be doing as well as could be expected."[15]

On the 17th the *Mail* commented editorially on the ac-

[14]The *Globe*, August 16, 1892.
[15]The *Mail*, August 16, 1892.

cident, suggesting that only those easily alarmed would find cause for apprehension and suggest that electric cars be abandoned; for "the victim would have been just as much hurt had he acted as he did towards an ordinary horse-car. . . . The new cars are so arranged that passengers cannot get on and off between the tracks. The public must get accustomed to using the cars from the starboard side. The idea is an excellent one, and when thoroughly understood should inure to safety rather than danger".[16]

The opposition to electric railways came in part from horse fanciers and buyers. A local paper, in supporting them, asked: "What will be the result of the trolley's application to King, Queen and Yonge Streets? The trolley will drive carriages off these streets, decrease the value of property, and increase the danger to life. . . . It is a mistake to accept it, and it will be a curse when it does come." A similar feeling was sometimes evident in the United States, where in 1892 a Brooklyn publication, in referring to interference with telephone services owing to electricity escaping from trolleys, stated that "this will be thought a minor inconvenience when the demon begins his daily harvest of victims. Then this town will rise up and call blessed the man who would deliver her from the trolley".[17]

The argument as to whether the storage battery or the trolley system of power should be adopted did not end when the first electric cars were placed in operation. The city engineer recommended the trolley as speedier and more reliable, but investigations in American cities were instituted before his opinion was accepted, for many citizens objected to any increase in the already numerous poles. In 1894 the remaining horse-cars disappeared from the streets, the last one, on the McCaul Street route, being withdrawn from service on August 31st. Trolley cars, somewhat larger and heavier, but differing chiefly in that the front platform was closed in and the windows contained glass, were then in use throughout the city. The electric cars

[16] *Ibid.*, August 17, 1892.

[17] Quoted in the Fellows manuscript account of the Toronto Street Railway, in the possession of the Toronto Transportation Commission. For a copy of this material, which contains considerable information not available elsewhere, the writer is indebted to D. W. Harvey, Esq., General Manager of the T.T.C.

necessitated heavier rails and a more substantial roadbed, so that a very considerable financial outlay was immediately essential. As to the operation of the early cars it may be said that they were none too certain, for short circuits, the filling of air-brake tanks, disconnected trolleys and other troubles often delayed them. Many a citizen recalls the slow trip homeward at the close of the day, and the reactions, good-humoured and otherwise, of the occupants of the crowded cars as they not infrequently aided the motorman to keep his vehicle in operation.

In construction the first electric cars did not differ greatly from horse-cars. The bodies were of wood, sixteen feet long. Platforms were not at first covered by a roof, but about 1895 the front end was protected in that manner. The motors were of 20 horse-power, and the trolley poles were of wood, the current being carried from the wheel to the trolley box through a bare copper wire stapled to the side of the pole. In 1893 the introduction of tubular steel trolley poles was a great improvement. A stationary lifeguard protruded some five feet in front of the car, about eight inches above the rails. It was unsatisfactory, however, and there were a number of fatal accidents before an automatic fender replaced the old type. The first steel double-truck cars built in Toronto in 1895 were among the earliest on the continent. For many years an equal number of open and closed cars were built, the former being used in the summer months and the latter during the winter. In 1904 the construction of convertible bodies obviated the necessity of building two types. The use of open cars with running boards was prohibited by the Ontario Railway and Municipal Board in 1908. About 1905 air brakes were introduced, and the filling of storage tanks at stations along the route caused many tedious delays. The modern Westinghouse air brake as used by the T.T.C. put an end to this inconvenience.

It is characteristic of Toronto that the proposed introduction of Sunday cars caused a violent upheaval of public opinion. The "gay nineties" were, perhaps, not so gay in this city as elsewhere, but in any case there was five years of agitation before Sunday street cars were allowed. The agreement prevented their introduction until the electors

approved the principle at the polls. On January 4, 1892, there was a majority of 3,836 against, and one can readily imagine the heated discussions in church and street prior to the acceptance of the revolutionary idea on May 15, 1897, by a scant 300 majority.

It is not intended to give a detailed account of the operation of the Toronto Railway Company between 1891 and 1921, when the franchise expired once more. Most citizens remember the various civic street railways that had to be constructed in suburban districts after the extension of the city boundaries in 1910, for the Privy Council upheld the Toronto Railway Company in its refusal to extend service beyond the limits as they existed in 1891. The Gerrard, Greenwood, Danforth, St. Clair, Lansdowne and Bloor West lines were consequently operated by the city, which had to assume the deficit resulting from the two-cent fare.

There were no transfers issued during the horse-car period—not, at least, until its closing days. Passengers paid a separate fare on each line until about 1891, when a transfer "by verbal statement" was allowed; and this—which must have been most unsatisfactory—was superseded by a free transfer system in the following year. Conductors and drivers were not provided with uniforms during horse-car days, these being first issued upon the commencement of the electric service in 1892. In 1882 their wages were $7 a week for a twelve-hour day, and, in 1891, $10 a week for a ten-hour day. According to the agreement with the new company in 1892 no adult employee was to receive less than 15c. per hour, and up to 1902 that was the rate for the first year, and 16⅔c. thereafter. Since that date the wage rate has steadily risen. In 1918 it was 39c. an hour for a ten-hour day. In 1919 an eight-hour day was inaugurated, and the rate was raised to 55c., and to 60c. an hour in 1920. The latter is still in effect, except that operators of one-man cars receive 5c. an hour extra. Between 1902 and 1920 four strikes occurred, varying in length from 2½ to 13 days. During the first of these there was considerable rioting, and troops were brought to Toronto from Niagara Falls.

Between 1913 and 1921 proposals and negotiations concerning the acquisition of the system were continually in

1896 strike?

the forefront of municipal politics. In 1917 the electors voted 40,328 to 3,725 in favour of the operation of street railways as a public utility. A company carrying on under an expiring franchise can hardly be blamed for refusing to sanction extensive capital outlay, and the service, never particularly satisfactory, became worse and worse. It may be interesting now to see historical illustrations of old types of cars "in use as late as 1921", but trips on a deteriorated roadway in antiquated vehicles overcrowded with exasperated and perspiring citizens vainly attempting to reach home an hour or two late by hanging on to someone's coat-tails while precariously perched with one foot on the running-board—such journeys were comparable only to an ocean voyage in the hold of a slave-trader during a sudden squall; and even if the ride was free—for the conductor could hardly hope to intimidate all of those whom he could reach with his coffee-pot fare-box—it was not appreciated, for in no particular did it even approach satisfactory street railway service.

In December, 1910, the first P.A.Y.E. (Pay-As-You-Enter) cars were instituted, the entrance being at the rear by a narrow passageway. Serious delays in traffic resulted from the use of this type of car, and an indignation meeting of citizens was held in Massey Hall. At its close numerous people boarded the cars and refused to pay their fares; and there were disorders in which bricks were hurled through windows—all of which goes to show that fights and riots, so common in pioneer days, are by no means merely a memory of the past.

On June 4, 1920, the Ontario Legislature passed an Act incorporating the Toronto Transportation Commission and authorising it to assume the operation of the lines of the Toronto Street Railway, together with the city suburban lines; and, in addition to the unification of the city's street railways, the Commission took charge of "the construction, control, maintenance, operation and management of lines of motor-buses, or of subways, or of tubes, or of any other method of underground or overhead local transportation". The rolling stock taken over by the Commission from the Toronto Railway Company numbered 832 passenger cars, and there was at that time 138 miles of single track under

the Company's control, the daily number of passengers totalling about 600,000. The Privy Council were the final arbitrators in the matter of the price to be paid for the property, and they fixed its value at $11,483,500.

In order to protect itself from excessive competition the Commission has also the right to acquire control of coach lines radiating from the city, and in 1927 substituted this service for several outlying electric railways, the use of which was no longer feasible. In the same year the city's transport services were further unified when the ferry boats running across the bay were placed under the control of the Commission. Since that time the islands have assumed much of their former importance as pleasure resorts.

In 1931 there were 254.5 miles of track in Toronto—nearly four times as much as at the close of the horse-car period. The rolling stock has increased in much greater proportion, for there were in that year 987 passenger cars, 93 service cars, 214 buses and coaches, 37 motor trucks and 9 motor snow plows and sanders. The modern pay-as-you-enter cars are of the double-truck type, and constructed of steel. Compressed air brakes, electric lights and an automatic stove are among the features which form a notable advance over the cars of other days. In spite of the fact that but one man operates many of the cars, a ride is normally (a qualification which eliminates the remarkably severe winter of 1933-4) much more comfortable than ever before, and at the same time the movement of traffic has been very considerably expedited by careful management. In the first eleven years of service under the control of the Commission street cars and coaches have travelled over 320 million miles and carried more than three billion passengers, and not one person was fatally injured during this period—certainly a notable record of efficiency. In recent years the patrons of the street railway have steadily decreased in number, a condition due in part to economic depression but to a greater extent to the motor-car; and as the congestion of traffic on the main downtown streets will become greater as the city expands, it may be necessary to relieve it by an underground railway on Yonge Street, which would not only replace the surface line but would greatly expedite travel.

CHAPTER IX

THE OLD TOWN PUMP—AND ITS SUCCESSORS

A SUPPLY of pure water has always been one of the most important problems of the human race, for pestilence and plague frequently resulted from impure water. During the first thirty years of Toronto's history, 1793-1823, the only public water supply available to the few hundred citizens who composed the population was that in the Bay, the Don River, or the several creeks which at that period emptied into the Bay. Those inhabitants who lived near enough carried water to their houses in buckets, while others hired carters to deliver it to them. A considerable number sank wells on their own property, and were thus provided with an independent supply. For example, John Hutchinson, one of the builders of the first public well, had two wells providing excellent water on his property on Duke Street, between Ontario and Berkeley. His house, by the way, is said to have been the first (or possibly the second) building in York constructed entirely of stone, and it remained until recent years. Many early citizens of the town had also underground tanks, barrels or cisterns in which to store rain water for washing and other similar purposes, and snow was sometimes melted to provide a supply in winter.

We do not know when the first well was sunk for official purposes; but the minutes of the Court of Quarter Sessions for 1800 show that advertisements were issued in that year asking for tenders "for the Sinking of a well in the Gaol Yard"; and that "the Sheriff be authorised to procure Six Water Casks and Six Water Buckets for the use of the Gaol, also a pump for the well".[1] It would appear likely that but few wells had been sunk in York prior to that time.

Nearly a quarter of a century elapsed before there was a public well in York. In the *Gazette* of June 9, 1823, an advertisement called for tenders to be sent to S. Heward, Clerk of the Peace, "for the sinking of a well, stoning and

[1]Minutes of October 15, 1800. *Report of the Archives of Ontario, 1932*, p. 9.

sinking a pump therein, in the most approved manner, at the Market Square of the said town, for the convenience of the Public". All proposals were to be in his hands by the first day of July.[2]

John Hutchinson and George Hetherington offered to do the work "for the sum of £25 currency on coming to the rock, with the addition of seven shillings and sixpence per foot for boring into the rock until a sufficient supply of water can be got, should it be required". Their tender was accepted, and on July 30th they were paid by the County of York for the work. They received £3 1s. 3d. for boring 8′ 2″ into the rock, and Hugh Carfrae, pathmaster, was paid £5 2s. 4½d. for placing around the pump a flagging of logs and stone; consequently the total cost of the well was £33 3s. 7½d.

The digging of the well is described by Dr. Scadding as "an event of considerable interest in the town. Groups of school boys every day scanned narrowly the progress of the undertaking; a cap of one or the other of them mischievously precipitated to the depths where the labourers' mattocks were to be heard pecking at the shale below may have impressed the execution of this public work all the more indelibly on the recollection of some of them".[3] In winter the pump sometimes froze up, and around it was usually to be found glare ice, but it served its purpose well. Many a citizen of later days recalled carrying jugs and pails to the well, either for his own home or for a neighbour's use, and a little pocket money was sometimes obtained in this way by the small boys of York.

It is believed that the old well was never filled in, but merely covered over. In 1831, when the wooden market building was torn down and replaced by a brick structure, the well was first covered; and after the great fire of 1849 the new St. Lawrence Hall and Market was commenced and the well again hidden from view beneath the flooring of the Market, probably at the southern end of King Street arcade. At the commencement of the present century the premises were again remodelled, and it is said that the well was uncovered during the laying of a new floor. Mrs.

[2]*Upper Canada Gazette*, June 9, 1823.
[3]Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old*. 1873. p. 41.

James Riddell, who is now caretaker of St. Lawrence Hall and whose father held the same position when the new floor was being laid, recalls the excitement among the workmen when the huge well was uncovered "exactly in the centre of the arcade leading into the market":

"Everyone around the market at the time went over to have a look, and the workmen threw a pail down and brought up water as fresh as though it had come from a spring. I was living here at the time so, of course, would take greater interest in an old well being found than other persons.

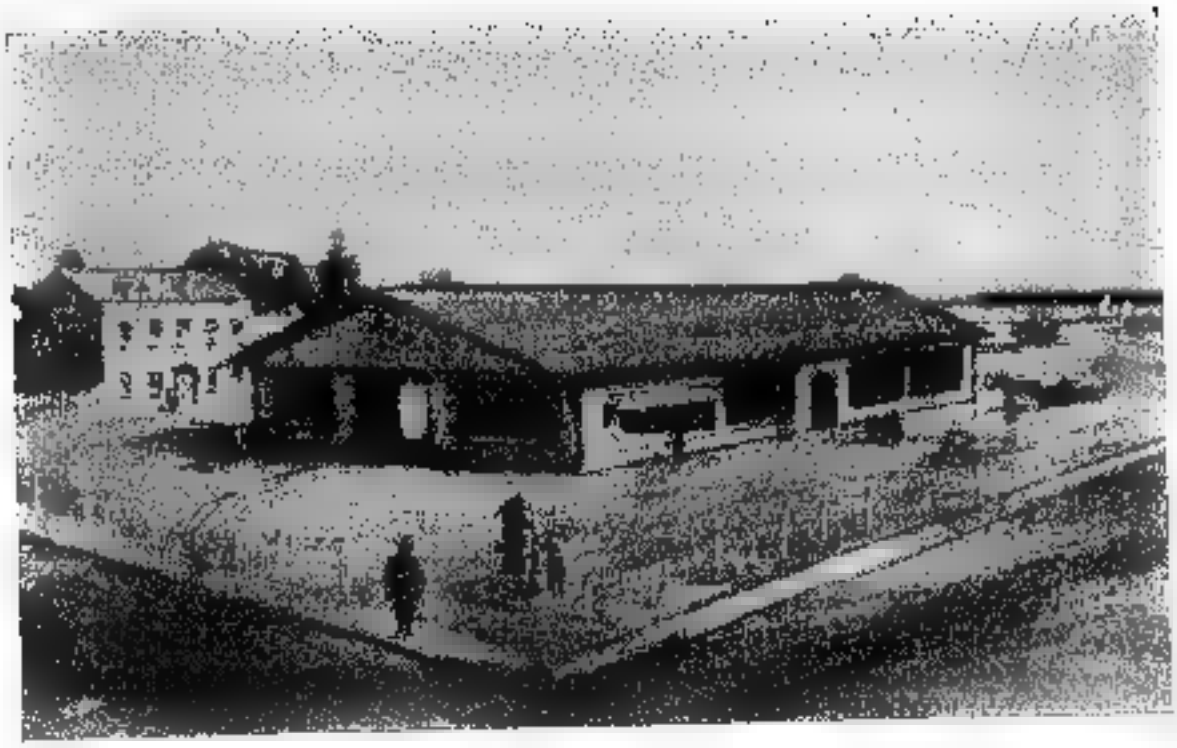
"But the well was there and it was very deep. We couldn't see the bottom, but the pail went down a great way. The market was empty for the remodelling and I doubt if anyone but the workmen and a few people around here saw it. They were laying the new floor at the time, so I doubt if it was uncovered for long, perhaps only an hour or so.

"I certainly don't remember them filling it in. I'm positive they didn't. I'm certain I'd remember that because it would take time, it was so deep a well. If I recall correctly they covered it over with something and laid the floor on top."[4]

Mrs. Riddell's statement is corroborated by Fred Duffy and John Wickson, butchers, whose families have for generations held stalls in the market; it would appear certain, therefore, that the old well might be revealed at small expense and trouble, to provide a remarkably interesting sight during the city's centennial celebration.

In 1824 the Market Square was, by the direction of the county magistrates, closed in on the east, west and south sides "with a picketting and oak ribbon, the pickets at ten feet distance from each other". The accessibility of the well was not greatly impaired, however, for there were three openings or footpaths on each side; though many a boy characteristically preferred to climb the fence. A second public well was sunk in the same year at the northwest corner of King and Princes Streets. On the 19th of August John James was paid £36 17s. 6d. for doing the work and providing a pump at this location. There do not appear to have been any other public wells in York.

[4]Quoted by Jessie E. MacTaggart in the Toronto *Mail and Empire*, July 17, 1933.



John Ross Robertson Collection.

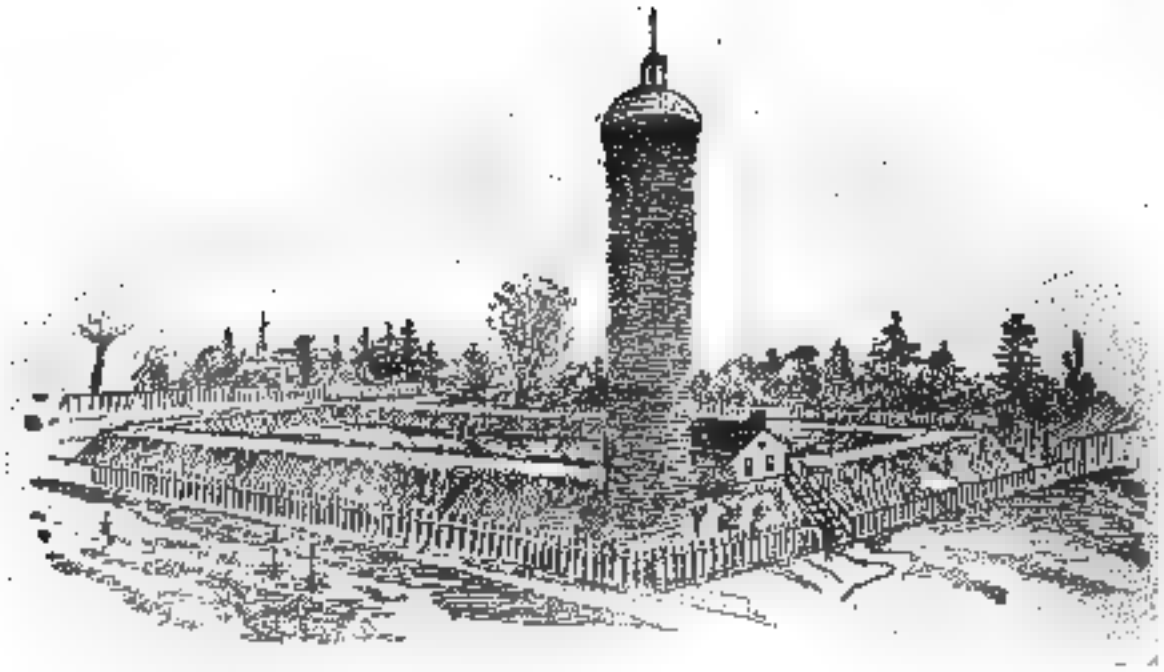
THE FIRST MARKET AND TOWN WELL

The market was established in 1803, and the well sunk in 1823.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

ST. LAWRENCE HALL AND MARKET, KING STREET

The old City Hall on Front Street may be seen in the rear. The market region was long the centre of municipal and social life.



John Ross Robertson Collection.

ST. GEORGE RESERVOIR, HURON STREET, 1864

A part of the plant of the old Waterworks Company, this reservoir was in use until the late seventies.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

THE TECUMSEH WIGWAM, 1820-1874

A notorious tavern on the north-west corner of Bloor and Avenue Road. Later the site of Albert Nordheimer's residence, the corner now contains an uncompleted "depression skyscraper", a most unattractive addition to an otherwise beautiful intersection.

Sewers were provided in York previous to any public water supply,—before even the first town well had been sunk. Among the regulations drawn up in 1817 and enforced by the police of the town was one stating that "no person be permitted to carry a Private Drain into any of the Sewers sunk at the expense of the public in the Town of York, without especial permission obtained from the Magistrates in Quarter Sessions assembled; and payment of such sum for the privilege as under all the circumstances of the case shall be considered reasonable and just".[5]

Improved sewer accommodation commenced in 1835 after a lengthy report by the Committee on Draining and Paving. Over £5,700 was eventually spent in laying a main sewer on King Street from York to Berkeley, and thence southward to the Bay, and in constructing smaller drains down York, Bay, Yonge, Church and Jarvis Streets. At the same time a small creek crossing King Street near the old Government House at Simcoe Street was diverted into the main sewer. The Local Improvement System was instituted at this time by levying a tax on the properties adjoining the sewers.[6]

Though the sewer system was improved at that time, the day of incinerators and garbage disposal plants was far distant, and in May, 1835, a select committee reported that there were suitable dumping grounds for offal and rubbish near the old Parliament Buildings at the southern end of Berkeley Street, at the southern extremities of York and Church Streets, and in the fields at the rear of Jesse Ketchum's house and stables on Yonge, where Holt, Renfrew's and Birks-Ellis-Ryrie's are now. Presumably Ketchum used some of the refuse in his tannery, for it was suggested that the Council give him what he wanted, or that he pay 7½d. a load at the turnpike gate. One or more carters were to be employed to remove filth from the streets, and the same men no doubt buried "all dead dogs, cats, and other animal substance", which, as Alderman Turton pointed out on May 20, 1834, abounded in most sections of the city.

Among the streams which supplied water to early

[5]*Regulations for the Police of York, 1817, as amended in 1828.*

[6]The best summary of the proceedings of Toronto's City Council is to be found in J. E. Middleton: *The Municipality of Toronto, a History*, 1923.

citizens of York was one running north of Davenport Road. At least as early as the eighteen-thirties this creek was being used for the purpose, for in November, 1834, the following advertisement was inserted in the *Gazette*:

"Notice is hereby given that application will be made to the Legislature at its next session for an act of incorporation of a company to convey water by pipes to the city of Toronto, from the stream running in the rear of Davenport, Spadina, and Russell Hill, in the second concession of York Township.

Toronto, 25th October, 1834."[7]

Nothing appears to have come of this project, however. In connection with the use of water from the Bay and the streams which flowed into it, one must remember that even in 1834 York had a population of less than 10,000; consequently there was not that pollution which is characteristic of centres of population with numerous factories and extensive harbour activities. A contemporary writer, in describing York as a suitable location for intending emigrants, notes that "water in the town is not generally good from the wells, but excellent from the Bay which runs up to the town, most well water being to a certain extent brackish, and impregnated with limestone, which strangers instantly perceive; this may easily be remedied by boiling, and all immigrants should use this precaution; in most parts I consider the water perfectly good."[8] The first City Council was interested in the possibilities "of bringing into the city the water of the Humber or any other source in its vicinity", and an exhaustive report on the matter was submitted by Deputy Surveyor David Gibson on January 24, 1835. No action was taken, however, the necessary expenditure appearing prohibitive.

Fire-fighting was a difficult matter in the days when Toronto had no adequate water supply, as the primitive methods in use testify. A bucket brigade, consisting of two lines of men from the Bay to the fire, at first provided a rather precarious service of filled pails and empties, and this was succeeded by a "puncheon" supply provided by the carters of the place, all of whom were compelled by law

[7] *Upper Canada Gazette*, November 13, 1834.
[8] *Sussex Emigrants for Canada*. 1833. p. 54.

to hasten with all convenient speed to every conflagration. Water so supplied was pumped by eight men with an ancient hand pump which was carried on a wagon to all fires. This machine, possibly Toronto's first pumper for fire purposes, was to be seen at the Canadian National Exhibition a few years ago.

In a day of wooden buildings fires were very frequent, and it was everybody's business to aid in putting them out. In addition to furnishing their homes with ladders and buckets suitable for the purpose, each man was expected to aid in the carriage of water by hand. After the formation of the first Fire Company in 1826 somewhat better hand fire-engines were available, and prizes were offered to "licensed carters and others" who appeared promptly on the scene with barrels of water. In the *Gazette* of May 22, 1834, the City Council under Mayor W. L. Mackenzie advertised[9] among other inducements a first prize of £1 5s.

This method may be assumed to have been productive of results, though it is more than hinted that some carters reached the scene of conflagration with such speed that they were suspected of foreknowledge of the likelihood of the fire, whether or not they actually had anything to do with setting it. There were, it is perhaps unnecessary to add, numerous incendiary fires in the pioneer period.

On February 18, 1836, the City Council received a communication from Thomas Roy, engineer, concerning a plan to bring water into Toronto from neighbouring springs, possibly in Scarborough Township. A special committee was named to investigate the matter, and on October 13th a motion was passed adopting its report and pledging the Council "to aid and assist (except by appropriation of the city's funds) in every possible way any company or corporate body which shall be formed, the object of which shall be the bringing of pure, wholesome water into the city, either for domestic use or any other purpose connected with the city either in a manufacturing or mercantile point of view". The absence of financial assistance must have put an end to Roy's scheme, for we hear no more of it.

In 1841 Joseph Masson, Albert Furniss and John Strang were authorised by Parliament to form the City of Toronto

[9]The advertisement is quoted in full on pages 190-1.

Gas-Light and Water Company, the capital not to exceed £40,000. This Company obtained the right to dig trenches and lay pipes wherever necessary, at the same time guaranteeing to take precautions against accidents and to restore the streets to their former condition—not a difficult matter, for the roads were merely of mud and gravel. Within two years the waterworks system was to be established, and the Company secured a franchise for fifty years. Neither the gas nor the water service provided was satisfactory, and at the same time the charges were high. Imported metal pipes were too costly, so wooden ones of small size furnished an irregular supply of water which frequently failed, particularly at fires, when it was most needed. The first pumping engine of the Company was located at the southern end of John Street, and the water thus obtained from the Bay was stored in a reservoir on Huron Street. Many citizens depended, in preference, upon their own wells or the carter service, and especially outside the limited range of the waterworks system were chain pumps and big wooden cisterns in evidence, rain water being largely used for washing. Some memories of the old St. George Reservoir on the north-east corner of Huron and St. Patrick Streets, which was in use until the late seventies, will be of interest here:

"The structure was built in 1843 of red brick surmounted by a metal-covered top, ornamented by a diminutive flagstaff. . . . The supply was for the purpose of serving the western part of the city, but it was miserably inadequate for the purpose, and the authentic statement was made in September, 1858, that 'while we have nearly 100 miles of streets opened, there is not now in all more than 15 to 20 miles of pipe laid, and a great proportion of that is useless'."[10]

The Lunatic Asylum, Queen Street West, far outside the

[10]John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*. 1894-1914. Vol. III, pp. 309-10. The source of the "authentic statement" quoted herein is [G. P. Ure]: *The Handbook of Toronto*. 1858. While somewhat prejudiced, this book contains a great deal of valuable historical information, the section on the history of the waterworks being on pp. 150-9. As an example of the defective supply of water this account notes that in 1858 the New Masonic Hall, Toronto Street, had a storage cistern just under the roof, but a force pump was necessary to distribute the water to the various offices.

very limited service attempted by the early waterworks system, had equipment of its own, for we are told that "the centre building is surmounted by a lofty dome covered with tin, (which can be seen for thirty miles on the Lake), within which is the wrought iron tank or reservoir, capable of containing 11,000 gallons of water, which is pumped up daily from the Lake by a steam engine. The water is distributed through lead pipes to all parts of the building".[11] The building, it may be added, was heated by hot water circulated through 25,000 feet of small wrought iron pipes and supplied by no less than sixteen furnaces burning anthracite coal.

Meanwhile the Waterworks Company was supplying parts of the city with an unsatisfactory service. Manager Furniss replied to the rather general complaints by some of his own. On July 16, 1846, he wrote asking permission to erect six "waterhouses" at street corners, in order to enable his Company to sell water to carters and others. He complained that the outlet of the Peter Street sewer was too close to his intake pipe, and that the levelling of King Street brought some of his pipes within 3 feet 7 inches of the surface, subjecting them to frost. The city, however, refused to allow the erection of the six tanks because they would be unsightly and inconvenient; and the Council replied to Mr. Furniss that the Company certainly knew of the grading of King Street, for they left certain pipes on top of the road with the expectation that they would be covered in the process.

In 1839-42, the four years previous to the inauguration of the waterworks, the city paid £419 16s. 3d. to carters for hauling water to fires. Commencing in 1843 the sum of £250 a year was paid to the Company for the hydrant service, but the deficient supply from this source necessitated continued reliance upon carters, and the total annual expense was about £400 during the next few years. In 1847 the Fire and Water Committee added its criticism of the hydrant service to that of the firemen and the press. In fact it was at that time the opinion of most citizens that the existing waterworks system was more of a nuisance than a convenience and deluded people into a false feeling

[11]Alfred Sylvester: *Guide to Toronto*, 1858, p. 25.

of security in no way justified by the service rendered. It was worse than useless for the extinguishing of fires, and it was largely to serve this purpose that the Company had been formed in 1841. Even as late as 1867 carters were still occasionally employed to haul water for fire-fighting.

The City Council, however, appears to have been considerably to blame for the deficient hydrant service. On November 15, 1842, an agreement was made under the terms of which twenty "fire-plugs" were to be provided at an annual charge of £250. It was stipulated that additional plugs were to be furnished if the twenty were insufficient, so as to "equal the number supplied in the New York or Philadelphia Water Works in the same distance or length of pipes". The agreement[12] was to be in force 21 years, and although over fifty hydrants had been installed by 1858 the city took advantage of the loose wording and refused to pay more than the original £250. The hydrants were presumably for use only in case of fire, but their employment for other purposes became usual, and detracted from the available pressure when fires necessitated their use.

A few years after its formation the City of Toronto Gas-Light and Water Company had split into two, devoted respectively to the supply of gas and water. In 1851 Furniss sold the Toronto Water Company to a joint-stock company under Charles Berczy, the consideration being £22,020 12s. 6d.; but the City Council refused to enter into a new agreement, and Furniss, who had been sole proprietor and shareholder of the former company and had obtained a mortgage to ensure payment of the sale price, was soon afterwards once more the owner when the Metropolitan Gas and Water Company defaulted. Improvements instituted at that time included "a large Bath and Washing establishment". There were, however, great difficulties in the operation of the waterworks. To lay miles of pipes for the use of comparatively few customers, (there were in 1858 only from 800 to 900 "takers" in a city of 7,500 houses), was a problem which continually faced the directors of the Company; and they themselves admitted that the supply of water was not only deficient but impure, while at the same

[12]A discussion of this agreement, and the Company's side of the case, may be found in Ure, *op. cit.*, pp. 151-5.

time the consumers complained of the exorbitant rates. Yet many citizens who were able to keep up with the times were soon being supplied with the new utilities. "We are now in treat", wrote Mary Jarvis in 1851, "for a house in Bay Street, which is of moderate size and has the advantages of water and gas."[13]

In 1854 the City Council made the first move towards the construction of a civic waterworks when "the Committee on Fire, Water and Gas, of which Alderman Romain was chairman, was authorised to offer two premiums—one of £100 and one of £50—for plans and estimates for supplying the city with water. In response thereto four designs were sent in by the competitors for the premiums. The two premiums were paid, and there the matter appears to have ended".[14]

On December 28th of the same year the large cabinet factory of Jacques and Hay was consumed by fire, and many persons were thrown out of employment. Urged to further action by this disaster, the Council gave some attention to a movement, probably inspired by the Waterworks Company, which had as its object the taking over of the works by the City. On September 10, 1856, a committee of the Council recommended the purchase of Mr. Furniss' plant, and to supplement this definite declaration of policy in favour of municipal ownership a committee was appointed to investigate the matter further. In the following April they reported that the Company would sell at its own valuation of £38,246 16s. 5d. But it was estimated that an outlay of £160,000 would be necessary to provide an adequate service, and T. C. Keefer, a noted civil engineer, was asked to draw up plans and surveys. Later in the year (1857) he submitted a long report. He estimated that the lowest cost possible to establish an effective water supply was £79,000, and to do this he advised pumping the water into a reservoir on Scarborough Heights and allowing it to

[13]Mary Jarvis to Fanny Jarvis, October 29, 1851. See Alden Meredith: *Mary's Rosedale and Gossip of Little York*. 1928. p. 205.

[14]*Toronto's Water Works*, in the Toronto *Evening News*, September 30, 1895. This good account, particularly of developments between 1872 and 1895, was "collated with much difficulty from official sources", and its publication in the press shows the public interest in the waterworks system.

settle in a number of basins before being drawn off for use in the city. Nothing definite, however, was decided one way or the other. On June 10, 1858, the Metropolitan Gas and Water Company under F. C. Capreol purchased the waterworks, and elaborate plans were made for a £450,000 plant. There was to be a reservoir on Scarborough Heights, and all streets were to be provided with pipes during the proposed extension of the service; but the whole program fell through when the opposition forces in the Council succeeded in securing the approval of a rival civic scheme—though the Act of the Legislature obtained at the time was never acted upon. In succeeding years the City Council's interest in the waterworks rose and fell from time to time, but no definite decision was reached in the matter.

One of the outstanding problems of the city in 1867 was still the water supply. The Fire Chief observed in his report that municipal tanks, private cisterns and the Bay had often to be used to combat fires when the hydrants failed to yield what was necessary. Citizens complained of "finding things in the water", living as well as dead, and the supply of it to homes was lacking in quantity as well as quality. Finally in 1872, following many ineffectual attempts to purchase the plant of the Toronto Waterworks Company, the city obtained the passage of an Act enabling the corporation to "construct, build, purchase, hold, improve, and generally maintain, manage and conduct waterworks and all buildings, matter and machinery and appliances therewith connected or necessary thereto in the City of Toronto and parts adjacent". This Act has been called the Magna Charta of the city's water supply. It provided also for the election of a commission to control the waterworks, and for the issue in three instalments of debentures totalling $2,000,000. When an agreement was finally executed in April, 1873, to purchase the Furniss waterworks the price to be paid for the existing plant was $227,000.

In 1873 and 1874 the works were taken over, and a start made in their improvement. The Board of Water Commissioners decided in 1875 to establish a municipal plant of sufficient capacity to serve three times the population—

then 68,000. During the reorganisation of the plant various suggested sources of supply were considered. The Don and Humber Rivers were found unsuitable. Bond Lake and Lake Simcoe entailed too great expense in piping, for it was estimated that $3,000,000 would have to be expended on a pipe of sufficient size to carry the water from Lake Simcoe, and that for several miles the pipe would have to be sunk about 900 feet in the earth through the ridges or highlands forming the watershed. Toronto Bay was rejected as unfit for use. Consequently Lake Ontario was the only alternative remaining, and, after consideration of various sites from Scarborough to the Humber, Toronto Island was chosen as the logical location. For the time being, therefore, the source of supply was settled, but the argument recurred from time to time. Two methods of obtaining water were then considered: one was to pump the water to an elevation at the north end of the city, and the second to form filtration basins on the Island and then draw water from them. On account of the expense involved the first proposition, which would have entailed an intake about two miles from shore, was abandoned, and in its stead a basin was excavated near the lighthouse. The basin was 500 feet long and 150 feet wide, and into it, by natural infiltration, about 4,000,000 gallons found its way. The water was then carried under the Bay to the pumping house between John and Peter Streets, and thence by a basin pipe to the north end of the city and into the distribution pipes which carried it to consumers.

The progress made in the two or three years after the acquisition of the plant had been satisfactory, and by 1876 the system was considered to be in good condition. The map of the waterworks for that year shows the extent of the service. Bloor Street was the northern boundary, except that one of the new mains extended through Yorkville village to Summerhill Avenue, and eastward to the new reservoir. Dufferin Street was then the western boundary of the city, but there were many thickly-populated areas to which the service did not extend. The Don was the limit in the east, except for a small extension beyond the river and south of Queen Street. The map shows also the new hydrants, marked by a dot, replacing the old ones which

are designated by a cross. The Company's reservoirs, which were used to store water and to increase pressure, are also shown—St. George's, on Huron Street from D'Arcy to St. Patrick Streets, and the Clover Hill Reservoir, on the south side of St. Mary's Street a block west of Yonge. As soon as the new plant was in operation these were drained off and later filled in. The characteristics of the water supply in the late seventies are outlined in a publication of the time, where some attention is also given to the contemporary controversy over the source of permanent supply:

"There are ten fire stations in various parts of the town and a complete system of fire-alarm signal boxes. Attached to the brigade are a large number of hose-reels, salvage waggons, horses, and the necessary apparatus for fire escape. Water is supplied from hydrants connected with the waterworks system, which tap the mains at all convenient and necessary points. The water is obtained from the lake at a point regarded as beyond the contaminating influence of the city sewage. Recently the suggestion has been made to draw the city's water supply from Lake Simcoe, about fifty miles northward. The water would be exceptionally pure, and the supply as large as desired; while the fall from Lake Simcoe to the level of Lake Ontario, about four hundred and forty feet, would give sufficient pressure for the extinguishing of fire in the loftiest building. Surplus water could be stored in reservoirs in the neighbourhood of Yorkville, and the waste turned to aesthetic purposes in the Valley of the Don."[15]

Reports issued from time to time by the Commissioners describe new plant installed and improved service. The ravage of fire had been curbed, one report noted, for there was not a street in the city where water was not available in sufficient quantity: "The business portion is particularly well off in this respect, as there is a hydrant equal in power and capacity to a first-class steam fire-engine every three hundred feet, so that, if a fire occur in any locality in any of the five central wards, ten to fifteen heavy streams can be thrown with not more than four hundred feet of hose in use for any one stream. This was exemplified in the fire which occurred in Hamilton's Foundry last summer (the only

[15]G. M. Grant (Ed.): *Picturesque Canada*. 1879. Vol. I, pp. 412-13.

large and disastrous fire we have had), when eleven streams from the hydrants were brought into play." The same report also notes that "not half the inhabitants take water" from the plant, and that the average daily consumption is 14,000,000 gallons, well within the capacity of the pumps.[16]

Old habits are hard to change, and many citizens had continued to use their wells, even though such a water supply in a growing city was dangerous. During 1879 and 1880 the water rates were reduced 42 *per cent.* largely through the efforts of Mayor Beaty, formerly Secretary of the old Metropolitan Water Company. An attempt was then made to close up the wells on the property of numerous citizens, and to induce them to take water from the city waterworks system; and as a result of this campaign 8,000 new customers were placed on the lists. In 1881 those who had persisted in their refusal were compelled to abandon the use of wells, and the same rule was applied thereafter whenever any territory was added to the city.

The difficulties were not all solved at once, however, for wooden stave pipes and cast iron pipes with flexible joints were frequently the cause of trouble. The filter basin proving inadequate, channels were cut connecting it with the lake; but this did not remedy the failure sufficiently, though for a time things went merrily along as usual. The proverbial last straw which broke the camel's back was provided by the report of a special committee, which found no evidence of infiltration on the south side and but little on the north, and observed that the water in the basin "was exceedingly filthy, of a putrid, fishy smell, in colour a dirty yellow"; while frog spawn and rank weeds covered the bottom and sides of the reservoir. No more was needed to get action, and in 1881 the basin was abandoned in favour of a six-inch wooden stave pipe, nearly half a mile long and drawing water from a depth of twenty-five feet.

Between 1874 and 1894, inclusive, debentures totalling over $3,700,000 were issued by the city for the development

[16]Report of 1877. The Hamilton Foundry fire occurred on November 21, 1876. At this period the village of Yorkville had a waterworks of its own. A *Directory* announces with some pride that the plant inaugurated in 1875 provided water "from a living stream" and distributed it "by iron pipes" to fire hydrants and customers. (See *Sloane & Purves' Directory of the Village of Yorkville*, 1876, p. 15.)

of the waterworks system. $227,000 of this was paid to the Furniss estate in 1874 as the purchase price of the old plant, and the remainder was expended in laying mains, supplying meters, purchasing engines, and in other ways developing the service. Included in the debenture issues was one for $75,000 by Yorkville village, and another for $140,000 by the town of Parkdale, both of which municipalities were incorporated within the city soon afterwards.

In 1892 there occurred what the *News* called "a Christmas Day surprise for the citizens".[17] A bad break in the conduit pipe under the Bay caused a considerable section of it to float to the surface. This disaster, caused in part by the extremely low level of the water in the lake, created a serious condition, which was repeated in 1895 when other breakages once more aroused the citizens. The topic of the day was "the water supply", and almost everyone had his opinion of the existing waterworks and how it might be improved. A writer noted that the defects of the system at that time were numerous, and suggested that "the impure quality of the water frequently introduced into the houses and, necessarily, into all domestic uses—drinking, cooking, washing—demands immediate consideration. . . . . The health of the citizens is of the first importance, and it is menaced by the unsanitary water. The uncertainty and inadequacy of the supply for fire purposes brings home to every property owner the necessity of demanding a radical and permanent change in the system".[18]

Edward H. Keating, City Engineer, reported on October 20, 1893, that seven proposals had been made to him with reference to the water supply. Three of these suggested Lake Ontario as the origin, the vicinity of Mimico and Scarboro being added to the existing source off the Island. A fourth suggestion combined the Oak Ridge Lakes and the Rivers Don and Rouge, from which water was to be supplied by the force of gravity. Lake Simcoe, wells sunk in the gravel beds north of the city, and springs and artesian wells in the Township of Erin made up the other three suggested sources of supply.

In discussing these proposals at length Dr. Beaty found

[17]Toronto *Evening News*, September 30, 1895.
[18]James Beaty: *Civic Relief*. 1896. pp. 37-8.

many objections to Lake Ontario, which may be summed up in his statement that "the trouble is to get it in its pure state". Engineer Keating, however, whose opinion might be assumed to be more valuable, favoured the development of the existing supply from Lake Ontario. As to Lake Simcoe it had been estimated that its level would be reduced one inch every 23½ days in order to supply Toronto with water. Since it was fed by creeks and rivers many authorities believed that the water would grow neither purer nor more abundant as settlement progressed; and Keating was certain that the cost would be enormous. Although other engineers had highly recommended the Oak Ridge lakes and rivers as a source of supply, Keating believed that the water would be "impure and unfit for domestic consumption".

In discussing the value of "wells north of Toronto, near Eglinton", Keating noted that "the North Toronto pumping station is supplied from a well adjoining, about 18 feet in diameter and 24 feet in depth, the normal depth of water in the well being about eight feet". The daily consumption of 8,000 gallons was raised in about 2½ hours, but the water was lowered some four feet in the process. While Dr. Beaty considered that "enough water of the purest and best quality could be obtained in that way for all purposes of the city", Mr. Keating dismissed the idea as a theory of no importance. The "springs and rivers in the Township of Erin" contained "a considerable quantity of water", and the prospects, he believed, were much better than in North Toronto; but the water was so hard as to be unfit for general use unless modified by that from other localities.

Dr. Beaty adds some proposed sources of his own to those already described. He elaborates upon his idea of constructing aqueducts and tunnels to bring water from Lake Scugog, Balsam Lake and Sturgeon Lake; and suggests also Lake Tice, west of Milton, and Lake Medad on the mountain north of Burlington. He appears, however, to have convinced no one but himself that either source had any possibilities. It is of interest here to note that a sewage disposal plant, then to be found only in a few great cities like London, England, was not seriously advocated, but it was merely hoped to keep sewage away from "the marsh

at the mouth of the Don" and from the Island, and to conduct it a mile or so out in the lake.[19]

The numerous suggestions advanced concerning the water supply, and the conflicting opinions of experts (to say nothing of the general public), resulted in the decision that James Mansergh, a noted English engineer, be retained to report upon the efficacy of the existing waterworks. He appears to have been very efficient, for between November 2nd and November 20th, 1895, he surveyed the entire system, visited all possible sources of supply in the vicinity, and assembled all the detailed information necessary for his report. Eliminating as impossible the Oak Ridge Lakes and the Don and Rouge proposals, he considered in detail Lake Simcoe and Lake Ontario. Chemical and biological examination showed definitely that the water in Lake Simcoe was inferior to that of Ontario. The report outlines in detail the advantages and disadvantages of obtaining water from each source, either by gravitation or pumping. While expressing an inclination towards Lake Simcoe, Mansergh advised the retention of the existing source at the Island.[20]

In 1898 a 72-inch steel intake pipe almost half a mile long was laid, and in 1905-8 a tunnel of concrete and brick construction was pushed nearly a mile into the lake. In 1910-11 a typhoid fever epidemic was blamed upon breakages in the intake pipe, and during repairs the water supply was obtained from basins and channels on the Island. A duplicate system near Scarborough Heights was advocated, but the Great War prevented its commencement and limited operations to the extension of the Island system. In 1913 a second intake pipe was placed in commission, and improvements were made in the connection with the filtration plant on the shore of the Island; and in 1916-18 a second filtration unit was constructed.

In recent years work has been progressing upon the duplicate system located off Scarborough Bluffs. An account of the work appeared in the Toronto *Mail and Empire* of June 20, 1933, and gives us some conception not only of

[19]See Beaty, *op. cit.*, pp. 38 *et seq.*, for the various proposals and a long discussion of their value.

[20]See James Mansergh: *The Water Supply of the City of Toronto, Canada.* 1896.

the plant itself but of the remarkable accuracy and precision characteristic of modern methods of surmounting engineering difficulties. The description affords an interesting comparison with waterworks projects of early times:

"With the laying of the last section of the pipeline and intake of Toronto's new duplicate water system by the Foundation Company of Ontario, Ltd., yesterday, one of the most hazardous and difficult feats of engineering ever undertaken in connection with city works came to a close, and a definite advance was made towards the completion of the entire system.

"The construction of the lake section of the system was begun a year ago last March by the Foundation Company, and since that time work has continued through fair weather and foul, as many as 200 men being employed upon it at various times. Not only had the bed of the lake to be prepared for the line, but the gigantic tubes of concrete and steel had to be built, carried to the scene of operations, and lowered into position with an accuracy, end to end, of amazing precision, some 50 and 60 feet below the surface of the lake.

"The intake, lowered yesterday, is actually the mouth of the pipeline which extends ■ mile and ■ half out from the shore off Scarboro Bluffs. Leading to the shore from the intake the pipeline of concrete and steel extends 4,100 feet, joining a tunnel extending from the shore, which takes the water to the filtration plant. Despite the fact the last section of the line, or the actual intake, weighed 183 tons, the *Foundation Scarborough*, derrick boat especially built for the job, lowered the section with ease in less than half an hour.

"The building of the *Foundation Scarborough* was but part of the enormous amount of preparation and equipment necessary for the handling of the contract. She has the highest lifting capacity, 300 tons, of any such derrick ship in the world, with the exception of naval ships, and to prepare her design R. E. Chadwick, president of the Foundation Company, visited Europe to study lifting gear in the Port of London, Hamburg, Bremerhaven and the Zuyder-Zee.

"Before actual laying of the pipeline began last July, a

trench was prepared along the bottom of the lake for the pipe to lie in. Difficulty lay in the necessity of the levelling of the trench and the carrying on of the work through all kinds of weather. In the meantime, pipes for the line were prepared. They were built in sections 100 feet in length, each weighing 250 tons. Each is actually a steel tube, lined and covered with concrete, the inside diameter or bore being eight feet.

"A casson, or steel cylinder, was sunk to a depth of 65 feet at the point where the pipeline begins, 3,000 feet from shore line. From the casson the pipeline was laid 4,100 feet out in the lake. The sections of the pipe were built in the Foundation Company's yards at the foot of Spadina Avenue, and were carried by the derrick boat seven miles down the shore to the point of operations. Part of the difficulty of this work came from the hazards of the weather. A corps of eight divers assisted in the actual laying of the line. As each section was lowered a diver at either end of the site of the section, under water, informed operators of the lifting equipment by telephone of the position of the section. Indicating the difficulty of the work, each section had to meet the adjoining one with an accuracy of a quarter of an inch. Divers then sealed sections together with concrete, . . . and the line will be covered over with earth to protect it from disturbances."[21]

In the meantime, pending the completion of this enormous piece of work, our water supply is obtained from two 72-inch intakes, is filtered and chlorinated at the plants, and distributed to all parts of the city. The average daily consumption is 118 gallons *per capita*, and 714 miles of water mains combine with 752 miles of sewers to supply the needs of the population in a manner vastly different form the primitive and restricted service of the first waterworks system. And how much better the water is in Toronto than elsewhere may readily be observed by a comparison with that of many inland communities who have to depend upon small rivers or mud-bottomed lakes for their supply.

[21]Toronto *Mail and Empire*, June 20, 1933.

CHAPTER X

FROM CANDLE TO ELECTRIC LIGHT

JEAN BAPTISTE VAN HELMONT (1577-1644) made the first important discoveries of the existence of gases other than air, noting that a heated crucible "did belch forth a wild spirit or breath"; and the name "gas" which he bestowed upon it is thought to be derived from the Flemish *geest* (ghost). But the first employment of gas for purposes of illumination occurred in a chemical laboratory in Louvain in 1784. In the seventeen-nineties an English engineer, William Murdoch, was experimenting in the use of gases from coal, peat, wood, and similar inflammable substances, and was able to illuminate his house and grounds by conducting gas through tinned iron and copper tubes. It was, however, the perseverance of a German scientist, Frederic Winzer (Winsor), that led to the ultimate adoption of gas distribution from a central source. He came to England in 1803, and his National Light and Heat Company, the first system of public gas lighting, was responsible for the illumination of the Pall Mall, London, in 1807.

Winsor's project met with but little enthusiasm at first. Sir Walter Scott wrote to a friend: "There is a madman proposing to light London with, what do you think? Why, with smoke!" Napoleon commented *"C'est une grande folie"*, and his opinion was held by many people.[1] But the success of the first gas company in London resulted in the organisation of many others, and by 1829 there were over 200 gas works in Great Britain. In the United States, meanwhile, Baltimore had the first gas company in 1816, to be followed by Boston in 1821 and New York in 1823. In 1836 a committee of the Toronto City Council was formed to consider lighting the streets with gas supplied by a plant to be erected near the old Parliament Buildings at the foot of Berkeley Street. Nothing was done at this time, however,

[1]See *75 Years, 1848-1923*, compiled by Edward J. Tucker for the Consumers' Gas Company of Toronto.

and Albert Furniss introduced the use of gas in Canada when he established a company in Montreal in 1840. In the following year he extended his enterprise to Toronto.

The early inhabitants of York, however, used other means to supply themselves with light. The blazing fireplace itself was not infrequently sufficient, for most people went to bed early. There were no matches, and the red coals were carefully covered with ashes to keep them alive till morning. To strike a light, many were expert in rubbing together dried pieces of pine, or the flint of a gun against the blade of a knife. Tallow dips—candle wicks dipped in sheep's tallow—were long in common use, particularly in the rural districts, and there were moulds in which candles of regular size and shape could be more easily manufactured. It is probable that at first most candles used in York were imported, but the chandler soon became an important manufacturer, while many citizens engaged in candle-making and soap-making for their own households. Inns, homes, stores and public buildings were equipped with sconces in which to place candles, or were fitted with hanging lamps with oil-dipped tapers; while many an early traveller considered himself fortunate to be able to replace the rushlight torch by a primitive candle lantern. Sperm-whale oil was a luxury available only to the rich, for it was frequently 9s. a gallon. As an illustration of the type of lighting usually found in halls may be taken the first Methodist Chapel, on King Street, which was illuminated "by a liberal supply of tallow candles in eight old-fashioned sconces, one at either side of the pulpit, and three down each side of the building. A short intermission was always a necessity at each service while the lights were being snuffed."[2]

In 1839 steps were taken in Toronto to investigate the possibilities of the use of gas for purposes of illumination. A joint committee of citizens and aldermen discussed the matter in that year, and Messrs. Blachford and Cull, civil engineers, submitted specifications and estimates. Mr. Cull was sent to Montreal to inspect the plant in operation there,

[2]W. H. Pearson: *Recollections and Records of Toronto of Old*, 1914, p. 285.

and his diary[3] gives particulars of the cordial reception accorded him by Mr. Furniss and of the information he obtained. Tenders appear to have been requested by the Toronto City Council, and several persons, including Mr. Furniss, sent in estimates. An early example of the desire for public ownership is provided by the proceedings of Council at the time, but the Chairman of the Finance Committee temporarily set the minds of the members at rest when he assured them that there was no way to finance such a project except by loan. A public meeting was called, Mr. Furniss spoke, and the work was undertaken by a private company under his management.

In July, 1840, Thomas Glegg, architect, proposed that gas lamps of a style designed by him should be used in Toronto. He wrote as follows to the City Council:

"To the Right Honourable the Mayor, Aldermen and Common Council of the City of Toronto, this elevation of an obelisk, suggested to be erected at the junction of King and Yonge Streets, is most respectfully inscribed by their obedient humble servant, Thomas Glegg. It is proposed that this obelisk be lighted with oil until it is decided to introduce gas into the city. The requisite number of lamps similar to the above to be made and the lamp posts to be cast of a pattern as near as possiible to agree in design with the obelisk."[4]

Mr. Glegg's proposition does not appear to have elicited much comment, and no action was taken. Albert Furniss and his associates, Joseph Masson and John Strang, secured the right "to break up, dig and trench so much and so many of the streets, squares and public places" of the city as should be necessary. The Toronto Gas-Light and Water Company was incorporated by these men in November, 1841, and their small plant at the foot of Princes Street was situated on land granted as an inducement and a mark of civic encouragement. An authority states that "the city was partially lighted in the winter of 1840", and that

[3]Cull's diary appears to have been published in 1839. It is quoted in [G. P. Ure]: *The Handbook of Toronto*. 1858. p. 159, a work which contains much historical material not available elsewhere.

[4]The original design of this lamp is in the Board of Works Office, City Hall.

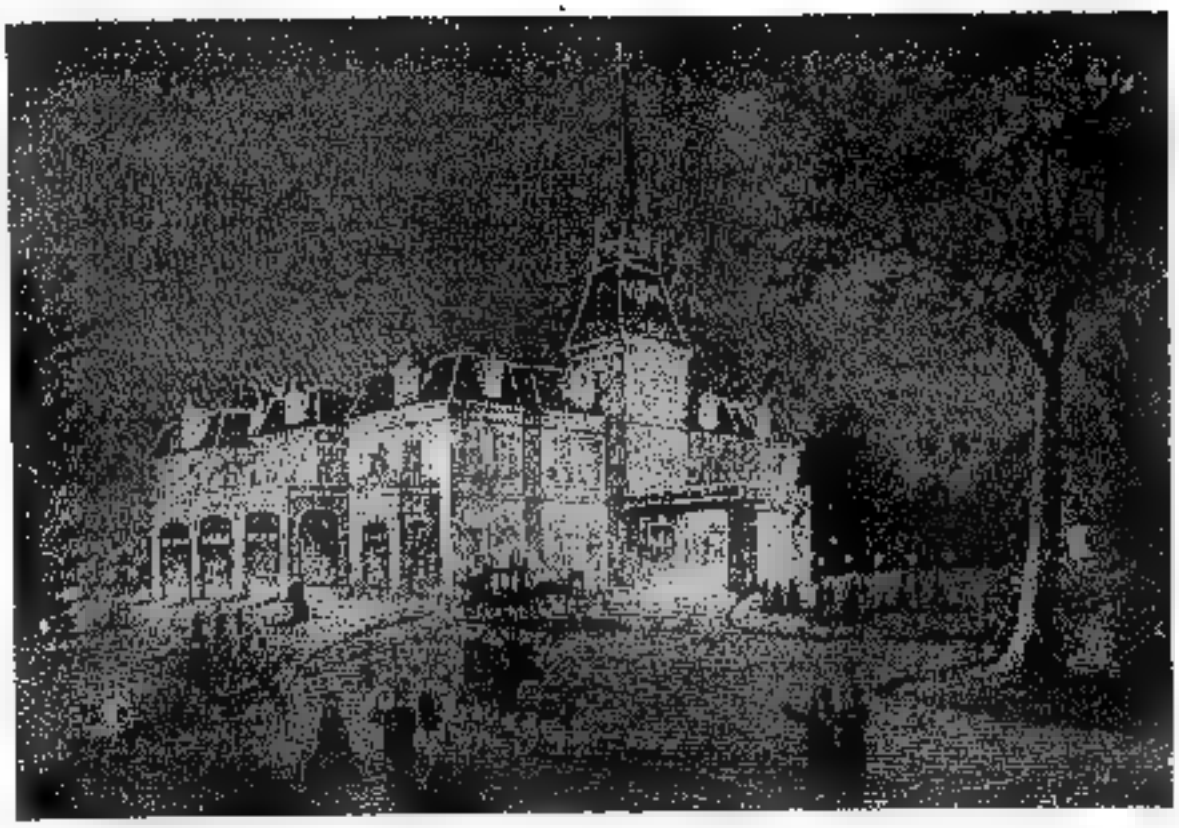
twelve lamp posts comprised the original street equipment.[5] Possibly an experimental illumination was arranged at that time, though references in the press a year later imply that gas lighting commenced then. In any case a considerable number of lamp posts were erected in December, 1841, on King Street and at a few main intersections elsewhere. It appears to have been originally planned to inaugurate street lighting on the 20th of the month, as the *Toronto Herald* stated:

"It is, we believe, Mr. Furniss' intention to commence lighting the City with Gas this Evening, when we hope merited success will attend the undertaking. Our good City, therefore, will present a brilliant display, the advent, we may term it, of that general illumination which of course will take place in honour of the birth of a Prince of Wales."[6]

The notable event was postponed until the 28th, however, for in the issue of Thursday, December 30th, we are informed that "on Tuesday evening the city streets and several of the stores were lighted with gas for the first time; and the novel and brilliant spectacle thereby presented was highly interesting. The whole arrangements are not yet complete—when they are we shall return to the subject: in the meantime we congratulate Mr. Furniss upon the success of his spirited undertaking".[7]

Thus did the first important substitute for the candle become available to Toronto citizens. "Illuminations" had been from York's earliest days the most notable means of celebrating victories, Royal marriages, and other occasions of the kind—even though the celebration was commonly from seven weeks to five months after the event. At first every window in town was expected to have a light—not particularly easy in the days of candles; but as fireworks became available they tended to replace some of the illumination. On January 4, 1842, Toronto was lighted in honour of the birth seven weeks earlier of an heir-apparent to the throne. Presumably the new gas lights aided in making the illuminations "most brilliant", though no direct reference to them is made in the press account.[8]

[5]Ure, *op. cit.*, p. 160.
[6]The *Toronto Herald*, December 20, 1841.
[7]*Ibid.*, December 30, 1841.
[8]The *Examiner*, January 5, 1842.



Canadian Illustrated News. M. Mathews.

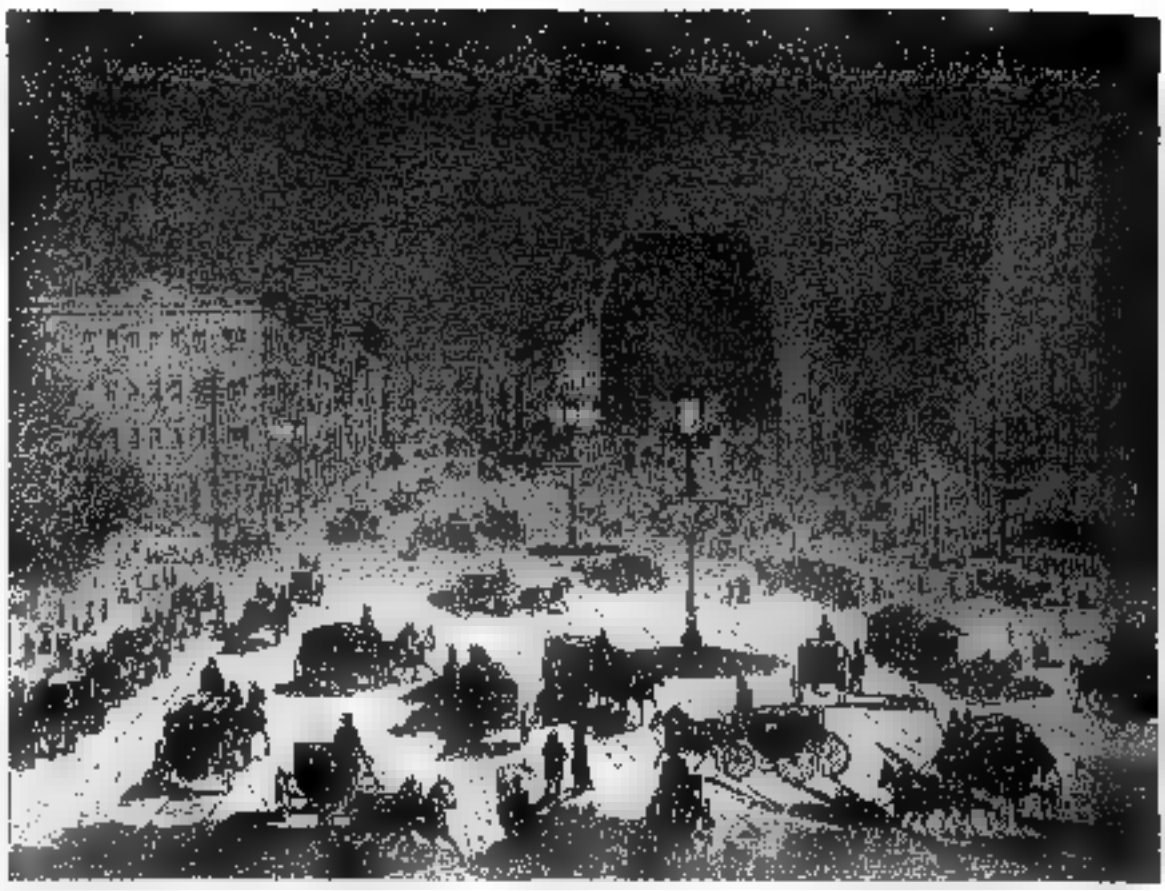
An Illumination

Government House *en fête* in 1872 in honour of the visit of Lord and Lady Dufferin.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

The Theatre Royal, 1836-40

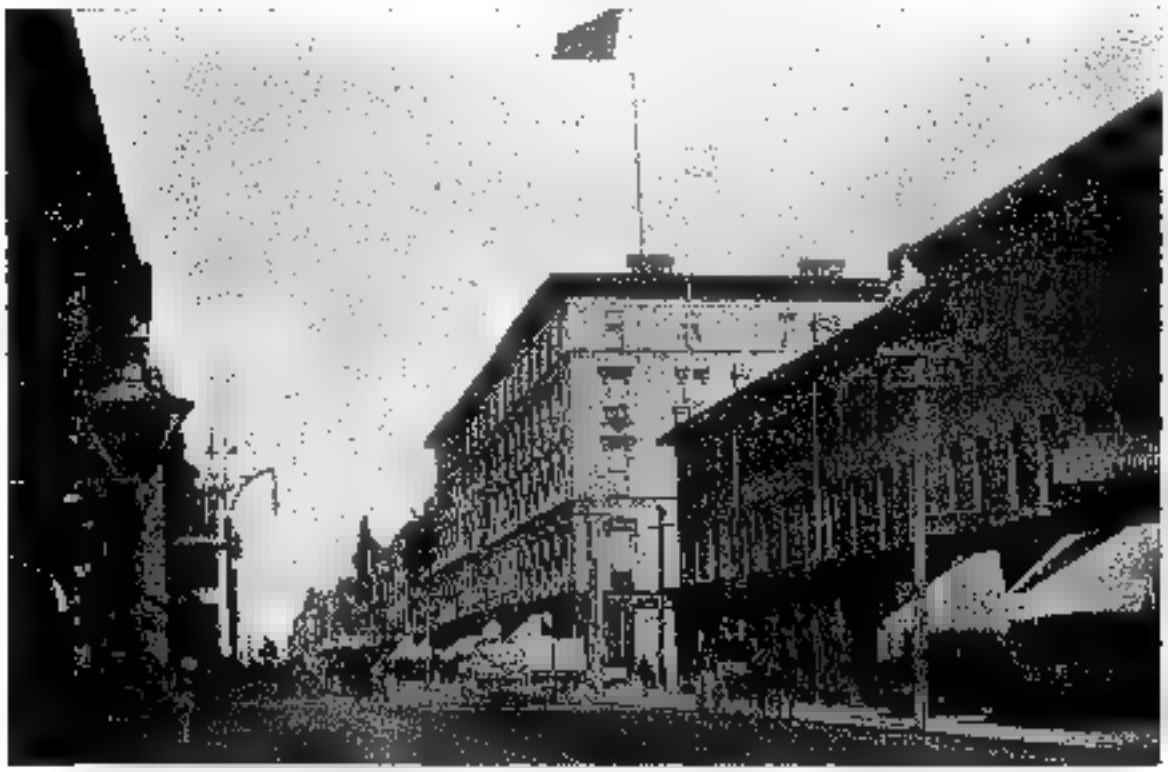
This theatre was situated just east of the Shakspeare Inn, on the north-east corner of King and York Streets, and was approached by a lane.



Canadian Illustrated News.

FIRST ELECTRIC STREET LIGHTS IN NEW YORK, DECEMBER 28, 1880

Twenty-two 2,000-candle power arc lamps were used to illuminate Broadway from 14th to 34th Street. The streets of Toronto were first lighted by electricity in 1884.



LOOKING EAST ON KING STREET IN THE EIGHTIES

Gas lamps, early electric arc lights and a street watering-cart may be seen. The Rossin House and the Revere Hotel are prominent at the corner of York.

For some years the use of gas in Toronto was largely restricted to the lighting of streets and a few of the larger stores and public buildings. The Court House was illuminated by gas in 1846, and the Gaol in 1850. In 1845 a 21-year agreement was executed by the Company and the City, by which the former agreed to light the streets of Toronto for £6 13s. 4d. per light per year, the Company to bear all expenses of erecting, cleaning and lighting the lamps. In 1848 the cost to city was £1,108 ($4,432), so that there were then about 166 lamps. By 1857 the number had increased to 828, the cost in that year for illuminating the streets, the City Hall and certain other municipal buildings being £5,135 12s. 6d.

Owing to the high cost of the gas provided by the original company but few citizens could afford to use it, and, since coal oil was not introduced until some fifteen or twenty years later, an early inhabitant recalled that "tallow candles were in general use for lighting. People had moulds and made their own candles—I have made them myself. They were sold by the pound by the grocer and chandler, some six to the pound and some nine. . . . The soap and candle manufacturers used to send around to the residences for grease, for which they exchanged candles or soap".[9] These conditions applied to a very considerable extent until the seventies and eighties, though by that time the use of gas and coal oil was quite general except among those whose poverty or inclinations prevented them from keeping up with the times. The uncertain supply and poor quality, as well as the high cost of the gas provided by the original producers, led in 1847 to the formation of the Consumers' Gas Company, which purchased the plant of the Furniss Company for £22,000. A better service and cheaper rates were soon available, and gas lighting was consequently rapidly extended to the homes of many citizens. In the late fifties the introduction of coal oil lamps provided a serious competitor. Their coming was forecast in the following news item appearing in the Toronto press in 1855:

"A new light produced from an oily liquid extracted from bituminous coal or native bitumen—rock oil or naphtha—has been tested lately in New York and is said

[9]Pearson, *op. cit.*, p. 121.

to afford a light exceeding the best gas in brilliancy and whiteness. A company in New York have erected a manufactory and will soon supply it in abundance. It is called Kerosene and is very cheap in its manufacture."[10]

The characteristics of early illumination by oil are well exemplified by Parson's Improved Coal Oil Lamp, which was advertised in 1858 under the caption "The Great Coal Oil Lamp!" People are assured that it is "perfectly safe, and cannot be blown up! There is no longer any reason for using Explosive Fluids—IT IS AT THE RISK OF YOUR LIFE—don't tamper with them!" The advertisers, Parson Brothers, "Coal Oil Lamp Manufacturers and Sole Agents for Canada for Pure Coal Oil", were located at No. 51, Boulton's Block, Front Street, and they announce that their lamp "produces a light of UNSURPASSED BRILLIANCY, and combines economy with simplicity—affording a better and purer light than any other known substance, at one-fourth the cost! Call and examine our LAMPS, and we pledge ourselves to demonstrate:

"1st. That no accident can occur by explosion!

"2nd. That they emit no offensive odour while burning!

"3rd. That they are very easily trimmed!

"4th. That they are easily regulated to give more or less light!

"5th. That they burn entirely free from smoke!

"6th. That it is the most economical light now in common use!

"This is not a random statement, but can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the most incredulous." And the advertisers guaranteed to cut anyone's annual lighting bill to one-third.[11]

The early history of the Consumers' Gas Company is coincident with advances in lighting in Toronto. In the forties, under the old Company, and for some years also under the new, gas was supplied either by meter or by flat rate contract. When supplied by contract some rather amusing stipulations were laid down:

"Lighting must not commence on any day until the sun

[10]The *British Colonist*, June 21, 1855.

[11]The advertisement is from the *Descriptive Catalogue of the Provincial Exhibition, 1858*, p. 4.

has set, and all lights must be extinguished each night within ten minutes after the hour contracted for. If otherwise they will be held as used for an additional hour each night, and for the quarter charged accordingly. In like manner, if the flame is allowed to burn higher than stipulated a corresponding price will be charged; and, if on any occasion more burners or jets are used than contracted for, the additional number will not only be charged but the offender will besides subject himself to a penalty provided for by the statute."[12]

While it at first appeared that the purchase of the Toronto Gas Company's works in operation would enable the Consumers' Gas Company to specialise upon improvements in the service, yet the old plant was soon out-of-date. The laying of larger and better pipes, and other improvements, resulted in cheaper and better gas; but the success achieved necessitated a better office, concerning which the Director's Report of 1851 said:

"Suffering inconvenience from not having a sufficiently roomy office, with a workshop attached thereto, and not finding a house that answered the purpose in a proper situation, the Directors determined upon building one for the use of the Company, which is now in course of erection in Toronto Street, where they will have their board-room, office, show-room and workshop, with a residence for the manager above; the latter they consider of importance, that the Consumers and others should know where to apply in case of any emergency."[13]

The limited and rather crude plant purchased from Mr. Furniss soon proved entirely inadequate in the manufacturing division also, and in 1855 the Company erected new works on another site. The Directors' report states that "these works are considered by all who have examined them to be equal, if not superior, to any on the continent, and are capable of still further extension when required, the plan of the works having been laid out with a view of supplying a population of over 100,000."[14]

[12]Quoted in Pearson, *op. cit.*, pp. 203-4.

[13]*75 Years, 1848-1923*, p. 61.

[14]Quoted in Pearson, *op. cit.*, pp. 204-5. A full description of the new plant is given in Ure, *op. cit.*, pp. 227-8.

In 1854 there was a manager and two clerks in the office of the Consumers' Gas Company, as well as four gas-fitters, about twelve main and service pipe layers, and some twenty men at the works. In 1913 the employees of the Company numbered 1,417, but twenty years later there were only 1,300. The 300 consumers of 1848 gradually increased as the years passed. In 1854 there were 924 meters in use, in 1913 the total was 91,284, and in 1933 there were 172,528; while from $5 per thousand cubic feet in 1848, and but half that charge in 1854, the cost of gas has been gradually reduced until it is now 80 cents per thousand—ten cents higher, however, than it was in 1913.[15] For many years, too, a gas jet produced a light of but ten or twelve candle power, but by the eighteen-eighties the intensity had been increased about 50%. There are now in Toronto very few users of gas for illumination.

In 1853 the first extension of service beyond the city limits took place when pipes were laid to the village of Yorkville, above the Bloor-Yonge intersection. So numerous were the applications for gas in that year that the Company could not keep pace with the demand, and attempts were made to bring an additional gas-fitter from England. In 1861, however, the number of consumers diminished owing to an attempt to limit the supply of intoxicating liquors. Toronto had for many years been notorious for the number of its taverns and beer shops; but in 1861 the City Council sought to remedy the condition, for we find in the Directors' report that the falling off in consumers had been "occasioned principally by a reduction of tavern licenses issued by the city in January last, thereby compelling many tavern-keepers to close their doors".[16] In the following year the price of gas was reduced from $3 to $2.50 per M in the hope that the use of coal oil, which was noticeably interfering with the consumption of gas, would be to some extent lessened; but in 1863 the Company reverted to the former rate upon finding that the reduction had not caused an increase in consumption.

When the streets of the city were first lighted with gas

[15]For several items of information concerning the Consumers' Gas Company the writer is indebted to Edward J. Tucker, Esq., Assistant General Manager and Secretary.

[16]*75 Years, 1848-1923*, p. 65.

on December 28, 1841, only ten other cities on the American continent had preceded Toronto in this respect. About 100 gas lamps provided the first equipment, but by September 30, 1847, there were 164 street lights. With the growth of the city these increased to 2,557 in 1885. In the intervening years, however, some interesting developments occurred. In addition to the introduction of coal oil for illuminating purposes, the Company was worried by civic economy in 1861. The country was experiencing a severe depression at the time, and the City Council decided to discontinue the lighting of about one-half the street lamps; furthermore, probably in imitation of the policy adopted for the lighting of London, England, a century earlier, it was determined to have the remainder extinguished for eight nights per month during the time of moonlight! It is to be hoped that there were not many cloudy nights during this period of intense economy.

Prior developments in arc lighting, and the invention by Thomas Edison of the incandescent light in 1879, placed electricity definitely in the field of illumination, and in that year the Consumers' Gas Company obtained the power to use and sell electric, galvanic or other artificial light, provided that permission was obtained from the city of Toronto. In 1889 the Company sought the right to wire the streets, but their request was refused by the City Council.

That the competition of electricity was not felt more seriously by gas companies is due to the development of heating and cooking with gas, a department which electricity has entered only recently. As the use of gas for illumination was gradually superseded by electric lighting, there was a coïncident increase in the employment of gas for these related purposes, commencing in Toronto in 1879, a few years prior to the inauguration of electric lighting as a public utility. The high cost of imported gas stoves and appliances exerted a deterrent effect at first, but in 1881 the price was greatly reduced by local manufacturers, and consequently the consumption of gas greatly increased year by year thereafter. In many old homes where gas jets had long been installed the wiring for electric lights was delayed, but before the closing years of the century the use of gas for purposes of illumination became old-fashioned, and

houses, stores, churches and other buildings soon came to be lighted by electricity as a matter of course.

For some years the use of electricity for illumination was not in the form of the incandescent bulb but by arc lamps. The inauguration of electric lighting in Toronto was under interesting auspices. The management of McConkey's Restaurant, long the best-known in the city, arranged in 1879 to have two arc lamps exhibited in their establishment at 145 Yonge Street, on the east side between Adelaide and Richmond Streets. Free ice cream was served until 9 p.m. to those who came to see the exhibition, and Mr. J. Manser recalls that he saw the lights on this occasion and also received the free refreshment.[17]

In May, 1881, R. H. Lunt applied to the City Council for permission to inaugurate electric lighting on the streets of Toronto. He was granted the right to use temporarily the fire-alarm poles on several of the principal streets in order to exhibit the new type of illumination. There was also in that year an experimental installation in the Golden Lion dry goods store on King Street, where the King Edward Hotel now stands; and one Sperry of Chicago had four arc lights at the corner of King and Yonge Streets, in an effort to obtain the contract for lighting city streets. On October 10th Alderman Hallam, seconded by Alderman Ryan, moved that "whereas the electric light for the illumination of public thoroughfares has passed beyond the region of experiment and is now an accomplished fact, being adopted in London, Liverpool, Edinburgh, and the large cities and towns on the continent, and is designed at no distant period to entirely supersede coal gas as a street illuminator, be it resolved that this Council take means as early as possible to have the centre of the City lit up with electric light, and that a Committee be appointed and named by His Worship the Mayor to get all the information necessary as to the cost of construction and maintenance, and that the Council keep the same under their control, and that the Committee report to this Council at an early date". The motion carried.[18]

[17]Reminiscences of J. Manser. For this interesting item, as well as for considerable other information concerning early electric lighting in Toronto, the writer is indebted to H. C. Powell, Esq., Chief Statistician of the Toronto Hydro-Electric System.

[18]Minutes of the City Council, October 10, 1881.

In 1882 the Industrial Exhibition showed the city the way by arranging for an installation of electric lights by the Fuller Electric Light Company of New York and the Ball Company of London. The buildings and grounds were in a state of unprecedented illumination, and the show continued each evening until 10 p.m. instead of closing at sundown as had always been the practice prior to that time.

Messrs. J. J. Wright and Howard Blizard were early operators of electric generators in Toronto, and Wright was in control of the use in Canada of some of the most important electrical patents. In the early eighties these men were working in Wright's shop in the basement of the Firstbrook Box Factory on King Street, east of Sherbourne; and later their generators were situated in a lane off Yonge Street, near King. Mr. Wright, born in England in 1850, was among the foremost early workers in the electrical field. In a biographical notice it is recorded that he was "in the United States at the time of the Centennial Exhibition of 1876, at which time electricity was beginning to attract attention as a possible means of giving light. He there became acquainted with Prof. Thomson, who was then occupying the Chair of Chemistry in the High School in Philadelphia, Pa., at which time he, in conjunction with Prof. Houston of the same school, was commencing experiments which have led up to the brilliant results of to-day. Mr. Wright built all the machinery during these experiments; he also built and put up the first electric street lamp on the continent of America, which was placed on the corner of 21st Street and Washington Ave. in the year 1879. He was amongst the first to handle electric light wires in the construction of underground service".[19]

After some years of residence alternately in Philadelphia and Toronto, Mr. Wright located permanently in the latter city in the spring of 1883, and became the manager of the Toronto Electric Light Company, which grew out of the small plant of C. J. Van Depoele of Chicago, promoter of electric railways and, with Wright, the operator of the line inaugurated at the Industrial Exhibitions of 1883-4.[20] In

[19]*Canadian Electrical News and Steam Engineering Journal*, Vol. I, No. 1, p. 1, January, 1891.

[20]For a full account see Chapter VIII, pp. 135-8.

1882 his plant was in the old Bolt Works, corner of Sherbourne and Front Street, and in the following year the machines were removed to the Gerrard Heintzman Company building on Sherbourne Street, where the Toronto Electric Light Company assumed control of them. Such were the beginnings of the generation of electrical power in Toronto.

In 1883, when the Toronto Electric Light Company was instituted and was granted the right to place poles on the streets, there were 2419 gas lamps in the city, including 88 in Queen's Park. The erection of poles and other apparatus in that year appears to have been regarded as temporary and experimental, and it was stipulated that any other company might use the poles on payment of a proportion of their cost. The territory in which poles and wires might be erected was bounded by the Esplanade, Sherbourne, Carlton, Beverley and John Streets. Like old customs, out-of-date utilities die hard, and an attempt was made by the Gas Company in 1883 to meet the challenge of electric lights. The *Globe* carried the following news item on September 22nd of that year:

"Last evening the Consumers' Gas Company gave an exhibition on King Street between Yonge and York Streets, of 14 improved street lamps and burners, known as the Whitehall & Lambeth lanterns, manufactured by William Sugg, the well-known inventor of London, England. These lamps, which are of 100 candle effective lighting power, are similar to the lamps erected by Mr. Sugg on Charing Cross, Whitehall Place, and Trafalgar Square in London, England. The Gas Company have erected them with the view of meeting the requirements by the city for high candle-power lamps, being ten times that of the street lamps now in use in Toronto. The management of the Company say they feel satisfied that they can supply a larger amount of effective lighting for a less sum than can be obtained by the electric light. These lamps, they affirm, have superseded the electric light in the city of London."[21]

In the spring of 1884 the City Council adopted the recommendation of the Committee on Fire and Gas "that the Toronto Electric Light Company and the Canadian Electric Light and Manufacturing Company be requested

[21]The *Globe*, September 22, 1883.

to put up 25 lights each, to be tested for a period of 3 months, the company not making the best showing to the satisfaction of the Corporation to withdraw from the contract. The amount to be paid to both companies to be 62c. per light per night. The test to be commenced on or before May 15th next".[22] The Toronto Electric Light Company eventually received the contract, and the fifty 2,000-candle-power lamps were placed chiefly at street corners. The *Globe* was immediately suspicious, owing to the high price which was being paid for the new lighting. Successive editorials appeared on "The Electric Light Job", the editor claiming that the cost was three times that of the gas lamps displaced, and suggesting that the price should be less than 40 cents per light per night.[23]

These early electric lights were large sputtering arc lamps—the kind that the light-keeper visited periodically in order to renew the carbons (the boys and girls were usually on hand to pick up the used "pencils"). John J. Wright was the principal maker of arc carbons, and he used to copper-plate them at Fred Divers' electroplating plant, 14 King Street East. Two lamps were in the Council Chamber and their success may, perhaps, be gauged by Alderman Moore's motion that, "as the two electric lights in the Council Chamber are a nuisance, they be removed forthwith". The same alderman moved that immediate steps be taken to terminate the use of electricity in Toronto, and to remove all wires and poles from the streets. No such reactionary policy turned back the wheels of progress, however. Gas lamps immediately began to be displaced. Early in January, 1885, it was reported to the Council that 91 electric lights had been erected since May 1, 1884, and that 294 gas lamps had been discontinued. The annual cost per gas lamp had been $22.75, while the first electric lights entailed a yearly expenditure of $226.40. Mr. Howard Blizard recalled[24] in that connection that, if a light was out, a policeman would disconnect it and the Company would not receive its 62 cents! The rate was gradually reduced until in 1906 it was but $69.35 per light per year.

[22]Minutes of the City Council, April 15, 1884.

[23]See the *Globe*, September 2, 1884, *et seq.*

[24]Mr. Blizard retired from the Toronto Hydro-Electric System on December 31, 1933.

The use of gas for street lighting long persisted, however. In Queen's Park, and in certain downtown areas where wires were not desired, gas lamps remained; but gradually they were relegated to small back streets and lanes, from which the last finally disappeared in 1911—as did the remaining electric arc lights.

The Toronto Incandescent Company was established in 1889. Prior to that date several Toronto hotels and steamships had steam-driven plants of their own, and were served by incandescent lighting in emulation of the first plant of the kind—that inaugurated by Thomas Edison in New York in September, 1882. Short-lived lamps and the high cost of the inadequate wiring of the times made early incandescent lighting a costly luxury, and there was at first no thought of extending the service to the streets of Toronto. In 1896 the Toronto Incandescent Company was absorbed by the Toronto Electric Light Company, but more than ten years passed before there was any intention of superseding the street arc lights. In 1907 lines were installed to bring power from the Falls of Niagara, and in 1910 a start was made in the use of incandescent lights in the parks and streets of Toronto, 22,000 such lamps being installed by 1911. There are at present (1934) 574.7 miles of paved streets in the city, and 551 miles are lighted by electricity; and there are also 31 miles of lights in parks, islands, etc. The lamps on residential streets are 100-watt, and on main streets 300- and 500-watt. Operating on the multiple series circuit, some 58,095 bulbs are fixed in cast iron brackets 9½ feet from the ground, placed on cement poles one hundred feet apart. While we have no record of the hiring of torch-bearers in early Toronto, as was long customary in European cities, the darkness of pre-gas days must have been most inconvenient for nocturnal travellers; and even the hundred gas lamps of the eighteen-forties provided street lighting scarcely comparable in any respect to the illumination made possible by Edison's great invention.

CHAPTER XI

Fire-Fighters of Old

For many years after the founding of the town in 1793 practically all of the buildings of York were of wood. In the early years of the new century there were two brick buildings—Quetton St. George's general store and the two wings of the Government Buildings. Log buildings predominated, though frame clap-board houses were occasionally found. Even the residence of the Lieutenant-Governor is described as "likewise formed of wood, in the figure of a half square, of one storey in height, with galleries in the centre. It is sufficiently commodious for the present state of the province, and is erected upon a bank of the lake, near the mouth of Toronto Bay."[1]

The first fire of which we have any record occurred on January 26, 1797, when "the dwelling-house of his Honour the Administrator, lately built at York, and in considerable forwardness, took fire by some accident and was entirely consumed."[2] This house, in which the Hon. Peter Russell was to live, was located on the north side of Palace (Front) Street, near Princes Street. The fire was, of course, by no means the first in York, for conflagrations were common in the days of wooden buildings. Consequently laws were passed both by the Provincial Government and the Magistrates in an attempt to lessen the possibilities of devastation by fire.

In 1800 it was ordered, in pursuance of an Act of the Legislature entitled "An Act to Guard against Accidents by Fire", that "every housekeeper in the Town of York shall, on or before the first day of October next ensuing, provide and keep TWO BUCKETS for carrying water when any house shall happen to be on fire, which buckets shall be made either of wood, leather or canvas, painted on the outside and covered with pitch on the inside, and shall hold at least two gallons of water. And the said buckets shall be marked with the Christian and surname of the

[1]George Heriot: *Travels through the Canadas*, 1807, p. 138.
[2]*Upper Canada Gazette*, February 8, 1797.

housekeeper to whose house they belong, and shall not be used for any other purpose than the extinguishing of fires". The regulation was also adopted that every householder "shall keep two ladders, the one to reach from the ground to the eaves of the house, and the other to be properly secured and fixed with hooks or bolts on the roof near the chimney".[3] In Lieutenant Stretton's water-colour of the York Barracks may be seen these ladders on the roofs of the log buildings, and there are still people living who can recall seeing decayed ladders on early Toronto structures.

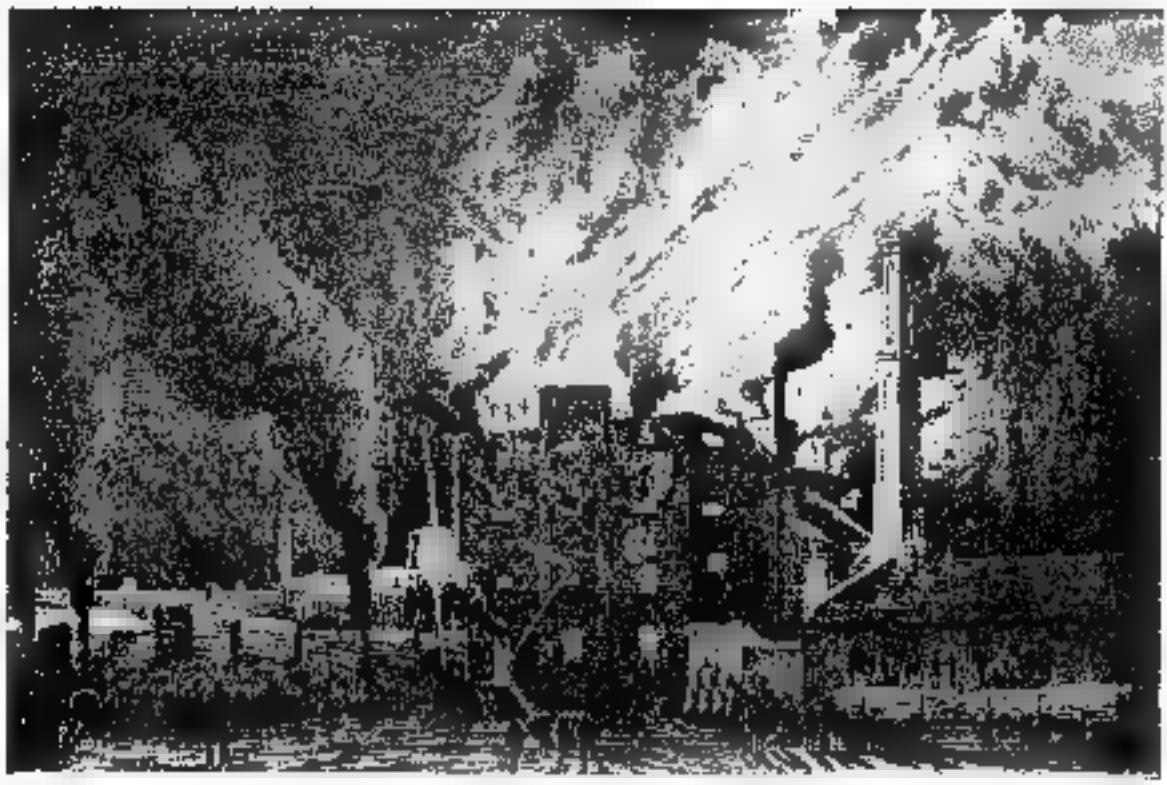
In 1802 the Hon. Peter Russell presented a fire-engine to the town; whereupon the citizens, to show their gratitude, erected a fire hall by subscription "for the preservation of the engine; and such measures will be immediately adopted as are best calculated to procure the most easy access to the engine at all hours of the day and night".[4] For many years fire-fighting remained everybody's business, buckets of water being carried from the Bay or the nearest cistern or well to the scene of the conflagration. In 1812 the stacking of hay was forbidden in York, presumably to lessen the fire hazard. In the following year the Americans are said to have carried away a fire-engine belonging to York, possibly the one presented by Governor Russell, or a military engine used at the barracks.

In 1815 there was a fire in the Rev. John Strachan's residence, and included among those who aided in saving his property were members of the garrison, and several strangers who were fortunate enough to be denominated "respectable" in the card of thanks:

"Card—Dr. Strachan begs leave to return his thanks to the inhabitants of York, and also to the military, and several respectable strangers, for their prompt assistance last Sunday in first endeavouring to extinguish the fire which broke forth at his house, and in afterwards saving his property."[5]

Chapter II of the Statutes of Upper Canada, 1817, provided for the establishment of a police in York, Sandwich and Amherstburg, and gave authority to the magistrates to

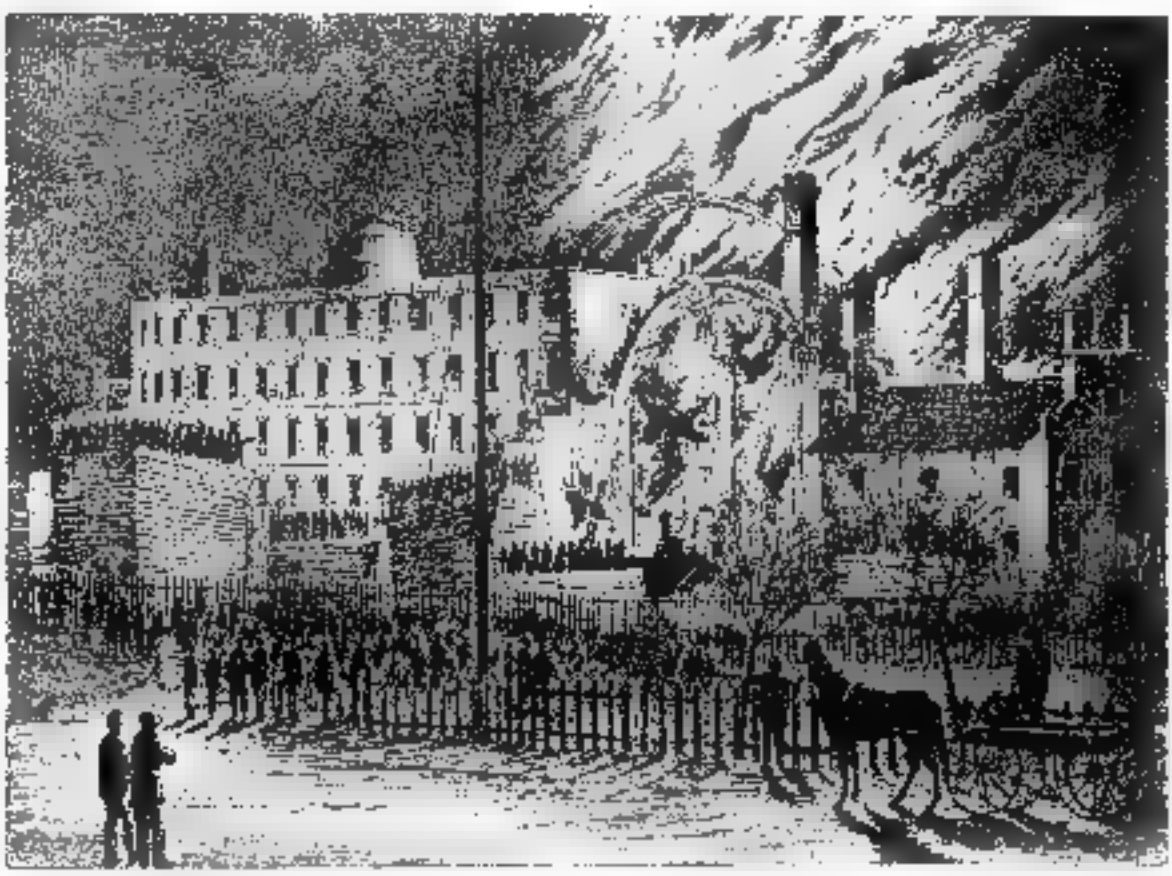
[3] *Ibid.*, April 12, 1800.
[4] *Ibid.*, December 18, 1802.
[5] *Ibid.*, March 11, 1815.



Canadian Illustrated News.

THE BURNING OF BOULTON'S MILL, NOVEMBER 18, 1870

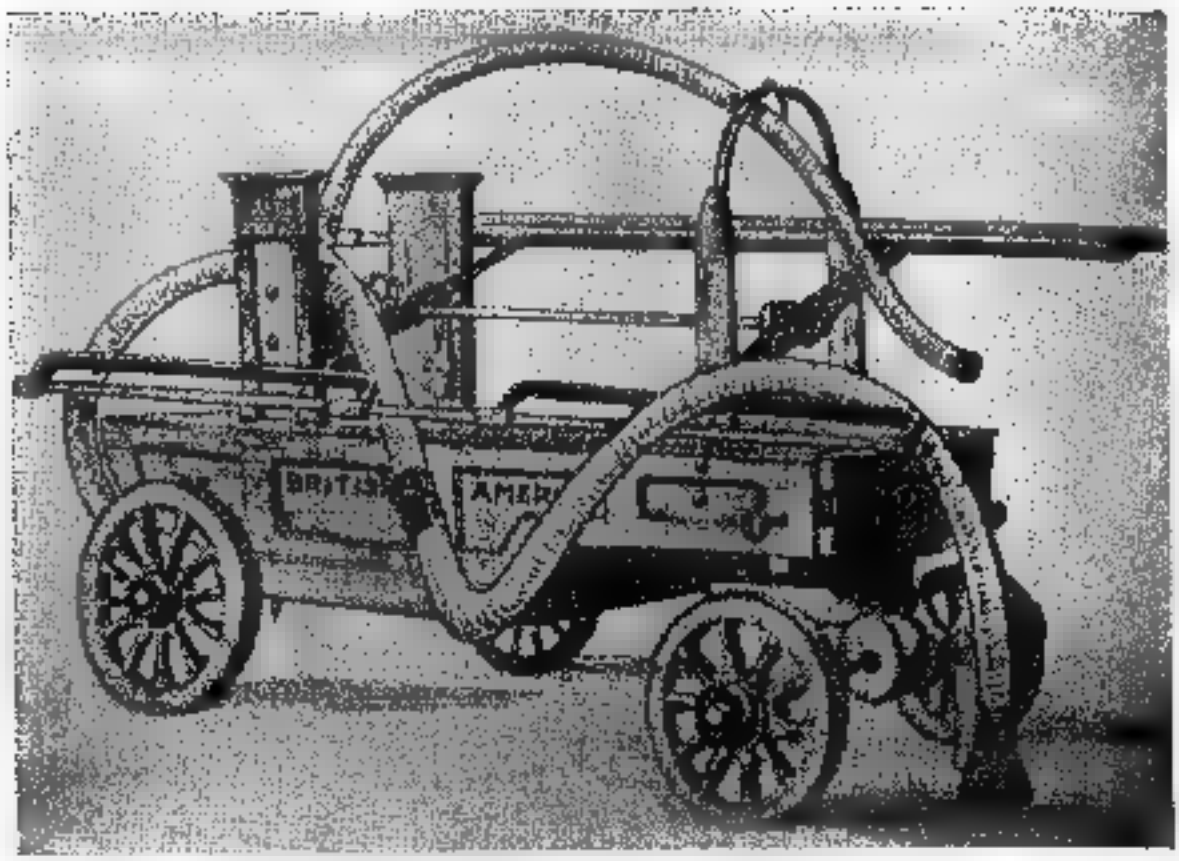
J. H. Boulton's Grist Mill was located at the corner of Bay Street and the Esplanade.



Canadian Illustrated News. W. Armstrong.

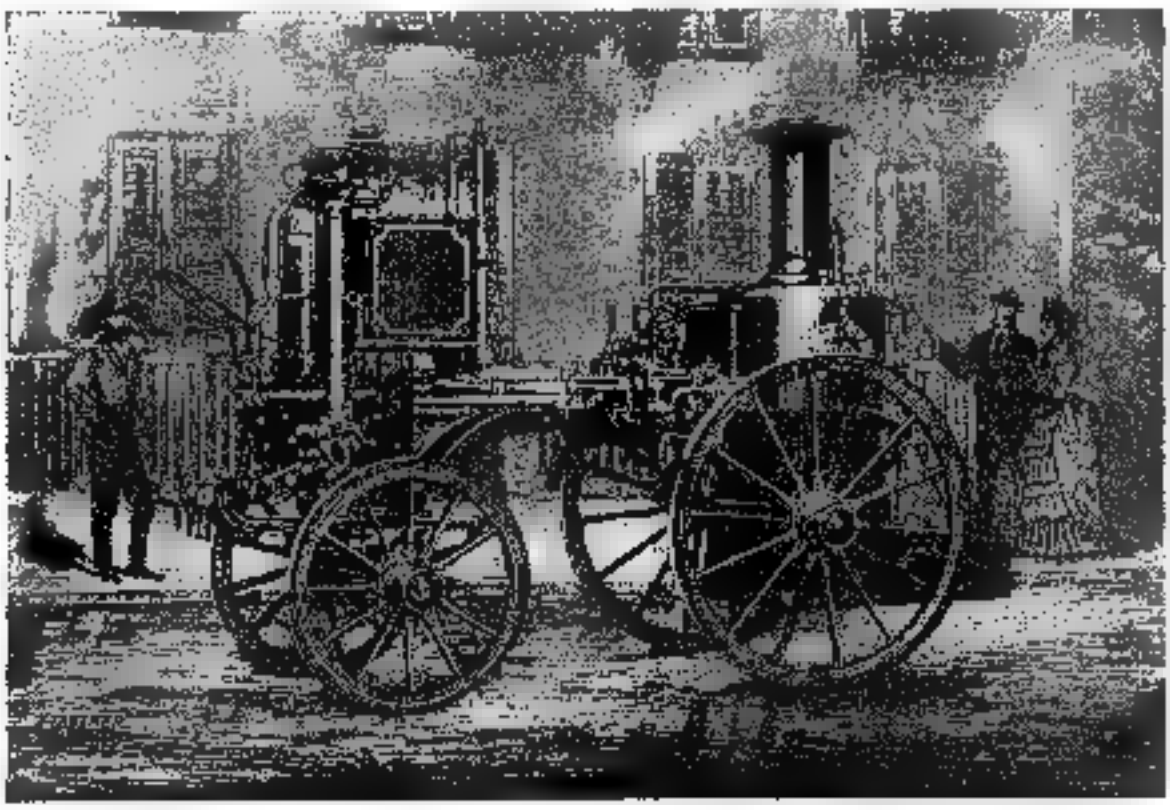
THE BURNING OF CLEMENT'S SASH FACTORY, DECEMBER 17, 1870

The building was situated on Front Street, opposite the Queen's Hotel, and its destruction was due to an incendiary.



THE BRITISH AMERICA, 1837

A "Montreal fore-and-aft" machine, much more powerful than the earlier "goose-neck" fire-engines. The *British America* was effectively used when Peter Matthews' men set fire to the Don Bridge in December, 1837.



Canadian Illustrated News.

A STEAM FIRE-ENGINE OF THE SEVENTIES

The introduction of steam fire-engines put an end to the old hand-pumpers, and the volunteer Fire Brigade did not long survive.

raise by assessment a sum not exceeding £100 annually for the purchase of fire-engines, buckets, etc. Pursuant to this Act the town of York issued a series of regulations, the violation of which led to the imposition of fines. Prominent among these were laws having as their object the prevention of fires. The various regulations were printed in 1823 at the direction of S. Heward, Clerk of the Peace.[6] They were amended at the General Sessions in June of that year, but it may be assumed that they were substantially the same in 1817.

To facilitate putting out fires in private homes it was stipulated that "every inhabited Dwelling-house shall, by the occupants of the same, be provided with one good and serviceable Ladder, long enough to reach from the ground raised, so as to give ready access to the roof; and two or more roof ladders suspended by iron fastenings from the ridge of the Roof, and reaching to the Eaves, and, where the Chimney or Chimneys rise more than three feet from the Roof, a small Ladder to rest against each Chimney, of sufficient length to reach the top of it. . . . That every Chimney or Flue in which a Fire is commonly made shall from the first day of November to the first of April, in each and every year, be swept under the direction of the Inspector of Chimneys at least once in every four weeks; and when the same are used daily, as in kitchens and manufactories, once in every year in the same manner. . . . Each and every owner, tenant or occupier of a Dwelling-house shall provide the said House with two or three good and serviceable leathern buckets, capable of containing three gallons each, which shall be hung up and exposed to view in the most convenient place nearest the front entrance of the said House, to be in readiness in the extinguishing of Fire". Persons disobeying any of the regulations were subject to fines of from ten to forty shillings.

In order to have someone in charge during fires, six "discreet and active persons", two from each ward, were appointed Firewardens, and their duties were "to command and enforce, with the help of Constables and other Peace

[6] *Regulations for the Police of the Town of York, in the Home District, Made and Ordained in Adjourned Quarter Sessions, May 14th, 1817—Revised and Amended in Adjourned General Sessions, June 21st, 1823.*

Officers, the aid and assistance of all the male inhabitants of the Town between the years of 16 and 60; and to preserve, as far as possible, order, regularity and despatch in the lines for the supply of water; and to appoint and establish guards for the preservation of furniture and other effects from injury and pillage". To prevent anyone from pleading ignorance of the Firewardens' identity, and so attempting to disobey orders, it was stipulated that each Firewarden should wear as a distinguishing badge of authority "a white handkerchief tied on the left arm below the elbow". Refusal to obey instructions subjected offenders to fines of twenty to forty shillings. The only bell in the town at that time was in St. James' Church, and the alarm of fire was sounded by ringing this bell and by shouting, at first solo and then in concert, until a large number had congregated. As speedily as possible a double row of citizens was formed from the burning building to the Bay, or the nearest cistern or pump, and along one line passed buckets of water, while the empties returned along the other. Prior to the formation of the first Fire Company an old pump, hauled to fires on a wagon, was worked by eight men, and such water as the bucket brigade and the carters provided was projected into the flames.

In 1818 a fire-engine costing £150 was ordered from London, England. In 1823, three years prior to the formation of the first organised fire brigade in York, thirty-eight citizens offered to serve as volunteer firemen, and among those who enrolled were representatives of the Jarvis, Small, Gamble, Ridout, McNab, Sullivan and other prominent families. Two years later cash prizes were offered to carters who earliest appeared with puncheons of water at fires, and this inducement was continued for over a quarter of a century. Among the members of the brigade organised in 1826 were, as before, "some of the most respectable merchants and tradesmen of the town".[7] There were Fire-Engine and Hook-and-Ladder companies, each with a full quota of officers, and the first captain of the brigade was Thomas Carfrae, Jnr. The engine purchased at the time was the *York*, and when worked by sixteen men it could

[7] [W. L. Mackenzie's] *New Almanack for the Canadian True Blues*, 1834. p. 11.

project a ¾-inch stream of water a distance of 140 feet. The engine-house of the original fire department was a two-storey brick building which stood on the west side of Church Street, between Court and Adelaide Streets. The *U. E. Loyalist* makes the following comment concerning the inauguration of the fire company:

"We are happy to hear a number of spirited individuals are taking the necessary steps for forming themselves into a fire company, under the provisions of an act passed during the last session of Parliament. The necessity of such a company having been severely felt on former occasions, much praise is due to those who came forward to enroll themselves as the protectors of the property of their fellow-townsmen when visited by the most dreadful of all calamities."[8]

In the same issue some space is devoted to impressing upon its readers that "too much attention cannot be paid by the police of the town in their regulations for the prevention of fires, and particularly where the buildings are of wood. At the commencement of the winter season more especially, when stoves are put up, the greatest attention is necessary in the manner in which they are placed, and the observance of regulations which relate to them should be strictly enforced. In carrying such regulations into due effect much depends on the efficiency of the police officer. In the event of fire breaking out, the offer of a premium to the person who shall bring the first puncheon of water has been found of infinite service".[9]

Regulations similar to those adopted in 1817 were in force in 1827, except that in that year they were amended to provide for the appointment of fifteen firewardens instead of six. When the town of York became the city of Toronto in 1834 a new set of regulations came into force, and the number of firewardens was increased to twenty-five, —five in each of the five wards which then composed the city. Instead of the former white handkerchief, each firewarden was to "have in his hand a baton or short staff with the words FIRE WARDEN painted thereon", and so accoutred he was to be master of ceremonies at all conflagrations.

[8] *U. E. Loyalist*, June 24, 1826. [9] *Ibid.*

The law of 1834 contains very detailed regulations[16] concerning stoves and stovepipes, ashes and ash-pans. The passing of pipes through floors, ceilings and partitions, and the securing of them to beams by wire, chain or iron hoop, are similarly regulated. Stoves must be at least twenty inches from partitions, and they must be furnished with metal ash-pans, which are to be at least four inches off the floor. Unused pipe-holes must be covered "with a tin or sheet-iron stopper".

The days when matches were uncommon, and when it was not easy to strike a light, are recalled by the regulation that "no person shall carry through any square, street or lane of the city, or through any yard, any lighted coals or wood, unless in a covered vessel made of iron or other safe material". To store ashes inside or outside the home a "safe receptacle" must be provided, and anyone not using one of such a type was subject to fine.

The burning of hay, straw, chips, shavings or other combustible materials shall take place only "on a damp day, when there is no wind; and all such fires shall be completely extinguished before seven o'clock in the morning from the first day of May to the last day of October, and before nine o'clock in the morning from the first day of November to the end of April, and the ashes or rubbish shall be removed without delay".

With reference to livery or other stables the law stipulated that no one shall keep or allow to be carried a lighted candle or lamp unless "enclosed in a lantern so constructed as to emit the light and prevent its communicating fire to any combustible materials". Smokers were similarly warned that anyone "who shall smoke or have in his or her possession any lighted pipe or cigar in any workshop wherein are combustible materials, or in any stable or barn, shall forfeit and pay for each and every offence the sum of five shillings".

In addition to the former regulation compelling homeowners to have ladders, there was one added stating that all buildings two or more storeys high which were thereafter erected must have "a scuttle on the roof, and a suitable stairway or ladder leading to the same from the

[16]See *Upper Canada Gazette*, May 22, 1834.

inside". Another regulation prohibited the setting off of any "gunpowder, squib, rocket, or any other fireworks, or to fire any firearms in any part of the city". No mention is made of the exemption from this rule of public holidays and similar celebrations, but it may be assumed that the rigour of the law was relaxed on such occasions.

The appointment of one or more fire inspectors was also provided for by this Act, and their duties were "to examine carefully at least once in every month every house, store or building, and to ascertain and note any violations of any of the preceding sections, and to report the same to the Mayor or any of the Aldermen".

As in earlier regulations, the periodic sweeping of flues and chimneys was ordered, and fines were to be levied against any persons refusing a visit of the fire inspector every six weeks between November 1st and April 1st. Peculiarly enough, there was a clause stating that a person need not have his chimney swept if he did not wish, provided that he was willing to pay 3d. to the inspector, and provided also that if a fire occurred in his home within the ensuing six weeks the tenant would be subject to a 40-shilling fine—eight times the penalty for a mere refusal. Even if the inspector swept the flue, however, the tenant was still subject to a 25-shilling fine if a fire occurred, so they got him one way or another no matter what course he followed!

The inauguration of the city of Toronto led to numerous other regulations calculated to reduce the fire hazard. A report in 1834 suggested that it would be preferable if new buildings should be constructed of brick or stone; but if a series of wooden structures were erected the contractor should, if possible, make the walls between them of brick. Another suggestion was that persons leasing or selling lots might aid in fire prevention if they preferred tenants who would build of brick or stone. In the first year of the city the total expenditure for fire-fighting, including the payment of carters for hauling water, amounted to the modest sum of £17 15s. 5½d.

In 1834 a number of regulations concerning the existing fire companies were also made. In the matter of organisation it was stipulated that "the different engine and hook-

and-ladder fire companies shall be under the control and direction of a captain, first and second lieutenant, secretary and treasurer". Those in charge were expected to have all apparatus in good condition at all times so that they could proceed immediately to every fire; though, of course, it must be understood that these volunteer firemen were on duty only on occasions of fire, and at such other times after working hours as they wished to practise or parade. The only full-time worker appears to have been a man to wash, clean and oil the engines and apparatus, and it is stated that he "will receive for such services out of the funds of the city the sum of twenty-five pounds annually, to be paid in quarterly payments by the chamberlain of the city".

An important provision in the regulations of early volunteer fire companies, and what may be considered as their only remuneration or reward, was that each member was exempted "from militia duty in time of peace, from serving as a juryman or constable, and from all other parish or city offices". There was a Common Council in the firemen's organisation, and, in addition to being the ruling body, its members were distinguished at fires by "a white sash, to pass over the right shoulder and under the left arm". The members of this council, as well as the firewardens and the officers of the various fire companies were empowered to demand obedience from all citizens who might be present at fires.

The all-important matter was to secure sufficient water, and the conduct of carters was therefore regulated very minutely. There was no waterworks system, and the deficiency of the water supply allowed many a fire to threaten the whole town, so in 1834 it was stipulated—and similar rules had for some years been in force—that "every licensed carter in the city shall at all times provide himself with a good and sufficient puncheon of water for the purpose of conveying to fires; and on the alarm of fire being given he shall forthwith procure and proceed with a puncheon of water to the place of fire, and shall continue to actively provide water under the direction of, and until discharged by the officers in command of the engines, under a penalty of twenty shillings. To insure the utmost promptitude in furnishing water at fires the following premiums shall be

awarded to licensed carters or others: for the first puncheon of water brought to the fire and furnished to any of the engines, the sum of £1 5s. 0d.; for the second, 15s.; for the third, 10s.; for the fourth, 5s.; and for each puncheon afterwards furnished, £0 1s. 0d."

It was essential for carters to exercise some care in speeding over the rough roads of "Muddy York", for William Lyon Mackenzie and his Aldermen inserted the wise proviso that "no carter shall be entitled to any premiums whose puncheon is not at least three-fourths full when delivered to the engine." Canvas covers for their barrels were found valuable by some carters in meeting this regulation. That the conduct of citizens at fires was not always above criticism may be seen from the regulation that "it shall be the duty of the High Bailiff or his deputy, as soon as possible after every fire, to report to the sitting magistrate any person or persons who may have been imprisoned for offences committed thereat".[11]

In 1834 the Church Street fire hall was divided into three sections, No. 1 Engine Company occupying the south portion, No. 2 the centre, and the Hook-and-Ladder Company the northern part. At the south-west corner was the bell tower, and the bell was rung by a rope in the lower portion of the building. At the rear was a long one-storey shed for drying hose. Fifty men, two engines and 750 feet of hose made up the equipment of the two engine companies in the closing year of the town of York; while the Hook-and-Ladder Company, formed in April, 1831, was sixty strong. In 1835 a second hook-and-ladder company was organised, and the city voted £55 for the purchase of uniforms.

Number 2 Engine Company resulted from the purchase by public subscription of a second engine, and in 1837 the British American Life and Fire Assurance Company donated a third, which went by the name *British America*. In 1839-40 a hall was built at the south-east corner of Bay and Temperance Streets for this engine. It was known as a "Montreal fore-and-aft" machine, and a full crew of twelve to fifteen men at each brake were in charge of its operation. This engine was much more powerful than the "piano" or "goose-neck" machine, which could accommodate only seven

[11] *Ibid.*

or eight men at each brake. No. 2 Company's engine was of the latter type, the name resulting from the fact that the hose was attached to a pipe curved like the neck of a goose, and rising about three feet above the deck of the machine. A cistern or water tank with a capacity of four or five puncheons was attached to the rear of the engine, and when it was in use a suction hose was fastened to a valve at the rear of the machine and the other end put in the cistern.

Competitions among volunteer fire brigades were frequently international in scope, and the chief stress was laid upon speed in reaching fires and in distance to which water could be projected from the hose by efficient working of the engines. On September 4, 1837, No. 3 Company was pleased to find during a practice that the *British America* could throw water 140 feet horizontally. In December of the same year this Company was particularly prominent during the scare that Toronto experienced when William Lyon Mackenzie and his "Patriots" gathered at Montgomery's Tavern on Yonge Street and seriously threatened to capture the city. On December 7th the fire brigade met for the purpose of forming a volunteer company to aid in resisting the invaders. A section was also formed to patrol the streets at night and keep order during the Rebellion, and it carried on until superseded by a body of 120 men enlisted at the suggestion of the Mayor. When Peter Matthews' men set fire to the Don Bridge and adjacent buildings on Thursday, December 7, 1837, the members of the British America played a notable part:

"With great spirit the members of the company started for the scene of action, most of them with a musket in one hand and the drag rope in the other; but ere their arrival at the building on fire the enemy had disappeared, not even waiting to see us, much less to fight, the heavy rumbling of the engine and cistern having frightened them into the belief that the cannon was on the track. On our arrival at the bridge our gallant captain ordered the engine into operation, but upon reconnoitring it was found the buildings were beyond salvation, with the exception of the toll-house. The bridge was saved by pulling up some of the planks and pouring water from buckets upon the burning embers. After

the fire was extinguished the company again made its way to the station into the Market Square about 9 in the evening."

Remaining there as a guard for the night, No. 3 Company was again called out by the Mayor at midnight, intelligence having reached him that 61 rebels were stationed beyond the Don Bridge. He asked for volunteers to go with him and capture the enemy, and with twenty men and "the High Bailiff on horseback" the doughty Chief Magistrate marched along the Kingston Road "to the lower toll-gate, or the fourth mile tree". Finding no one in the vicinity the detachment returned to the city, arriving about 3 a.m., and received hearty thanks from the Mayor. On the following day two members of the Company were expelled for refusal to take up arms in defence of the city.[12]

It must be kept in mind that for most of the nineteenth century these fire companies were composed entirely of volunteers. The chief attractions of the organisation, apart from the sense of public duty, were the excitement of the work and the social activities connected therewith, though the exemption from military and other duties in time of peace was no doubt pleasing to some members. Annual festivals at which the men paraded in uniform amid the applause of their friends, competitions with brigades from other towns, suppers, social evenings and grand balls,—all of these activities contributed greatly to the social life of a large number of people; and there were occasions, too, when a ministrel show or some other theatrical venture would be undertaken by the members of the brigade. There was a feeling of *camaraderie* in firemen's organisations that led to much wholesome rivalry between companies; and in some towns it was more than suggested that a spirit of bravado was responsible for many of the incendiary fires which were common almost everywhere. But in general the public spirit and self-sacrifice of fire-fighters has been a noted characteristic, and it is as true today among permanent civic employees as it was among the volunteers.

Processions were characteristic of the times, and the

[12]The Minute Book of the British American Company is quoted at considerable length in J. Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*, 1894-1914. Vol. II, pp. 568 *et. seq.*

Fire Brigade always took a prominent part. In June, 1838, the officers of the three fire companies met at Baker's Black Swan Inn to make arrangements for a firemen's procession on Queen Victoria's Coronation Day, June 28th. It was there agreed that the British American Fire Engine Company (No. 3) should lead, the Hook-and-Ladder Company be placed second, and the Toronto Company bring up the rear. The minute book of the British America describes that on the 28th "the hydraulic engine owned by Watkins and Harris, hardware merchants, King Street, drawn by a horse and having a handsome flag upon it, came up, when the Company, preceded by the assistant engineer No. 1, Richard Woodsworth, with the engine, drawn by four horses, with banner and flags of a splendid description, proceeded to the City Hall, in front of which they were joined by the other fire companies, and after being arranged by the Chief Engineer, accompanied by the united bands of the Queen's Foresters and Rangers, proceeded down King Street to Berkeley", ... and so over the chief streets until the City Hall was again reached. Here, "leaving the machines in front, they repaired to the Council Room, where a collation was being prepared for them by the stewards, of which they partook and then withdrew to their respective quarters, the display being considered one of the most gratifying the citizens of this place ever witnessed."[13]

On the 18th of July following, a similar parade was held as part of the reception accorded to Lord and Lady Durham. The *cortège* proceeded to the Parliament Buildings, "the steps being carpeted, and a crimson chair of state awaiting his reception". About 10,000 persons were present on this occasion, "the most numerous and splendid display ever made in the city". On the following day another procession was organised to give the Governor a send-off. As on the previous day, the members of the City Council and of the National Societies of St. Patrick, St. George and St. Andrew joined the fire companies in honouring the Earl of Durham, and at 3 o'clock "they proceeded to and lined Mr. Brown's new wharf, east of the foot of Scott Street", and there awaited the arrival of the party. As usual upon such occasions there was a long wait, but at five the official party

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 572.

approached the wharf and the boat, "when a most violent thunderstorm suddenly coming on drenched such as could not get shelter, and prevented the Earl from addressing the spectators". The cheers of the citizens, however, followed him far out into the Bay.[14]

The importance attached to appearances in these firemen's processions was very great. The Cobourg Brigade sported a "parade machine" which cost $1,500, but was of no value apart from the admiration it engendered on gala days; while in 1842 the Toronto British America Company resolved to purchase "a carved and gilt lion for the use of the Company on procession days, in consequence of the desire to be in possession of a lion of their own without the difficulty of procuring one for processions similar to the last, by being under obligation of borrowing from Mr. Parkiss or any other person".[15]

The by-laws which early fire companies passed to regulate the conduct of members are of considerable interest. As an example may be taken the regulations in force in No. 3 Engine Company in 1837. It was usual to meet one evening in each month, and any absentees were fined 2s. 6d., or if merely late, 1s. 3d. Sickness, or absence from the city on business, were the only recognised excuses. The fines went to a general fund which was drawn upon for such purposes as the majority approved, and any member failing to pay a forfeit was expelled. Similar fines were levied for disobedience at meetings or at fires; while "any member found guilty of smoking or swearing at any meeting of the company shall be fined one shilling for the first offence, two for the second, and expelled for the third". Similarly any member appearing at engine practice or on duty without his fire-hat was subject to fine. A typical regular meeting of firemen is that described by the minute-book of this company for June 4, 1838:

"On Monday, June 4th, 1838, the Company met at half-past six o'clock, called the roll, and took out the machine to King Street, where, having some hogsheads of water ready, the force was tried over the Commercial Bank. It was found that the machine worked well, throwing fully 20 feet over the tops of the chimneys of that high building.

[14] *Ibid.* [15] *Ibid.*

After trying her satisfactorily they returned to the engine house and collected twenty shillings in fines".[16]

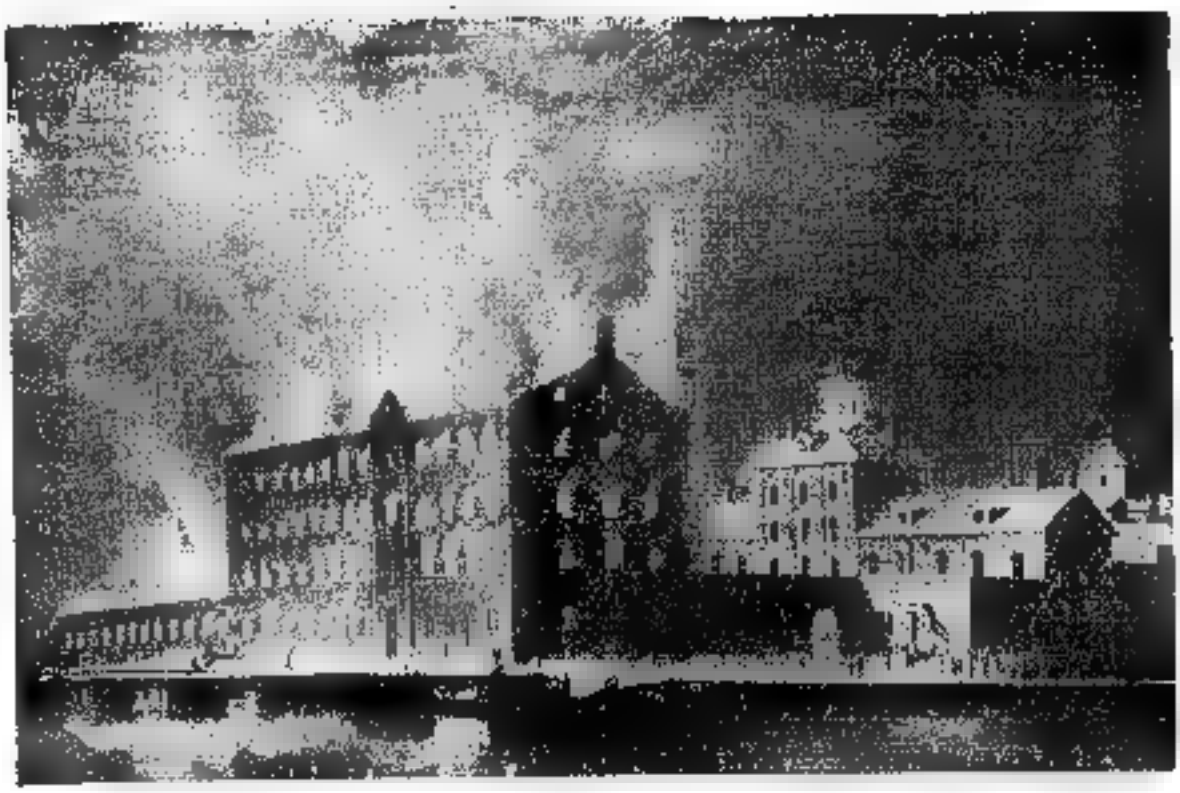
In 1838 there was a reorganization of the various fire companies. Those men who wished to continue as members of the brigade had first to report to the City Council before they were considered eligible, whereupon they could choose which fire company they wished to join. The reorganisation was necessary because of dissension in the Brigade, probably caused by the ill-feeling aroused during the late Rebellion. Thomas Harris was placed in charge of the new brigade.

In 1842 Fire Company No. 4 was organised and equipped with a "goose-neck" machine. Three years later the Firemen's Benefit Society was established with the object of providing for firemen disabled at fires, or, in the event of their death, in some measure compensating their widows and children. This was the period of the first waterworks in Toronto, but the pipes were so small and the hydrants so few and so unproductive of water that an almost entire dependence was placed upon the carters and their water puncheons. The average puncheon would hold sixty to eighty gallons—about three times the capacity of a flour barrel.

The Toronto waterworks was in operation in 1843, but sufficient progress had been made by 1842 to cause the British America Company to write a letter to the Chief Engineer advising him that the hydrants should be increased to provide an adequate supply of water at fires. In 1847 the deficient hydrant service led the same company to suggest to the city that "the so-called waterworks, for which the citizens are taxed so heavily, are in general of little service in case of fire, and might with advantage to the safety of the inhabitants be at once shut up". It was suggested that unless by some means the Company could not be compelled to live up to their obligations in that respect "the members of the fire company cannot be expected to remain associated in the service".[17]

In the same year the Fire and Water Committee of the City Council suggested that the service provided was worse than useless at fires, since the arrangement with the Company "had considerably enhanced the danger by leading the

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 570. [17] *Ibid.*, pp. 572-3.



Reproduced by Courtesy of Members of the Gooderham Family. William Armstrong.

BURNING OF THE GOODERHAM MILL, OCTOBER 26, 1869

For over a century the Gooderham & Worts' establishment—at first a grist mill, then a distillery—has been located on the same site.

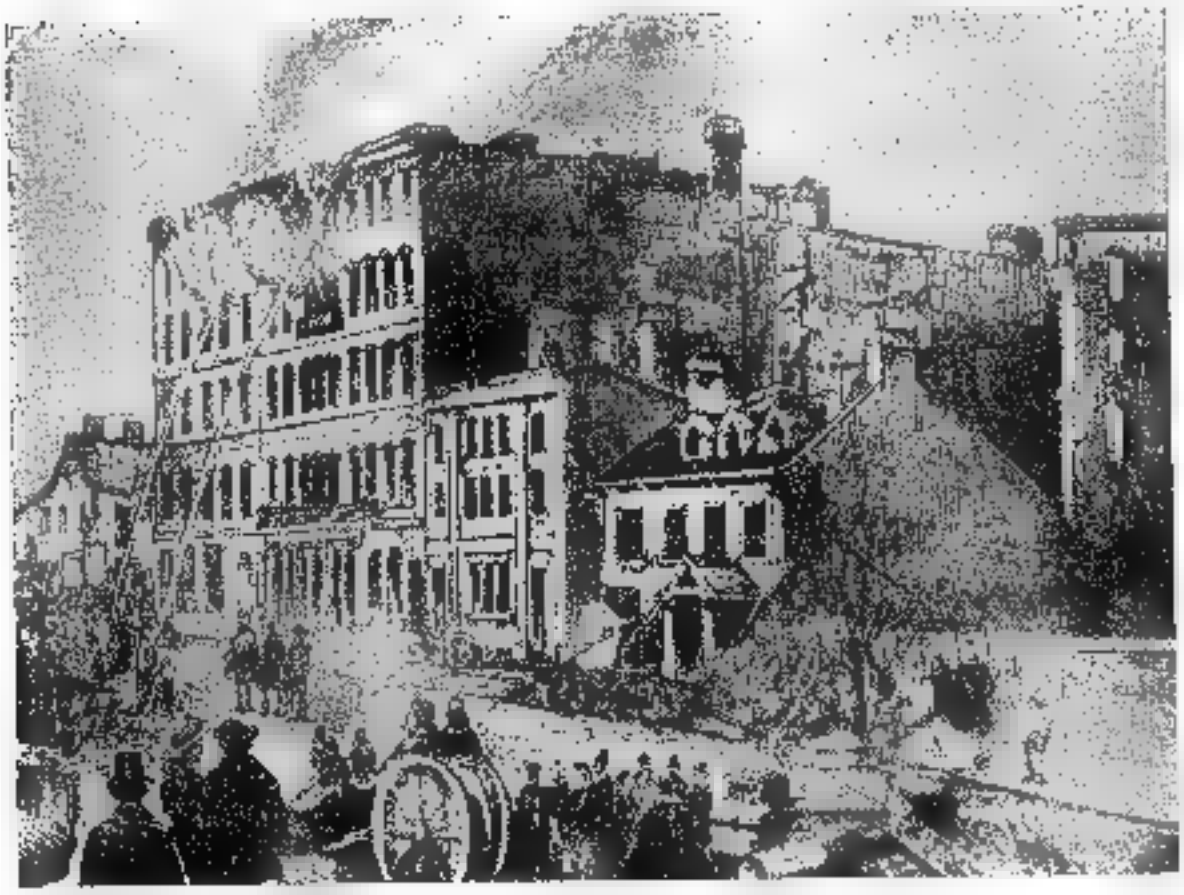
Canadian Illustrated News.

AN ALARM OF FIRE IN THE EIGHTIES

While public executions have long since come to an end, fires still remain notable spectacles, though modern fire-fighting equipment has rendered unlikely a repetition of the great conflagrations of the past.

History of the Toronto Fire Department.

THE TORONTO FIRE DEPARTMENT IN 1897



Canadian Illustrated News.

Shakspeare Inn | Rossin House | Club Chambers | Toronto Club

ROSSIN HOUSE FIRE, NOVEMBER 22, 1862

In 1833-4 John Cotter's New British Coffee House was erected on the site. Ellah's Hotel and the Rossin House (since 1909 the Prince George Hotel) round out a century of social life on the corner,

citizens to the entertainment of a deceptive dependence on a source of supply which had in almost every instance proved defective". One example will suffice. In the second week of January, 1848, there was a serious fire on Yonge Street, and in describing it the *Examiner* remarked: "As usual, the fire engines, although on the ground, were of no use for about a quarter of an hour. No water could be had at the hydrants, and when it did come it was insufficient to supply one engine. . . . The waterworks are justly regarded as a public nuisance instead of being a benefit".[18] At that time the Fire Brigade delivered an ultimatum stating that they would all resign if the system was not improved; some of them even suggested a march upon the Waterworks and the destruction of the plant. Three weeks later Rennie's Tavern was burned, but for an hour no water could be obtained from the Church Street hydrant, only the proximity of the fire to the Bay enabling a plentiful supply.

In the years just previous to the establishment of the Waterworks the annual cost of having carters haul water to fires averaged a little more than £100 a year. During 1839, 1840, 1841, and 1842 a total of £419 16s. 3d. was expended for this service. When the Waterworks opened in 1843 the city agreed to pay £250 for the hydrants, or "fireplugs" as they were early called. As carters, of whom there were fifty-seven in that year, had still to be relied upon to provide puncheons of water, the total expense per year for having water supplied at fires was about £400 during the period 1843-1847. The puncheon supply system continued until 1861, and prizes of four, three, two and one dollar were awarded to the first four carters reaching a fire with a loaded puncheon, while a "York shilling" (12½c.) was paid

[18]The *Examiner*, January 12, 1848. It was not unusual for Mr. Furniss, owner of the waterworks, to appear at fires and tell the citizens in no uncertain terms that they were getting all the hydrant service the city was willing to pay for. In early years there was no pressure in the hydrants after nightfall, and the entire supply of water was afforded by the cartmen. An illuminating description of a fire under these circumstances in 1847 may be found in Patrick Slater's *The Yellow Briar*, 1933. pp. 50-52. Racing carters—many of them drunk,—volunteer firemen pitching house furnishings out of upper windows, the odd dishonest citizen scurrying home with what he could pick up, even the pumping equipment in flames—no wonder a fire long remained the most exciting public spectacle!

for every additional arrival. When a carter reached the fire with his cask he was given a round disc of tin or lead. On the disc was marked the number of the company which issued it, and upon its presentation to the proper official the bearer received his money. At times it was usual to pay cartmen on a time basis after the prize-winners were decided. Some carters were always in readiness for a race to a fire, keeping a full puncheon on their wagons both day and night. Concerning these good old days, C. C. Taylor recalled the prevalence of fires at week-ends:

"It was very remarkable that about this time scarcely a Saturday or Sunday night passed without a fire taking place. Some said they occurred opportunely on these nights, because everybody was at liberty, and, the firemen being volunteers, their occupations were not interfered with; and this, as a way to relieve the monotony that prevailed over everything, had led to the wilful acts of incendiarism which undoubtedly took place, but which were all overruled for the growth and general improvement of the city.

"The fire brigade in 1850 consisted of four engine companies, two hook-and-ladder and one hose company, Mr. Ashfield being then the chief engineer. The old hand-engines were not very powerful, and, when the firemen grew tired at the pumping, the law compelled any bystanders to 'lend an hand'; while many were willing, many more could be seen taking their departure when there was a prospect of a 'draft' for active service.

"There were some remarkable instances of destruction of property, one of which the writer distinctly remembers. A fire took place in a frame building on King Street, one door from the corner of Yonge, then occupied by Messrs. Betley & Kay. The flames from the wooden building were driven by an easterly wind into the millinery and mantle room over the store of Betley & Kay. On the arrival of the firemen the fine windows were immediately smashed in with axes, when the door might have served as well; and when the fire was extinguished it was found that a number of fine silk velvet mantles had been placed at the door of the room to prevent the water from spreading to other parts of the building."[19]

[19]C. C. Taylor: *Toronto Called Back*. 1886. p. 69.

Mrs. Anna Jameson, an observant traveller who spent some months in Toronto in 1837, was similarly impressed by the attitude of indifference which many of the inhabitants affected towards fires. She was assured that "whatever might be the private loss or suffering, a fire was always a public benefit in Toronto—a good brick house was sure to arise in the place of a wooden one".[20] However that might be in theory, few fires were ever a benefit to individuals in a day when fire insurance was unusual. In May, 1858, as a result of the great number of fires which were continually occurring, the Mayor called a special meeting of the Council to consider means of more effectively preserving citizens' property from destruction. It was resolved to organise a volunteer night patrol throughout the city, and to offer $1,500 reward for the apprehension and conviction of incendiaries.

A primitive means of spreading the news of fire was long in use in Toronto. Even in 1846 the bells to be rung in case of fire were the two in St. James' Cathedral, and it is announced in a publication that the key to the church may be obtained "at W. Atkinson, Esq.'s, City Buildings, and at the Police Station, West Market Place".[21] It is rather remarkable that any such antiquated and uncertain means of notifying the public should have been used at such a late date, but perhaps the town crier or bellman (for Toronto had one—in imitation of the custom prevalent in the Old Land) aided in spreading the alarm, though a citizen who remembered him recalled that his "principal duty seemed to be to call out the names and give a description of lost children and animals".[22]

Among fire regulations enacted in Toronto in 1850 was one requesting permission from Council prior to the erection of foundries, blacksmith shops or steam engines; while the manufacture of varnish, fireworks or other combustible materials was similarly controlled. Steamers in dock had to have screens over their smokestacks to prevent the escape of sparks, and the Mayor directed a surveyor to examine

[20] Anna Jameson: *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada.* 1838. Vol. I, p. 111.

[21] *Brown's Toronto City and Home District Directory, 1846-7*, p. 3.

[22] W. H. Pearson: *Recollections and Records of Toronto of Old.* 1914. p. 124.

"all fireplaces, hearths, ovens, boilers, furnaces, or any place where fires were made or kept". It was also stated that no person might keep more than twenty-eight pounds of gunpowder in one place for more than 48 hours, unless it was in an approved powder magazine.

These regulations followed closely upon the great fire of 1849, a conflagration of such magnitude that firemen and citizens despaired of being able to stop it. The fire commenced early in the afternoon of April 7th at Covey's Tavern, in the centre of the Frederick, Nelson (Jarvis), Adelaide and King block. There was a strong north wind, and the efforts of carters and bucket brigades availed but little when the chief fire-engine broke down. The total loss exceeded £100,000, and only a comparatively small amount of insurance was carried by the owners. The City Hall was among the many buildings destroyed, and one man, Mr. Watson, publisher of the *Upper Canada Gazette*, lost his life while trying to save manuscripts in the *Patriot* office. In describing the destruction of St. James' Church, Dr. Scadding states that the open space around it did more than anything else to check the fire as it rolled irresistibly westward:

"The energies of the local fire brigade of the day had never been so taxed as they were on that memorable occasion. Aid from steam-power was then undreamt-of. Simultaneous outbursts of flame from numerous widely-separated spots had utterly disheartened everyone, and had caused a general abandonment of effort to quell the conflagration. Then it was that the open space about St. James' Church saved much of the town from destruction.

"To the west the whole sky was, as it were, a vast canopy of meteors streaming from the east. The church itself was consumed, but the flames advanced no further. A burning shingle was seen to become entangled in the luffer-boards of the belfry, and slowly to ignite the woodwork there: from a very minute start at that point, a stream of fire soon began to rise—soon began to twine itself about the upper stages of the tower, and to climb nimbly up the steep slope of the spire, from the summit of which it then shot aloft into the air, speedily enveloping and overtopping the golden cross that was there.

"At the same time the flames made their way downwards within the tower, till the internal timbers of the roofing over the main body of the building were reached. There, in the natural order of things, the fire readily spread; and the whole interior of the church, in the course of an hour, was transformed, before the eyes of a bewildered multitude looking powerlessly on, first into a vast 'burning fiery furnace', and then, as the roof collapsed and fell, into a confused chaos of raging flame.

"The heavy gilt cross at the apex of the spire came down with a crash, and planted itself in the pavement of the principal entrance below, where the steps, as well as the inner walls of the base of the tower, were bespattered far and wide with the molten metal of the great bell.

"While the work of destruction was going fiercely and irrepressibly on, the Public Clock in the belfry, Mr. Draper's gift to the town, was heard to strike the hour as usual, and the quarters thrice, exercising its functions and having its appointed say amidst the sympathies, not loud but deep, of those who watched its doom; bearing its testimony, like a martyr at the stake, in calm and unimpassioned strain, up to the very moment of time when the deadly element touched its vitals."[23]

In 1856 there were the following six fire companies:

No. 1. Phoenix Company—29 men, at Court Street Hall. (One member, J. C. Steele, died March 20, 1934, aged 96.)

No. 2. Rescue Company—29 men, at Court Street Hall.

No. 3. British America Company—30 men, stationed at the Bay Street Hall.

No. 4. Victoria Company—17 men, St. Patrick's Market.

No. 5. Deluge Company—24 men, stationed at the Berkeley Street Hall.

No. 6. Provincial Company—35 men, at Bay Street Hall.

In addition to these engine companies there was the Hook-and-Ladder Company, comprising 23 men and stationed at the Court Street Hall; and the Hose Company, with 45 men at the Bay Street Hall. The total number of firemen was 227, in addition to the Chief and the engineers. In 1857-8 a Boys' Hose Company was attached to Phoenix Company, George McConkey being boy captain and John

[23]Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old.* 1873. pp. 172-3.

Ross Robertson first lieutenant. The annual loss from fire was not usually very great, the total in 1856 being but £12,376.

An interesting commentary on the condition of Toronto streets at that time is seen in the practice of running the fire-engines on the sidewalks, which were at least somewhat smoother. When in 1858 a fireman was run over and killed during this procedure it was decided to impose a fine of £5 on any company proceeding faster than a walk when returning from a fire, though it appears for some time to have been considered that any means to attain speed on the outward journey was excusable. In 1860 the Hose Company was divided into two, and largely in the expectation that the twenty men in each section might more readily be prevented from using the sidewalks.

In the late fifties the era of hand fire-engines was drawing to a close in Toronto, though smaller centres of population could not so quickly substitute the steam engine. At the time of the Provincial Exhibition of 1858 the large brigade necessary for the operation of hand engines represented the peak of effectiveness and prestige for the days of volunteer fire companies. A notable parade was held at that time in Toronto, and the fire brigades of London, Hamilton and Cobourg were invited to participate in the firemen's demonstration. Led by the band of the Toronto Fire Brigade, the procession was formed on Duke Street and proceeded *viâ* Frederick, King, York, Front, Yonge and Queen to Bathurst Street. Behind the band was James Ashfield, Chief Engineer, and his deputies; whereupon followed in order:

Hook-and-Ladder Company.
No. 1 Phoenix Company.
London Fire Brigade.
No. 2 Rescue Company.
No. 3 British America Company.
Mullvaney's Brass Band.
Hamilton Fire Brigade.
No. 4 Victoria Company.
No. 5 Deluge Company.
No. 6 Provincial Company.
Cobourg Fire Brigade.

Gaily caparisoned horses drawing engines profusely decorated, floating banners preceding each company, and the scarlet coats of the men, combined with the music of the bands to make the parade a colourful event which, with a torchlight procession in the evening, merited the comment in the press that the parades were "the grandest things of the sort that have ever taken place in Toronto".

Hand engines drawn to the fires by the men continued in constant use until 1861, the last one, the *Phoenix*, being sold to Oakville in that year. Although a committee recommended the purchase of steam engines in 1858, it was not until 1861 that two were bought at a cost of $6,000, of which one-third was donated by an insurance company. In later years, when these machines had outlived their usefulness, a junk dealer purchased the two for $30, while instead they might have been preserved for the historical education of later generations.

The change to steam fire-engines greatly decreased the number of men needed in the fire brigade. In 1862 there were only two fire stations, each with an engine, and the force, little more than one-sixth of the strength of the brigade of 1858, included the following men: 1 chief engineer, 1 assistant engineer, 17 branchmen, 11 hook-and-ladder men, 1 bugler, [redacted] engineers of steam fire-engines, [redacted] firemen, [redacted] drivers of hose carts, and 1 driver of hook-and-ladder truck; and the brigade had seven horses to pull the various engines and carts. It will be evident, therefore, that the heyday of the volunteer fire companies ended with the purchase of steam fire-engines, though some features of the old brigade were retained for over a decade longer.

In 1862, also, $2,000 was voted for the construction of tanks in various parts of the city, in order to afford a more adequate supply of water to extinguish fires. Twenty-eight tanks were erected during the year, and more added from time to time. In 1866 there were fifty-five fires in Toronto, and 750,000 gallons of water was used by the fire brigade at a cost of $11 per 1,000 gallons. Of the eighty-five hydrants in the city at the time twelve were useless because the pipes connecting them were too small for the purpose, or the hydrants were too far distant from the large water mains to provide an effective supply. The problem

was long one of the Council's chief sources of worry. The Fire Chief seized every available opportunity to belittle the service supplied by the Waterworks Company, and in his report in 1867 observed that municipal tanks, private cisterns and the Bay had frequently to be called into commission to supplement what little the hydrants could be forced to give. Undoubtedly Toronto's experiences with private companies in their effort to provide public utilities have been the most important factor in arousing such strong support for municipal ownership of such services. But the equipment of the fire brigade itself was not in every respect up-to-date. In the Chief Engineer's report concerning the year 1866 there is the following paragraph commenting on the crude method of sending in an alarm:

"The bells in use for the purpose of giving alarm on occasions of fire in this city are not as effective as formerly, when the city could not boast of as many extensive blocks of high buildings as at present. There is no lookout or watch kept at any of the engine or fire-alarm stations, and it often happens that fires occur for which some of the principal bells are not rung at all. Along with this it may be noticed that there are many parts of the city in which, should a fire break out, a messenger, to convey the intelligence to the nearest engine or alarm station, may have to travel nearly two miles; and before reaching it, saying nothing of the shortest time possible to get the engines and other apparatus to the place of fire, the building where the fire originated, with all its contents, together with other property adjacent thereto, may have been wholly destroyed."[24]

At this time (1867) the Council passed a by-law providing for the reward of distinguished conduct at fires, and for pecuniary assistance to widows and orphans of firemen killed in the discharge of their duty. No change was for some years made in the fire-alarm system, but in 1871 the

[24] A large amount of valuable information concerning Toronto's fires and fire-fighters was collected by John Ross Robertson, and appears in Volume II of his *Landmarks of Toronto*. The official *History of the Toronto Fire Department* (1922) is deficient in that it goes back only to 1820; but it contains many details of the personnel and organization down through the years, and particularly of the modern brigade. There are also numerous illustrations depicting fires, engines, and members of the department.

"electric telegraph" method was successfully demonstrated, an alarm being communicated in twenty seconds. In the next few years the electric alarms were greatly developed. In 1871, also, four new engine houses were opened, and the fire department was considered the acme of perfection and efficiency. Only the engineers and firemen were continuously on duty, all the other members of the brigade pursuing their usual vocations except when fires occurred; in fact they attended fires only when it suited their convenience, though they received $125 a year for their services.

It was soon seen, however, that Montreal's permanent force of firemen was worthy of imitation, and it was decided in 1874 that 36 men should comprise the department, a change that added $12,000 a year to the expenditure for fire protection, making the total annual cost $39,916. All part-time members were dropped, and two electricians were included among the thirty-six employees, while horses with drivers were furnished by contract; but in 1891 twenty-eight horses were purchased by the city. By 1885 the electric fire alarm system had been greatly extended, 154 boxes being located in various parts of the city. In the same year the brigade answered 208 calls, and the new chemical truck was effective in extinguishing seventeen fires without the help of other equipment.

In 1895, during the Osgoodby office building fire, the first use of a life-net saved three persons from certain death. Had such a net been available four days earlier, on January 6th, when a fire originating in the *Globe* office destroyed several buildings, the life of Fire Chief Richard Ardagh would not have been lost as a result of a forty-foot jump that he was compelled to make from a burning warehouse. The series of bad fires during this year led to the strengthening of the force to 132 officers and men, divided into sixteen sections. The equipment included three steam engines and a water tower, a double-cylinder chemical engine, a combination chemical fire-engine, five hook-and-ladder trucks, one aerial turntable hook-and-ladder truck, eleven single-hose carts and wagons, four two-horse hose wagons and thirty-six horses.

Toronto's greatest fire commenced during the night of April 19, 1904, when property valued at $10,000,000 was

destroyed. This fire, which swept through the Front Street business section, continued to burn for two weeks, but was stopped at the Queen's Hotel, though it appeared for a time as if the entire city might be destroyed. The ruins left in the wake of the fire were prominent on Front Street for many years, particularly on the sites of the present Union Station and Custom House.

The fire department under Chief Sinclair which protects the Toronto of today costs $2,000,000 annually to maintain, and in addition an extra $1,000,000 is necessary to provide for water and the use of hydrants. This seems a great expense when compared with the $71 spent for the purpose in the first year of the city, the $3,100 which maintained the volunteer brigade of 1848, or the $7,520 which it required in 1861; but it must be remembered that there is a permanent fire-fighting force of 697 men, as well as 34 fire-halls and extensive modern equipment to be kept in a high state of efficiency. Insurance companies rate the Toronto fire department among the best on the continent, and fires of the magnitude of the great conflagrations of other days are now highly improbable.

CHAPTER XII

THE POLICE FORCE

THE two or three hundred inhabitants of the town of York at the commencement of the nineteenth century included a large proportion of soldiers, and, it would appear, a considerable number of evil-disposed persons whose activities necessitated continual vigilance on the part of honest citizens. The various types of officials appointed by the Court of Quarter Sessions or at the annual town-meeting did not include police as such, though poundkeepers, fence-viewers and other officers were in charge of the enforcement of regulations in their particular fields of activity. Among his other duties Sheriff Alexander Macdonell performed the office of policeman, and arrested those suspected of crimes; and all officials were frequently aided in law enforcement by private citizens.

In 1800 Chief Justice Elmsley presided over the Court of King's Bench, and he was assisted by Mr. Justice Powell and Mr. Justice Alcock. Minor cases were dealt with by the magistrates, who were William Jarvis and William Willcocks, and it would appear that they had many crimes and misdemeanours to deal with. Charges of assault and battery were common in a day when fighting was a popular diversion; but we will hope that the case of Jesse Updegraff, who "Damned the King and used other disrespectful Language",[1] was an isolated instance. The *Gazette* contains numerous notices of robberies, even the magistrates and high officials being the victims on some occasions. In the issue of June 5, 1802, Mr. Justice Alcock offers $40 reward for the conviction of the person who stole from his "farm near the Garrison a number of iron teeth from two harrows". He states that the culprit was thought to have been a deserter from the garrison, who had sold the teeth to two blacksmiths in York.[2]

[1]Minutes of the Court of General Quarter Sessions, April 9, 1811, *Report of the Archives of Ontario, 1932*, p. 176.

[2]*Upper Canada Gazette*, June 5, 1802.

In 1803 Peter Russell offered five guineas reward for the apprehension of the thieves who stole from his barn near the town "a turkey hen, with her brood of six half-grown young ones";[3] while Magistrate Jarvis announced that he would pay $50 for information leading to the conviction of the persons who stole from his "improved grounds" a number of fruit trees.[4] John McGill once had a quantity of onions and melons stolen from his garden, while Sarah McBride missed "a fine ruffled shirt" from her house.

The punishments of the time were, as in Europe, very severe. The death penalty was in force for a large number of crimes, including forgery and counterfeiting. In 1800 a man was executed in York for forging a note, and it is recorded that "with unparalleled fortitude he approached the place of execution; and to the last appeared much resigned to his unhappy fate".[5] Two years earlier, in November, 1798, a man was sentenced to be burned in the hand for grand larceny,[6] the law as to branding being part of the English criminal code adopted in Upper Canada on the formation of the province, though in 1802 branding was abolished in Canada except for manslaughter. Whipping was a common punishment for petty larceny, while in August, 1801, a thief was banished from Upper Canada for seven years.[7] Until the construction of the Asylum in 1846 no special provision was made for "lunatic persons". If they were violently insane they were confined in the jail, but all the other types of mental aberration were merely ignored, and the unfortunate persons so afflicted remained at home or wandered about the town as they or their relatives saw fit.

The old English punishment of standing in the pillory was also in vogue in early York. Elizabeth Ellis was sen-

[3] *Ibid.*, August 20, 1803.

[4] *Ibid.*, May 10, 1800.

[5] *Ibid.*, May 17, 1800.

[6] See *Ibid.*, November 17 and December 1, 1798.

[7] *Ibid.*, August 29, 1801. For many details of old-time punishments and the procedure of criminal courts both in England and Upper Canada see J. Edmund Jones: *Pioneer Crimes and Punishments in Toronto and the Home District*. 1924. In the publications of many learned societies may be found essays on particular criminal cases by that versatile and indefatigable writer, the Hon. Mr. Justice William R. Riddell.

tenced in 1804 to six months' imprisonment, and in addition "to stand in the pillory twice during the said imprisonment, on two different market days, opposite the Market-House in the town of York, for the space of two hours each time".[8] Probably the first stocks wore out, for in July, 1811, it is recorded in the minutes of the Court of Quarter Sessions that the magistrates decided to employ a carpenter "to make Moveable Stocks that will confine two Persons at once, and when completed that they be erected where a Majority of the Magistrates of this Town may think most proper".[9] Stocks remained in the market-place until 1834, when, with the whipping-post, they were destroyed during a riot occasioned by the particularly wild elections during the year of the creation of the city of Toronto.

In connection with the last use of the stocks, in 1834, a writer describes that Mayor William Lyon Mackenzie "caused considerable ill-feeling by causing a drunken woman to be placed therein, after they had practically been unused for some time. A woman of notorious character was brought before the Mayor, charged with drunkenness, and he, during the hearing of the case, made some remarks not very complimentary, when she, stooping down in the dock, took off one of her wet and muddy shoes, and flung it at him as he sat upon the bench; for this, and her abusive language to him, he ordered her to be placed in the stocks. These stocks were not after the common English model for confining the feet alone, but confined the feet, head and arms of the offender, and are well remembered by many of the citizens of today (1877). Mr. J. H. Rogers, furrier, King Street East, relates many boyish incidents in connection with the now extinct mode of punishment. One celebrity who was a well-known drunkard, and who, after indulging in his cups, appeared to have a particular animosity against all boys, on one occasion found himself confined in the cumbrous frame. The news soon spread over the place; the boys, jubilant at having the opportunity of paying off old scores, congregated around him, jeered, laughed at, and derided him, and finally painted his face.

[8]Quoted in Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old*. 1873. p. 42.
[9]Minutes of July 13, 1811, *Report of the Archives of Ontario*, 1932. p. 196.

We are informed that being unable to use his arms and feet, he used his tongue all the more freely in reply to the jeers levelled at him by the youngsters, and when the crowning indignity of paint was put upon him he retaliated by gripping with his mouth the painter's hand and giving him painful proof that sharp teeth are worse than strong blows".[10]

From time to time local laws and regulations were adopted by the town-meeting. Those concerning fire prevention and road maintenance will be dealt with elsewhere, but a number of a miscellaneous character may be mentioned here. On March 3, 1800, the annual meeting was held at Abner Miles' Tavern, and after the election of the usual municipal officials matters of general interest to the inhabitants were discussed. The regulations adopted on these occasions show how primitive and how rural were conditions in early York. One deals with that old English custom of allowing hogs to be scavengers and garbage collectors:

"It is agreed by a majority of the inhabitants of the town that no hogs, of any description, shall be allowed to run at large within the limits of the city, from and after the first day of May next ensuing, and it is further agreed by a majority that every person or persons shall be liable to pay the sum of five shillings lawful currency for each time, and for each hog found running at large. It is further agreed that all persons who keep hogs shall cause them to be marked, which mark shall be registered with the town clerk."[11]

In April of the same year a notice signed by T. Ridout, C.P., announces that anyone obstructing the streets by piles of wood and stone, or by digging pits, will be prosecuted.[12] Two years later the law with respect to hogs was amended by the following resolution of the inhabitants at the annual town-meeting, held on March 1st at Myles and Playter's Hotel:

"With respect to hogs (under three months old) running at large in the country it was voted by a majority that

[10]J. Timperlake: *Illustrated Toronto, Past and Present*. 1877. pp. 96-7.
[11]*Upper Canada Gazette*, March 8, 1800.
[12]*Ibid.*, April 12, 1800.

they should be at liberty to run at large without yokes. And in the town it was agreed that all hogs shall have liberty to run at large, provided they be yoked and ringed, but if found without a lawful yoke and ring to the nose, shall be subject to impoundage until the owner pays one dollar for each hog. This restriction to commence on the 1st day of May next."[13]

At a later meeting it was decided "that all lawful fences shall be the height of five feet, and that there shall be no space through the fence of more than four inches".[14] This appears to have been a matter of considerable importance in early York, for thefts were quite common, and men would even break down fences to revenge a grudge, or perhaps merely for the amusement. The following advertisement, signed by Robert Gray, the Solicitor-General, appeared in the *Gazette* under the heading "$20 Reward":

"Twenty dollars reward will be paid by the subscriber to any person who will discover the man who is so depraved and lost to every sense of social duty as to cut with an axe or knife the withes which bound some of the fence round the late Chief Justice's farm on Yonge Street, and to throw down the said fence. Independent of the said inducement it is the duty of every good member of society to endeavour to find out who the character is that can be guilty of such an infamous act, in order that he may be brought to justice."[15]

In 1802 a number of recommendations of a nature similar to those adopted by the town-meeting were presented by the Grand Jury. One was that taverns should not sell intoxicating liquors or allow disorderly behaviour on the Sabbath, particularly during the hours of divine service. The Grand Jury also considered that the butchers of York "should be obliged to bury the garbage and useless offal of their slaughtered cattle, or to remove from the town or otherwise dispose of the same, so that it may cease to be (what it now is) a public nuisance". They suggested in addition that "joiners, cabinet-makers, carpenters and other descriptions of workers in wood, by whose trade shav-

[13] *Ibid.*, March 6, 1802.
[14] *Ibid.*, July 9, 1803.
[15] *Ibid.*, July 23, 1803.

ings are made, should be obliged to burn or otherwise destroy the same on the Wednesdays and Saturdays of every week, at or about the hours of sunset".[16]

In 1817 an important change was made in law enforcement when the Legislature passed a bill entitled "An Act to Establish a Police in the Towns of York, Sandwich and Amherstburg." It provided that the magistrates assembled in Quarter Sessions might make such prudential rules and regulations as deemed expedient concerning paving, lighting, maintaining and improving streets, the regulation of the assize of bread, and, in general, the abating of any nuisances that might arise. Powers were granted to enforce local laws relating to the running at large of cattle and swine, the inspection of weights and measures, and the supervision of fire companies.

With relation to York it was specifically stated in this Act that the beach east of Russell's Creek and the carriageway in front of the town were to be considered as a part of the town, and subject to police regulation. The magistrates were given authority to raise by assessment from all property holders a sum not exceeding £100 in any one year for the purchase of fire engines, buckets, etc., and also to impose fines on any persons breaking police regulations.

Pursuant to this Act the town of York issued in the same year a series of laws, which were printed six years later under the title *Regulations for the Police of the Town of York in the Home District, Made and Ordained in Adjourned Quarter Sessions, May 14th, 1817—Revised and Amended in Adjourned General Sessions, June 21st, 1823.*[17] Constables and Peace Officers are mentioned in the *Regulations,* but most (if not all) of them were undoubtedly on duty only in cases of fire or other emergencies. The old English "Assize of Bread" was enforced by the following terms:

"No person or persons to sell, or bake Bread or Biscuit for sale, without having previously obtained a license, and entered into recognisance before the clerk of the peace, with two sufficient sureties in the sum of twenty pounds, to sell the same in conformity to the Assize, to be published

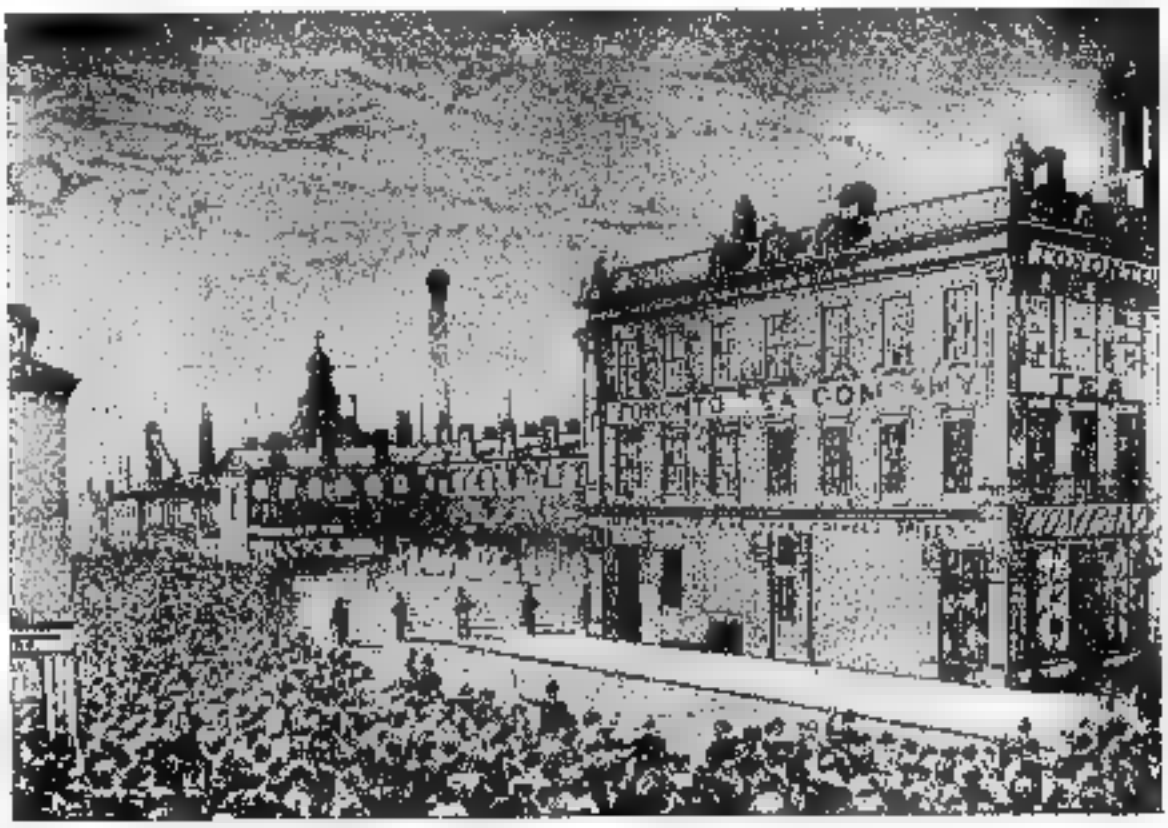
[16]*Ibid.*, July 10, 1802.

[17]A copy of this pamphlet is in the Legislative Library of Ontario.

John Ross Robertson Collection. J. G. Howard.

Colborne Lodge, High Park

The home of J. G. Howard, one of Toronto's greatest benefactors. He was the first City Engineer, and his contribution to art and architecture is second only to his munificent gift of High Park to the people of Toronto.



Reproduced by Courtesy of Mrs. N. McMahon.

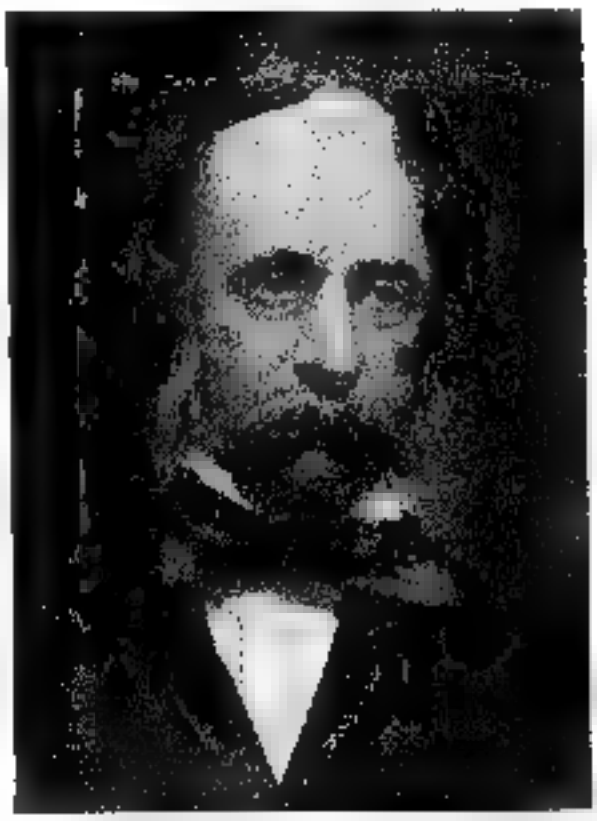
The O'Donovan Rossa Riot, March 18, 1878

Rossa, a Fenian lecturer, escaped from St. Lawrence Hall dressed as a woman. The rioters thought he had gone to Cosgrave's Hotel, at the north-west corner of Queen and Dummer (St. Patrick) Streets, and wrecked that building. As the illustration shows, many windows in St. Lawrence Hall were smashed, and the police had great difficulty holding back the mob.

PETER FREELAND
Proprietor of the Soap and Candle Factory at the foot of Yonge Street.

JESSE KETCHUM
As a philanthropist and public benefactor he occupies an honoured position.

CAPTAIN W. S. PRINCE
While he was Chief of Police, 1858-74, the force was greatly improved.



SHERIFF W. B. JARVIS
Prominent in the development of the village of Yorkville.

monthly by order of the magistrates; and also, during the continuance of such license, to bake and have daily for sale a reasonable supply of bread.

"Every baker to stamp each Loaf or Biscuit with the initials of his name. . . . An entry shall be made from time to time by the Clerk of the Market, in a book to be kept for that purpose, of the Assize of bread, as fixed each month, or oftener if required, which book any inhabitant may inspect at all reasonable hours, without fee. The Clerk of the Market, likewise, to keep an account of the prices of flour, to lay before the Magistrates when called for."

Offenders against these laws were subject to a penalty of from ten to forty shillings for each offence. The old regulations with reference to hogs were continued with some changes. It was stipulated that "every person duly convicted for having wilfully or negligently suffered his or her Hog or Hogs to run at large in the Town of York shall be liable to a penalty of Ten Shillings for every such Hog so suffered to run at large, and a further penalty of Five Shillings for every day the offence is continued". The informer was entitled to one-half the penalty, and all impounded hogs were to be sold at auction by the Poundkeeper three days later, if the owner did not pay the penalty, claim his hogs and remove them. And it is further stipulated that "after deducting from the proceeds of such sale the penalty and charges incident to such distress, the overplus, if any there be, shall be paid to the owner". To give effect to these regulations the Poundkeeper was authorised to employ such assistance as was necessary.

The embryo of a Board of Health may be seen in the rules regarding rubbish and offal. Slaughter-houses were subject to regulation, and no one could make use of one without special permission from the Magistrates. It was further stated that "no chips, shavings, or rubbish of any description" shall be thrown into the streets or along the waterfront. As these regulations were suggested by a Grand Jury in 1802 it may be assumed they were in force soon afterwards.

Among other laws adopted in 1817 were several concerning Weights and Measures, and those kept by the Clerk

of the Market provided the standard to be followed in "Shops, Taverns, Warehouses, or elsewhere". It was also stipulated that all measures used in the town were to be stamped { U.C. / York / S.M. } and all weights { U.C. / York / S.W. }; for the doing of which the Clerk of the Market was entitled to receive three pence, or five cents, per stamp.

Even as late as 1827 York was but a village in size, having at that time a population of only 1,817. But by the early months of 1833 immigration to Upper Canada had so increased that the town contained 6,094 people; and thereafter it developed still more rapidly. In 1835 it was considered that the new city of Toronto needed a professional police force, and on March 11th the Council determined that five persons should be appointed police constables; these men were to be in constant attendance at the Police Office, and their employment was to be under the direction of the High Bailiff and the Magistrates of the city. In addition to the five on the permanent staff fourteen men were appointed supernumerary constables to act as they might be required—presumably whenever riots or "bloody battles" necessitated an increased police force. Uniforms were first provided for the five Toronto constables in 1839.

On August 28, 1843, the Council authorised the renting of a house at the corner of John and Lot (Queen) Streets to serve as a police station for what was then "the west end of the city". By 1852 the Toronto police numbered about twelve and were under Chief Samuel Sherwood, who is described as "a quiet, good-natured man, who did not insist on any strict regulations as to the dress or discipline of the men. They wore a sort of uniform, but without uniformity except in one respect—they were uniformly slovenly. Day & Martin's blacking, and white gloves, were not considered at all necessary; the latter had not come into fashion, and as to the former the men might say as to their boots what was generally said as to waggons and carriages, —that if the mud was taken off they would be just as dirty in a short time again".[18]

[18]C. C. Taylor: *Toronto Called Back*. 1886. p. 74.

In July, 1855, there occurred what was long remembered as "the Circus Riot", and the apparent failure of the police to deal effectively with it resulted in the appointment of a special committee of Council to investigate the matter. They reported that the Chief's authority had been weakened by undue influence, exercised presumably by aldermen in favour of friends on the force. Though not belittling the Chief's difficulties, the committee was of the opinion that a new head, a man "habituated to command", would be necessary to bring the force up to the required standard, and it was consequently suggested that the Mayor communicate with police authorities in England and Ireland to see if they could recommend a suitable chief.

Meanwhile the appointment and dismissal of constables was taken out of the hands of the Council and given to a committee of three men—a Magistrate, the Recorder and the Chief of Police. The removal of the control of the police from the municipal council was not achieved without bitter debate and open quarrel, but the proposals were adopted by a majority of two in eighteen votes. The desire was given effect in 1859 by an Act of Parliament which constituted in every city a Board of Commissioners of Police, consisting of the Mayor, Recorder or County Judge, and the Police Magistrate. The first Board in Toronto consisted of Mayor the Hon. Adam Wilson and George Duggan, Police Magistrate.

In 1858 Captain W. S. Prince, late of Her Majesty's 71st Regiment, was appointed Chief Constable, and the force under him consisted of three sergeants-major, six sergeants and twenty-five constables. During the next ten years there was a gradual increase in the personnel of the force. A writer who lived through these changes in police administration recalled that "there was not much improvement in the Police Force till the appointment of Captain Prince, who, by the introduction of a semi-military system of discipline, brought about a complete revolution in every respect; not only in the dress and discipline of the men, but in the selection of a superior class, both as regards physique and intelligence, forming in a short time a body of police equal to that of any city in the world. The best men selected

were from the Irish Constabulary, who had been drilled at the barracks in Phoenix Park, Dublin".[19]

At the end of the first decade of the Board's control there were three police divisions in Toronto, and the force consisted of nine officers and fifty constables. No. 1 Station was then located in the old City Hall on the Market Square; No. 2 on Yonge Street, opposite Edward Street; and No. 3 on Queen Street West, near the corner of John.

Captain Prince resigned in 1874 and was succeeded as Chief by Major F. C. Draper, formerly of the Queen's Own Rifles. A year later the "Sunday Riots" occurred during the Roman Catholic Pilgrimage Processions, and there resulted considerable property damage and the injury of half the members of the police force. The riots were caused by the attitude of the Orange Order, which, although insisting upon its own right to stage public demonstrations, was strongly opposed to allowing other citizens the same rights. As the events occasioned the worst situation that the police of Toronto ever experienced, it will be of interest to give a description[20] almost contemporary with the riots:

"The city was the scene of considerable rioting during Sunday afternoon, September 26th and October 3rd, arising from a procession of the Roman Catholics in celebration of the Jubilee. It appears that once every twenty-five years the Roman Catholic Church holds a jubilee, but in consequence of the disturbed state of Europe in 1850 no jubilee was held by the Church. Formerly one of the conditions to gain Jubilee indulgences was to visit Rome, but in this year the Pope announced that indulgences would be given to any one visiting four different churches on three consecutive Sundays in procession with three other parishes. In Toronto two of the parishes performed the requisite procession or pilgrimage in July last without molestation. The other three parishes, St. Basil's, St. Patrick's and St. Paul's, postponed the pilgrimage on account of the heat of the weather. They had their processions arranged for the same three Sundays, and the first of these took place on the 19th of September and passed off without any disturbance. The second took place on the 26th, when the Jubilee procession in connection with St. Paul's parish, on returning from St. Patrick's

[19]*Ibid.* [20]Timperlake, *op. cit.*, pp. 152-4.

Chapel on William Street, was met at the intersection of Queen Street and Spadina Avenue with a shower of stones from a large crowd of thoughtless young men and women. The police made a dash at the assailants and drove them off, but throughout the line of march from here to St. Mary's Church on Bathurst Street stone-throwing was continued. Almost the whole of the police, consisting of detachments from Stations Nos. 1 and 2, were wounded. A very strong feeling was aroused by this proceeding, the Roman Catholics insisting upon their right to walk in public procession, while, on the other side, the Orangemen of the city met in public meeting and called upon the Mayor to prevent the procession taking place the following Sabbath, but the Mayor had no power to do so, though he requested the Archbishop to countermand the procession, as he could not guarantee to keep the peace. On Sunday, the 3rd of October, a section of the Roman Catholic pilgrims assembled at St. Paul's Church, Power Street, and, having formed a procession, marched up to St. Michael's Cathedral by way of Queen Street. The procession included a large number of women. They, however, carried no banners, flags, or regalia of any kind, and marched along in the most quiet and inoffensive manner.

"A vast crowd had collected outside the Cathedral, and the pilgrims were allowed to enter without any hindrance. While the procession was in the Cathedral the entire police force, under the command of Major Draper, the Chief Constable, was drawn up at the entrance to the Cathedral. About half-past three the procession left the Cathedral, and, headed by a squad of police, moved along Shuter Street amid the yells and hootings of the large mob. Just as the foremost ranks reached the corner of Church and Queen Streets a perfect volley of stones came upon them from Queen Street. A halt was made, the police charging upon the rioters, who were soon driven off. This was repeated several times before the procession made any further progress. The procession moved down Church Street to Adelaide Street, where stones were incessantly thrown, and at the corners of Bay, Brock and Bathurst Streets the same scenes occurred, but at the latter place the riot assumed the most serious aspect; revolvers were freely used, the

fight between the police and the crowd being kept up for a considerable time.

"The police, during the whole time the processionists were passing along the streets, sustained the brunt of the fight with the opposing crowd; and though more than half the entire force were severely wounded, yet their coolness, bravery and self-restraint excited the admiration of all spectators. Though the riots were a disgrace to the city it is a matter for congratulation that mob law did not prevail, for, though under difficulty, the pilgrimage was made from and to the points intended."

In 1876 there was a complete change in the boundaries of the police divisions, and a new one, No. 4, was established in the east end. The increased supervision necessary led to the appointment at that time of a Deputy Chief Constable, Major McPherson being the appointee. During the same year Chief Draper thoroughly examined the Metropolitan Police Force of London, England, and his investigations resulted in the publication of *Orders and Regulations of the Toronto Police Force,* which for many years formed a highly satisfactory basis of police discipline. In 1886 Major Draper resigned his command owing to ill-health.

In October, 1884, a large gang of illicit traders were in practical possession of the territory surrounding Michipicoten, on the north shore of Lake Superior. The Canadian Pacific Railway was under construction at the time, and as local authorities were unable to cope with the trouble a detachment of the Toronto Police Force was sent out at the request of the Provincial Government. In less than two weeks they arrested a large number of the malefactors, and the rest left the district. Over thirty years later 152 Toronto police took part in that world-wide catastrophe—the Great War—and 26 made the supreme sacrifice.

The organisation and activities of the present force fall outside the scope of the present work, but the 997 men who compose Brigadier-General Draper's corps form one of the most efficient of modern police forces. An interesting annual event which is of great importance in maintaining the morale and physical condition of the men is the Police Games, of which the tournament of the year 1933 marked the fiftieth anniversary.

CHAPTER XIII

Public Executions

Changes in laws and in the administration of justice occur from time to time, and a description of a few of the more notable crimes connected with early York, and the punishments which resulted from them, will illustrate legal procedure as far as it concerns executions, which, by the way, were long public spectacles. Until 1862 about 120 crimes carried the death penalty in England, and prior to 1859 at least twelve were punishable by death in Canada, but very seldom was the penalty actually imposed for what are now considered lesser crimes. Flogging, branding and the stocks were punishments not infrequently inflicted in York early in the nineteenth century, and they were the penalties for petty larceny and a variety of misdemeanours. The hangman also administered the lash, usually in public, and it was his duty to brand criminals who were sentenced to that punishment, the branding being inflicted on the hands or on the tongue; in 1802, however, this barbarous punishment was abolished in Canada, except for manslaughter.

The first execution in York occurred in 1798, and it was the result of the forging of an order for three shillings and ninepence. Mike Flannery was responsible for the drawing of the note, to which he signed another's name. He prevailed upon an illiterate tailor, John Sullivan, to cash it; but, upon hearing that the forgery had been discovered, Flannery fled to the United States, leaving Sullivan to face the charge of having uttered a forged note. He was speedily sentenced to death, and confined in the old log jail located near the present King Edward Hotel. The day of execution was October 11th, and in those days (and for some seventy years longer) an execution resembled a public holiday. The jail yard and surrounding common were crowded with men, women and children looking as if they fully expected to enjoy the spectacle, though we do not hear of the rich renting windows near the scaffold, as in England. Two upright pieces of scantling and a cross-

piece composed the gallows of that day, and the rope was in the hands of an executioner named McKnight. Everything did not go smoothly, however, and the first attempt to hang Sullivan was defeated by the breaking of the rope, or some accident of the kind; finally, after his statement, "McKnight, I hope to goodness you've got the rope all right this time", Sullivan, without prayer or consolation, paid the penalty of having passed a forged order for less than one dollar![1]

In 1801 two brothers by the name of Stotenburg were arrested for stealing horses. They were sentenced to death, but on the day previous to the execution a reprieve permitted them to spend the rest of their days in jail. This procedure not infrequently occurred when men were sentenced to death for crimes less than murder.

In 1816 Elijah Dexter shot James Vanderburg after a quarrel on Yonge Street. Many people were of the opinion that Dexter shot in self-defence, but he was found guilty of murder and sentenced to death. A proper scaffold was erected, and the Rev. John Strachan accompanied Dexter to the place of execution, where he was greeted with a cheer by the assembled populace who had left farm and business to see the sight. When the prisoner reached the foot of the scaffold, however, he took one look at it and thenceforth refused all suggestions that he ascend. Even Dr. Strachan's sympathetic "Oh, Mr. Dexter, do please come up" elicited no response. But the jailer was a man of resource, and, procuring a horse and cart, placed Dexter in the vehicle with his back to the scaffold and conveyed him under it. The noose was then adjusted, the horse lashed, and the unfortunate man left hanging in the air. The recital of the lurid details of these early executions enables us to appreciate the crude conditions of other times.

York, as the capital of the Home District, was the scene of all executions, no matter where in the district the crime occurred. What is thought to be the only lynching in

[1]John Ross Robertson is the authority for some of the material in this chapter. In certain instances his account appears to be based upon press descriptions, while in others, particularly where conversation is quoted, the source is probably the reminiscences of citizens who recalled the events. See his *Landmarks of Toronto*. 1894-1914. Vol. III, pp. 257-70.

Ontario's history occurred in 1819 near Whitby, and the circumstances of the crime almost excuse those who took the law into their own hands. A dissipated Frenchman, De Benyon by name, after turning his 13 year old step-son out of the house on a bitter winter night, tied him in front of the fireplace when he returned to the house almost frozen, and there the poor boy was literally roasted to death. De Benyon watched his victim die, and then tried to escape, but neighbours captured him near the bridge over the Don River, and he was summarily hanged to a tree. It is improbable that a more brutal murder ever occurred in the province.

In 1828 two men were hanged simultaneously at the rear of York's second jail, which was located across the street from the first, near the northeast corner of King and Toronto Streets. This was, indeed, a chance not to be missed, and over 10,000 people assembled to witness the "double-header", as it may appropriately be called. When it is remembered that York's population at the time was merely some 2,000 it is quite evident that people came long distances for the occasion. The gallows erected for executions were usually attractively painted and prepared at considerable cost, and no pains were spared to make the event worth while. The greatest excitement prevailed upon this occasion, but the executions went off without a hitch. One of the men was Charles French, a printer employed by William Lyon Mackenzie, a circumstance almost ominous enough to have him executed in those days! There appears to be no reason, however, why he should not have been hanged, though Mackenzie and others did what they could to have his sentence commuted; in fact it is said that to consider the matter there was held just previous to the execution a midnight session of the Executive Council.

On December 14, 1837, Julia Murdock was hanged for having murdered her mistress with arsenic, and she appears to have been the only woman executed in Toronto. About 4,000 people witnessed the event, and the *Christian Guardian*, while noting that the utmost decorum marked the conduct of the proceedings, considered that it was "exceedingly revolting to see among the spectators a large

number of females".[2] The crowd was kept back from the scaffold by a detachment of cavalry.

Probably the most notable execution in the history of Toronto was that of the two convicted leaders of the Rebellion, Samuel Lount and Peter Matthews. An immense concourse of spectators viewed the scene, of which we have a description that was pleasing, no doubt, to Family Compact readers, but in language which shows how much the *Christian Guardian* had diverged from the "Patriot" section of the Reform Party:

"The drop was erected in the open space between the jail and court house. Early in the morning persons began to assemble to witness the awful exit of the unhappy men who had forfeited their lives by the prominent part which they took in the late un-natural rebellion. A highly creditable degree of commiseration for them appeared to prevail almost universally, but not the slightest indication was given of any intention to interrupt the administration of the laws. An armed force composed of the volunteer companies in the city was in readiness under the direction of the civil authorities to preserve order; but we are happy to say their interference was not required. The criminals were attended to the place of execution by the Rev. James Richardson and the Rev. John Beatty, the former of whom offered up an impressive prayer on the scaffold, in which the unhappy men appeared to join, highly suited to their awful circumstances. It affords us unfeigned satisfaction to state that we learn from the reverend gentlemen who attended them subsequently to their condemnation that they were brought to acknowledge the enormity of their offence, and with every indication of true repentance to acquiesce in the justice of their sentence. During the last few days of their earthly existence they appeared to possess a considerable measure of religious comfort and hope."[3]

A more intimate account of this unfortunate event is given by Charles Durand, who was in jail at the same time:

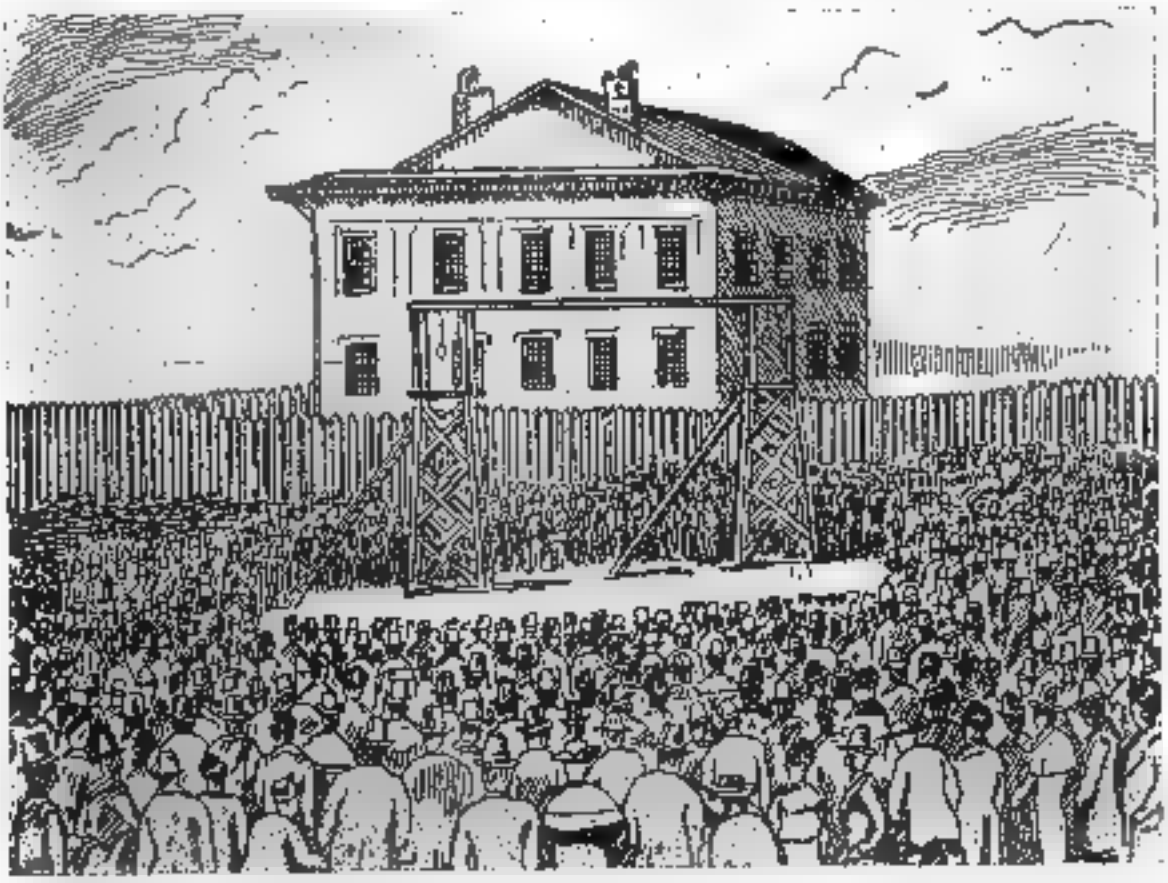
"The hours of April 12, 1838, were the saddest we ever spent. None of us could sleep, and we were all early astir. It was a fine spring morning. Looking through the window of our room we saw the scaffold. It was built by the late

[2]*Christian Guardian*, December 19, 1837. [3]*Ibid.*, April 18, 1838.

Dent's *Upper Canadian Rebellion.* William Bengough.

MRS. LOUNT PETITIONING SIR GEORGE ARTHUR, 1838

When her appeal failed, Samuel Lount went to the gallows.



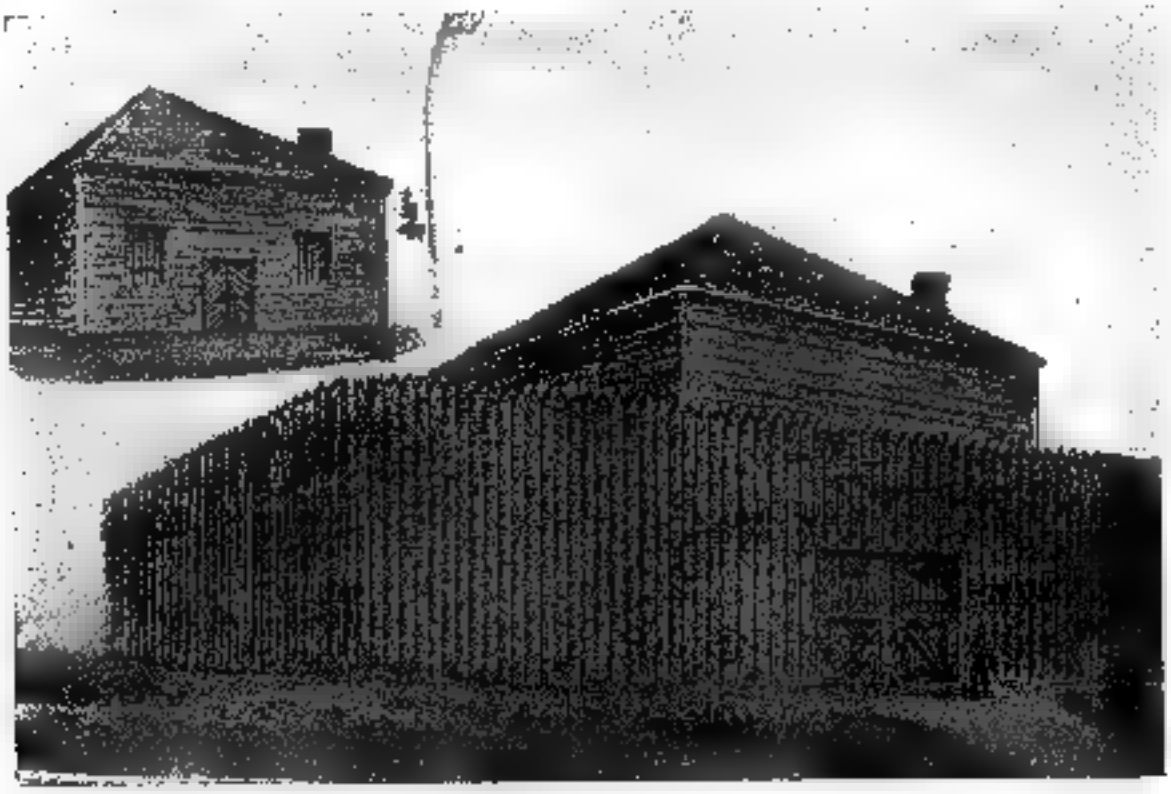
THE EXECUTION OF LOUNT AND MATTHEWS, APRIL 12, 1838

Walls over a yard thick, the front elevation of the original building, two of the old cells adjoining the guard room in the basement, and the gallows' yard in which Lount and Matthews were hanged—these relics of a century ago are still to be seen in modern Toronto, for the city's second jail is incorporated in the old York Chambers, now the Canadian National Railways Building, near King and Toronto Streets.

John Ross Robertson Collection. F. V. Poole.

RICHMOND'S BLACKSMITH SHOP, QUEEN AND SIMCOE STREETS

The locality carried fond memories for Upper Canada College boys; and in the vicinity the Brown-Cameron election riot took place.



John Ross Robertson Collection.

TORONTO'S FIRST JAIL, 1800-1824

The jail was situated on the south side of King Street, at the corner of Leader Lane. When some spike nails were necessary to repair it in 1811 the Clerk of the Peace obtained a few from the King's Stores by making personal application to the Lieutenant-Governor.

Mr. Storm. His foreman was Matthew Sheard, then a fine young Yorkshireman, afterwards Mayor of the city. He was expected to share in the work of building the scaffold. 'I'll not put a hand to it,' said he; 'Lount and Matthews have done nothing that I might not have done myself, and I'll never help to build a gallows to hang them.' So, without the foreman's assistance, the gallows was erected near the spot where the police court building now stands. Around the gallows the Orange militia stood in large numbers with their muskets. The authorities dreaded a rescue. While we were watching and talking we heard steps on the stairs, and then the clank of chains. It was poor Lount coming up, guarded by his jailers, to say good-bye to us. He stopped at the door. We could not see him, but there were sad hearts in that room as we heard Samuel Lount's voice, without a quiver in it, give us his last greeting: 'Be of good courage, boys, I am not ashamed of anything I've done. I trust in God and I'm going to die like a man.' We answered him as well as we could, and sorrowfully listened until the sound of his sturdy tramp and clanking chains died away.

"I don't know why Peter Matthews did not come up with Lount, but I saw him as they were led through the jail yard to the scaffold where two nooses were swinging. They never faltered. I saw them walk up the steps to the floor of the scaffold as firmly as if they were on the pavement. Again Bishop Richardson, who attended Lount, and another clergyman who attended Matthews, prayed. Deputy Sheriff Robert Beard officiated. Lount and Matthews shook hands with the clergymen, and when we looked again their bodies were dangling in the air. Matthews struggled hard but Lount died instantly. When the bodies had been exposed for a short time they were cut down and quietly buried in the Potter's Field near where the Yorkville Avenue fire-hall now stands. Thomas Anderson, who lives on Yonge Street, and Mr. Gibson, a builder, assisted in 1843 to remove the bodies from the Potter's Field to the Necropolis, where they now lie near the western fence, with a plain marble slab over their remains bearing the simple inscription: 'Samuel Lount, Peter Matthews, 1838'."[4]

In 1847 William Turney was executed for the murder

[4]These reminiscences are quoted in Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 85-6.

of a Markham Township clerk, the crime being committed during the robbery of a store. The murderer was apprehended on suspicion, but would probably not have been convicted had he not secretly sent a letter to his wife informing her where the money might be found. The wife, who could not read, took the letter to a neighbour, who promptly informed the authorities. Turney was thereupon convicted, and expiated his crime on the gallows at the third jail, on Berkeley Street, surrounded by a crowd of over 3,000 people, hooting and jeering during his execution. In his last words Turney, who had formerly served in the British campaign in Spain, stated that he and four other troopers had once murdered an entire Spanish family, and if so, it is evident that his punishment was too long delayed. It is quite possible, however, that this confession was to a considerable extent fabricated for the benefit of his wife and family, for pamphlets were sold on the streets with that end in view. In any case his execution was a notable event, rendered still more exciting from the fact that one Hamilton was hanged at the same time. From an excellent account based on a diary we learn that "a double gallows had been built facing the Fair Grounds and high on top of the prison wall". Schools were closed so that the boys and girls might participate in the festivities, and a holiday crowd assembled from all directions.[5]

A notable tragedy occurred in 1859 on the Don Bridge. John Sheridan Hogan, M.P.P., was attacked there on December 1st by a number of ruffians known as the Brooks' Bush Gang, and his battered body was thrown into the river. For sixteen months, however, the cause of his disappearance was not known, and efforts were made to trace his supposed movements in the United States. The discovery of the body changed the course of the investigation, and a woman came forward with the statement that she had seen James Brown and others attack Hogan, rob him, and throw

[5]See the vivid pages of Patrick Slater: *The Yellow Briar*, 1933, pp. 43-50, for a full description of the event—from the gathering of the motley assemblage to the speeches of the condemned and the savage shouts of the mob. A press account in the Memphis *Press-Scimitar* of March 16, 1934, suggests that the days of barbarism in public executions have not yet passed in the southern United States. A revolting description of the hanging of three negroes is quoted in the Toronto *Mail and Empire*, March 17, 1934.

the body in the river. Corroborative evidence was obtained, but Brown only was found guilty. A second trial had the same result, though Brown insisted to the end that he was innocent. The execution took place on March 10, 1862, and a large number of women were among the spectators.[6]

The last public execution in England occurred in 1868, and the change in Canada was practically coincident, all executions being more or less private after 1869; and since 1905 the scaffolds erected in Toronto have always been within the prison itself. Old customs die hard, and there were no doubt many people who held the views so forcefully expressed by that famous dictator, Dr. Samuel Johnson, in an earlier period: "Sir, executions are intended to draw spectators. If they do not draw spectators they don't answer their purpose. . . . The age is running mad after innovation. . . . The old method was most satisfactory to all parties; the public was gratified by a procession; the criminal was supported by it. Why is all this to be swept away?"[7]

In any case the people who have witnessed executions in Toronto in the last sixty years have been those only who, for one reason or another, have been admitted by passes. On November 30, 1877, for example, John Williams of Weston was executed for the murder of his wife, and about 150 persons were given passes by the Sheriff in order that they might witness the event. It is of interest in this connection that the executioner, a man named England, scorned to wear a mask while performing his work, but walked out before the spectators and coolly pulled the lever which sent the doomed man to eternity, and then turned his face to the spectators, as if for approval. A few days afterwards, however, a mob attacked him with bricks and stones, near the Don, and he escaped with his life only with considerable difficulty. Consequently he was more discreet when he officiated at the execution of the murderer

[6]Brown was so certain he would be acquitted that he brought his civilian clothes to the Court House. For a full account of this case by a well-known historian see W. S. Wallace: *Murders and Mysteries*. 1931. pp. 255-71.

[7]James Boswell: *Life of Dr. Samuel Johnson*. 1791. Everyman's Library, Vol. II, p. 447.

of the Hon. George Brown, wearing on this occasion a mask of black glazed linen with small apertures for his eyes.

It will be appropriate to close this account of murders and executions with some details concerning one which aroused widespread interest as well as public indignation. George Bennett, at one time an employee of the *Globe* Printing Company, was involved in a domestic dispute, and his arrest, together with carelessness in the performance of his duties, led to his dismissal. It is noteworthy that habitual drunkenness was also a cause of Bennett's downfall, as, indeed, of almost all of the other murders in Toronto's history. While on bail Bennett was frequently seen prowling around in the vicinity of the *Globe* building, and on March 25, 1880, he entered the office of the Hon. George Brown and shot him with a revolver. After a painful illness Brown died, and Bennett was sentenced to death for the crime. The execution took place on July 23rd, and we are informed[8] that "for fully an hour before the doomed one left his cell members of the press, officials and spectators had been arriving, and even up to the last five minutes the door bell continued to twinkle, announcing fresh visitors. Hardly a word was spoken above a whisper, and all the spectators appeared to be deeply impressed with the sombre surroundings". Bennett expressed in a last-minute speech his sorrow at having killed George Brown, who, he said, "was a most popular man throughout the world." He blamed liquor for his act, and left a long epistle addressed to the governor of the jail. In this document he outlined in considerable detail the way of life which had led him to the gallows, and expressed contrition for the various sins of which he had been guilty.

[8]See Robertson, *ibid.*

CHAPTER XIV

Among the Merchants

Business conditions in a country in process of settlement are as primitive as all other fields of activity. Many an early storekeeper in Upper Canada was first a peddler, travelling from settlement to settlement with his pack on his back. Others were primarily engaged in the fur trade, but as conditions changed and the demand for settlers' commodities increased it was good business to develop into the general store. Abner Miles, probably York's first innkeeper, was among the more important early citizens of the town, for he was also one of the first merchants. In his inn he conducted a general store where such miscellaneous articles as butter, leather, buttons, cloth and lumber might be obtained at the prevailing high prices. His day-book for 1795-99 has fortunately survived to give us many interesting details of both business and tavern life in early York.[1]

As no newspaper was published in York until October 4, 1798, we have but little record of the development of business and the trades prior to that date. The announcements in the *Gazette*, (the word "advertisement" would be considered too vulgar in those days!), are invaluable in that they enable the compilation of at least a partial list of the merchants of the town in 1798 and succeeding years. In 1799 O. Pierce & Co. conducted a store in which spirits, brandy, port wine and gin were sold by the gallon, puncheon or barrel at prices ranging from 18s. to 22s. per gallon. They carried also teas, "Hyson, 19s. per lb.; Souchong, 14s.; Bohea, 8s.; sugar, best loaf, 3s. 9d. per lb.; lump, 3s. 6d.; raisins, 3s.; figs, 3s.; salt, six dollars per barrel, or 12s. per bushel. Also a few dry goods, shoes, leather, hats, tobacco, snuff, etc., etc."[2] P. Mealey also kept a general store in 1800; while in 1802 Quetton St. George & Co., at the north-

[1]This interesting record is in the Toronto Public Library. See pp. 295-7 for further references to Miles' day-book. It is printed in John Ross Robertson's *Landmarks of Toronto*, 1894-1914. Vol. 1, pp. 445-53.

[2]*Upper Canada Gazette*, July 13, 1799.

east corner of Frederick and King Streets, advertises a line of groceries and goods of a general nature.[3] In 1807 St. George obtained bricks from Rochester and Oswego and erected the second brick building in York. In comparison with most others this large structure with its tinned roof, graceful porch, and neat finish stood out prominently, and in later years it became the office of the Canada Company. Dr. Scadding gives an interesting account of St. George's emigration to America, and his early activities in Upper Canada. The description is illuminating as to early business conditions:

"Mr. Quetton St. George was a French royalist officer, and a chevalier of the order of St. Louis. With many other French gentlemen he emigrated to Canada at the era of the Revolution. He was of the class of the *noblesse*, as all officers were required to be; which class, just before the Revolution, included, it is said, 90,000 persons, all exempt from the ordinary taxes of the country. The surname of St. George was assumed by M. Quetton to commemorate the fact that he had first set foot on English ground on St. George's day. On proceeding to Canada he, in conjunction with Jean Louis, Vicomte de Chalûs, and other distinguished *émigrés*, acquired a large estate in wild lands in the rough region north of York, known as 'the Oak Ridges'. Finding it difficult, however, to turn such property speedily to account, he had recourse to trade with the Indians and remote inhabitants. Numerous stations, with this object in view, were established by him in different parts of the country before his final settlement in York. One of these posts was at Orillia, on Lake Couchiching."[4]

The announcement of another of St. George's stores appeared in the *Niagara Herald* in 1802:

"New store at the House of the French General, between Niagara and Queenston. Messrs. Quetton St. George and Co. acquaint the public that they have lately arrived from New York with a general assortment of Dry Goods and Groceries, which will be sold at the lowest price for ready money, for from the uncertainty of their residing any time in these parts they cannot open accounts with any person.

[3]*Ibid.*, December 11, 1802.
[4]Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old*. 1873. p. 188.

Will also be found at same store a general assortment of tools for all mechanics. They have likewise well-made Trunks; also empty Barrels. Niagara, July 23."[5]

Contemporary also with the York store was one in Kingston in charge of Mr. Boiton, and another in Amherstburg under Mr. Boucherville, and both were controlled by St. George. In various issues of the *Upper Canada Gazette* prior to September 20, 1806, St. George advertises his stores extensively; but on that date he announces that he is discontinuing advertising in the press, and refers his customers to his previous announcements. The contents of his general store in York are pretty fully particularised, and the goods are usually described as "just arrived from New York". The following list includes many an old-time piece of dry goods:

"Ribbons, cotton goods, silk tassels, gown-trimmings, cotton binding, wire trimmings, silk belting, fans, beaded buttons, block tin, glove ties, cotton bed-line, bed-lace, rollo-bands, ostrich feathers, silk lace, black veil lace, thread do., laces and edging, fine black veils, white do., fine silk mitts, love-handkerchiefs, Barcelona do., silk do., black crape, black mode, black Belong, blue, white and yellow do., striped silk for gowns, Chambray muslins, printed dimity, split-straw bonnets, Leghorn do., imperial chip do., best London Ladies' beaver bonnets, cotton wire, Rutland gauze, band boxes, cambrics, calicoes, Irish linens, callimancoes, plain muslins, laced muslins, blue, black and yellow nankeens, jeans, fustians, long silk gloves, velvet ribbons, Russia sheetings, India satins, silk and cotton umbrellas, parasols, white cotton, bombazetts, black and white silk stockings, damask table cloths, napkins, cotton striped nankeens, bandana handkerchiefs, catgut, Tickenburg, brown holland, Creas á la Morlaix, Indian lutestring, beaver caps for children."

In those days spices predominated among the groceries. We find listed: "Hyson tea, Hyson Chaulon in small chests, young Hyson, green, Souchong and Bohea; loaf, East India and Muscovado sugars, mustard, essence of mustard, pills of mustard, capers, lemon-juice, soap, Windsor do., indigo, mace, nutmegs, cinnamon, cassia, cloves, pimento, pepper,

[5]*Niagara Herald*, August 7, 1802.

best box raisins, prunes, coffee, Spanish and American Segars, Cayenne pepper in bottles, pearl barley, castor oil, British oil, pickled oysters." Jewellery and hardware are included in the following remarkable list:

"Chinaware in small boxes and in sets, Suwarrow boots, bootees, and an assortment of men's, women's and children's shoes, japanned quart mugs, do. tumblers, tipped flutes, violin bows, brass wire, sickles, iron candlesticks, shoe-makers' hammers, knives, pincers, pegging awls and tacks, awl-blades, shoe-brushes, copper tea-kettles, snaffle-bits, leather shot belts, horn powder flasks, ivory, horn and crooked combs, mathematical instruments, knives and forks, suspenders, fish-hooks, sleeve-links, sportsmen's knives, lockets, earrings, gold topaz do., gold watch-chains, gold seals, gold brooches, cut gold rings, plain do., pearl do., silver thimbles, do. teaspoons, shell sleeve buttons, silver watches, beads, paste-board, foolscap paper, second do., letter paper, black and red ink powder and waters."

The literature of other times and tastes is pretty well covered in the supply offered by M. St. George:

"*Telemachus*, Volney's *Views*, *Public Characters*, Dr. Whiteman's *Egypt*, *Evelina*, *Cecilia*, *Lady's Library*, *Ready Reckoner*, *Looking Glass*, Franklin's *Fair Sex*, *Camilla*, *Don Raphael*, *Night Thoughts*, *Winter Evenings*, *Voltaire's Life*, *Joseph Andrews*, Walker's *Geography*, *Bonaparte and the French People*, Voltaire's *Tales*, Fisher's *Companion*, *Modern Literature*, *Eccentric Biography*, *Naval* do., *Martial* do., *Fun*, *Criminal Records*, Entick's *Dictionary*, Gordon's *America*, Thompson's *Family Physician*, Sheridan's *Dictionary*, Johnson's do., Wilson's *Egypt*, Denon's *Travels*, *Travels of Cyrus*, *Stephani de Bourbon*, *Alexis*, *Pocket Library*, *Every Man's Physician*, *Citizen of the World*, Taplin's *Farriery*, *Farmer's Boy*, *Romance of the Forest*, *Grandison*, Campbell's *Narrative*, *Paul and Virginia*, *Adelaide de Sincere*, *Emelini*, *Monk*, *Abbess*, *Evening Amusements*, *Children of the Abbey*, *Tom Jones*, *Vicar of Wakefield*, Sterne's *Journey*, *Abelard and Eloisa*, *Ormond*, *Caroline*, *Mercutio*, *Julia and Baron*, *Minstrel*, *H. Villars*, *De Valcourt*, *J. Smith*, *Charlotte Temple*, *Theodore Chypon*, *What has Been*, *Elegant Extracts in Prose and Verse*, *J. and J. Jessamy*, *Chinese Tales*, *New Gazetteer*, Smollett's *Works*,

Cabinet of Knowledge, Devil on Sticks, Arabian Tales, Goldsmith's *Essays,* Bragg's *Cookery,* Tooke's *Pantheon,* Boyle's *Voyage, Roderick Random, Jonathan Wild, Louisa Solomon's Guide to Health,* Spelling-books, Bibles and Primers."[6]

In another advertisement we learn that customers have run off with some of M. St. George's goods, the return of which he attempts to effect in a very naïve manner; and also that he carried on the real estate business among his other activities:

"Mr. St. George has just received wine, Jamaica spirits, Rapee snuff, mails, best Spanish segars.

"Mr. St. George having missed two pair of Suwarrow boots, requests those persons who have purchased same from him to let him know, as he is afraid he has forgot to charge them; or should they have been taken on trial, it is requested that they may be returned.

"It is also requested that the gentleman or lady who has borrowed a volume of the *Revolutionairs Plutarch* will return it immediately.

"He has for sale the following lots of land, viz.—Nos. 12, 13 and 14, in the third concession of Whitchurch; 29 and 30 in the fifth concession of Beverley; 19 in the second concession of Whitby; 19 and 20 in the third concession of Whitby; also No. 17 in the Township of Thorold, in the District of Niagara, with the improvements and buildings thereon."[7]

William Cooper's "Toronto Coffee House" was a combined inn and general store where "genteel lodging", "the best liquors and viands", "segars, pipes and tobacco", and "a general assortment of groceries and dry goods" could all be obtained for cash or in exchange for country produce.[8] It was a time when frequently a man found it necessary to be a jack-of-all-trades if he was to support his family. In addition to his other activities William Cooper, who was the town's first schoolmaster, became one of the earliest auctioneers in York, and announces his new profession in the following notice:

[6]Lists similar to these appear in various issues of the *Gazette.*
[7]*Ibid.*, June 14, 1806.
[8]*Ibid.*, November 27, 1802.

"William Cooper begs leave to inform his friends and the public in general that he has lately received License as Auctioneer for this Town. That he has appropriated a part of his house in Duke Street for the purpose of an auction room, which will be made as commodious as possible; where every attention will be paid to such articles as his friends may be pleased to honor him with the disposal of. He flatters himself that the tenor of his conduct heretofore will entitle him to the confidence and patronage of the public; secrecy will be strictly observed on his part.

"He will sell by auction at the house of Mr. John M'Dougall, between the hours of 11 and 12 o'clock on Monday, the 22nd instant, 4 barrels of prime tobacco, 1 do. of pork, a well assorted library of books in different languages, some of the most fashionable coloured fine and refine cloths, together with sundry other articles too tedious to mention."[9]

It was never easy to collect debts in a period when money was very scarce and barter was the usual means of carrying on business. John Horton, in an announcement in the *Gazette* in 1801, "requests all those who are indebted to him, and whose accounts ought to have been paid long ago, to make payment in the course of one month from this date, or unpleasant measures will be recurred to; evasive answers from those whose accounts have been given in will not satisfy *his* creditors; he therefore hopes that this notice will be productive of something more than promises from those whose accounts remain unpaid."[10]

In early times it was believed that the inhabitants of Canada would derive great wealth from the ginseng that grew in the swamps, for in China it was worth its weight in silver, since it was considered a kind of "all-heal". In 1801 Jacob Herchmer was among those who were buying ginseng, which was then worth 2s. per pound dried, or 1s. if green. Hemp was another product which was early expected to add greatly to the profits of Canadian farmers, and at the same time, in this instance, to supply the British navy with sail-cloth and rope. The Hon. John McGill, the Hon. D. W. Smith and Thomas Scott were commissioners in York to distribute hemp seed gratis to farmers—the

[9]*Ibid.*, September 18, 1800.
[10]*Ibid.*, November 4, 1801.

first, and for many years the only government encouragement of agriculture.[11]

Horticulture, both for business and pleasure, was a popular pursuit in early York. For some years after 1800 William Bond operated a nursery garden at the corner of Duke and Ontario Streets. He had 41 apple trees, 30 peach trees, 9 cherry trees, and several plum trees, and produced as well such small fruits as gooseberries and red and white currants.

In early times, as not infrequently at the present day, merchants lived over or in the rear of their stores. On the south side of King, between Berkeley and Ontario Streets, was located the original home of the Cawthra family. In the *Gazette* of June 14, 1806, J. Cawthra advertises what appears to have been the first apothecary establishment. But this forerunner of the drug store was (like many a modern one) in reality a general store:

"J. Cawthra wishes to inform the inhabitants of York and the adjacent country, that he has opened an Apothecary Store in the house of A. Cameron, opposite Stoyell's Tavern in York, where the Public can be supplied with most articles in that line. He has on hand also a quantity of Men's, Women's and Children's shoes and Men's hats. Also for a few days will be sold the following articles, Table Knives and Forks, Scissors, Silver Watches, Maps and Prints, Profiles, some Linen, and a few Bed-Ticks, Teas, Tobacco, a few casks of fourth proof Cognac Brandy, and a small quantity of Lime Juice, and about twenty thousand Whitechapel Needles."[11]

On November 27, 1806, he announced that he had just arrived from New York with a general assortment of "apothecary articles" and patent medicines, and that anything genuine in that line could be supplied; while dry goods, hardware and groceries are included in the following list:

"Broad cloths, duffils, flannels, swansdown, corduroys, printed calicoes, gingham, cambrick muslins, shirting, muslin, men and women's stockings, silk handkerchiefs, bandana shawls, pulicat and pocket handkerchiefs, calimancoes, dimity and check; also a large assortment of

[11] *Ibid.*, June 14, 1806.

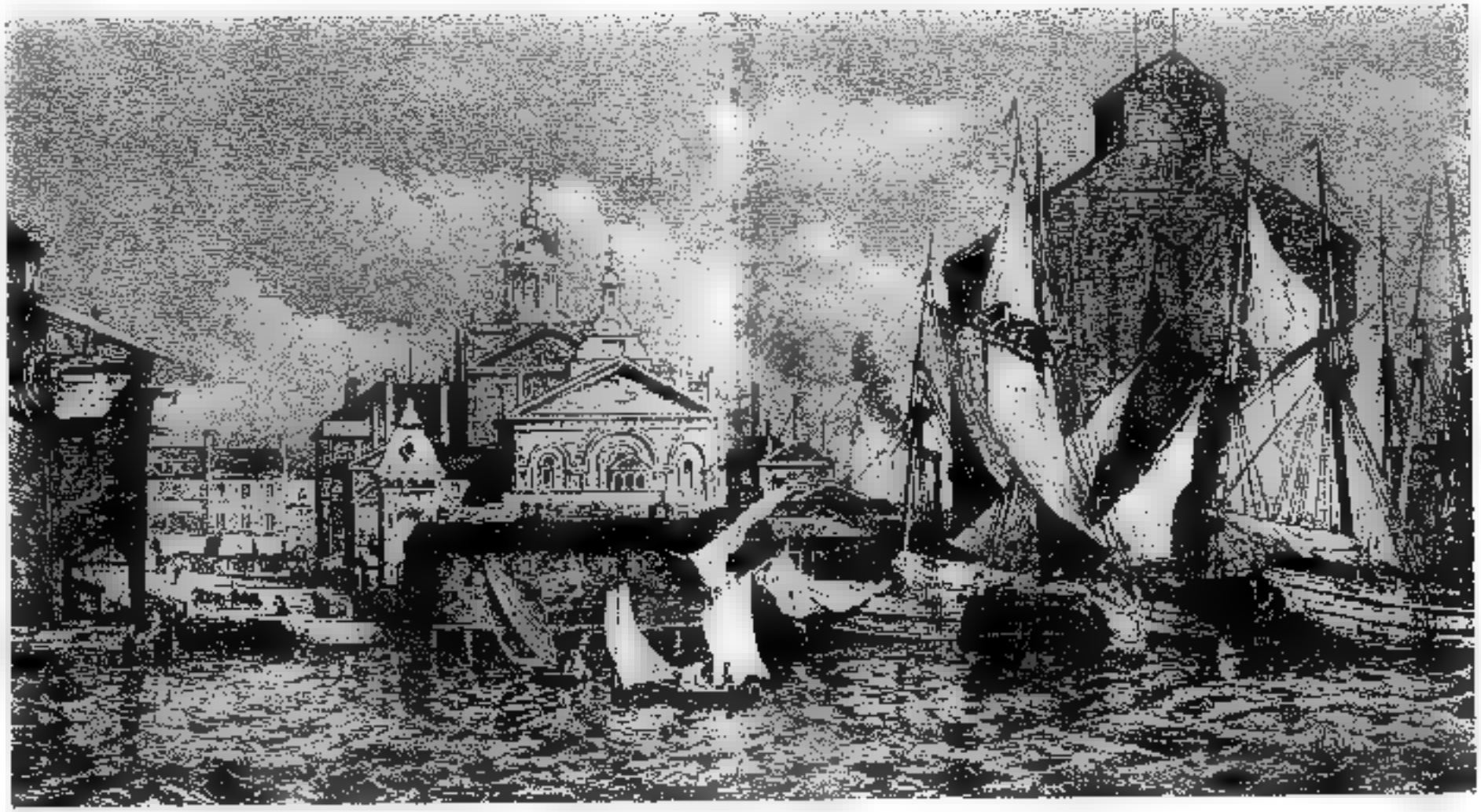
men's, women's and children's shoes, hardware, coffee, tea and chocolate, lump and loaf sugar, tobacco, &c., with many other articles; which he is determined to sell on very low terms at his store opposite Stoyell's Tavern."[12]

In the autumn of 1803 Lieutenant-Governor Peter Hunter issued a proclamation establishing a market in York. The document sets forth that "great prejudice hath arisen to the inhabitants of the Town and Township of York, and of other adjoining townships, from no place or day having been set apart or appointed for exposing publicly for sale cattle, sheep, poultry and other provisions, goods and merchandise brought by merchants, farmers and others for the necessary supply of the said Town of York". Realising the advantages which would arise from a weekly market, the Governor and his Executive Council "ordained, erected, established and appointed a public open market to be held on Saturday in each week and every week during the year within the said town of York, the first market to be held on Saturday, the 5th of November, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and three."[13] The first market-house was only 36 feet by 24, and was within the square formed by Front, New (now Jarvis), King and Church Streets, an area of five and a half acres having been set aside for the market-place. In later days the vicinity came to be not only a centre of trade but also of public meetings, entertainment, and social life generally, for in 1850 was erected the St. Lawrence Hall, for twenty years the most popular assembly room in the city.

Laws similar to those in mediaeval England with respect to forestallers and regraters were enforced against anyone who attempted to intercept produce on the roads leading to the market. Under the heading "Forestalling, Regrating, etc., Home District", occurs the following warning in the *Gazette*:

"Whereas at a Special Session of the Peace, holden at the town of York on Saturday of the present month of December, 1814, it was represented to the magistrates that sundry persons residing in the said town make it a practice of intercepting and buying up the provisions and other

[12] *Ibid.*, November 27, 1806.
[13] *Ibid.*, October 29, 1803.



Canadian Illustrated News. Henry Sandham.

TORONTO MARKETS, 1870

This Venetian scene shows the waterfront south of St. Lawrence Market. The old City Hall on Front Street may be seen in the rear of the sheds in the centre foreground.

Reproduced by Courtesy of the T. Eaton Co.

THE FIRST EATON STORE, 1869

Plank sidewalks and cedar-block paving are evident in the illustration. Knox Presbyterian Church may be seen in the background.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

TORONTO'S FIRST POST OFFICE

This log structure was situated on the east side of Frederick Street, south of King, and remained in use under the Hon. William Allan, postmaster, until 1827.

necessaries coming to the said town for sale, and that the said persons sell the same at very advanced prices to the inhabitants who are compelled to purchase from them:

"Notice is hereby given that any person or persons who shall after the date hereof intercept any provisions on its way to the said town, or purchase the same on its way in or after it shall be brought into the town, with a view to sell the same again, will be prosecuted to the utmost rigour of the law for each and every time he, she or they shall offend."[14]

In his account of the historical significance of the market district Dr. Scadding devotes considerable space to some of the lesser-known characters whose activities centred in the locality:

"Here business and bustle were every day, more or less, created by the usual wants of the inhabitants, and by the wants of the country farmers whose waggons in summer and sleighs in winter thronged in from the north, east and west; and hereabout at one moment or another, every lawful day, would be surely seen, coming and going, the oddities and street-characters of the town and neighbourhood. Having devoted some space to the leading and prominent personages of our drama, it will be only proper to bestow a few words on the subordinates, the Calibans and Gobbos, the Nyms and Touchstones of the piece.

"From the various nationalities and races of which the community was a mixture, these were drawn. There was James O'Hara, for example, a poor humorous Irishman, a perfect representative of his class in costume, style and manner, employed as bellman at auctions, and so on. When the town was visited by the Papyrotomia—travelling cutters-out of likenesses in black paper (some years ago such things created a sensation),—a full-length of O'Hara was suspended at the entrance to the rooms, recognised at once by every eye, even without the aid of the 'Shoot easy' inscribed on a label issuing from the mouth. (In the *Loyalist* of November 24, 1827, we have O'Hara's death noted: 'Died on Friday the 16th instant, James O'Hara, long an inhabitant of this Town, and formerly a soldier in

[14] *Ibid.*, January 21, 1815.

His Majesty's service.')—There was Jock Murray, the Scotch carter; and after him, William Pettit, the English one: and the carter who drove the horse with the 'spring-halt' (every school-lad in the place was familiar with the peculiar twitch upwards of the rear hind leg in the gait of this nag).

"The negro population was small. Every individual of colour was recognizable at sight. Black Joe and Whistling Jack were two notabilities, both of them negroes of African birth. In military bands a negro drummer or cymbal-player was formerly often to be seen. The two men just named, after obtaining discharge from a regiment here, gained an honest livelihood by chance employment about the town. Joe, a well-formed, well-trained figure, was to be seen, still arrayed in some old cast-off shell-jacket, acting as porter, or engaged about horses; once already we have had a glimpse of him in the capacity of sheriff's assistant, administering the lash to wretched culprits in the Market Place. The other, besides playing other parts, officiated occasionally as a sweep; but his most memorable accomplishment was a melodious and powerful style of whistling musical airs, and a faculty for imitating the bag-pipes to perfection. For the romantic sound of the name, the tall, comely negress, Amy Pompadour, should also be mentioned in the record. But she was of servile descent: at the time about which we write slavery was only just dying out in Upper Canada, as we shall have occasion to note hereafter more at large."[15]

Before the town of York became the city of Toronto most of the stores were of a more or less general nature, but as the time passed subdivision into various types of merchandising became more pronounced. In the late eighteen-forties business activities centred just east of the King and Yonge intersection. Some conception of the Toronto of that day will be made easier by a description of the buildings which at that time occupied parts of the down-town area. Front Street was then quite close to the Bay. The Custom House was the only building on the south side of the street, and there were comparatively few on the north, the section west of Yonge being then the fashionable

[15]Scadding, *op. cit.*, pp. 175-6.

residential district. The homes of Judge Macaulay, Judge Jones, Joseph Rogers, and the Baldwins occupied the north side of Front Street between Yonge and Bay. Further westward, on the site of the old Queen's Hotel, were four dwellings owned by Captain Thomas Dick; these were soon to house Knox College, and a little later were altered to form Sword's Hotel. To the rear, on Wellington Street, was Holland House, erected in 1832 and occupied by the Hon. Henry John Boulton. At the corner of York and Front Captain Strachan, son of the Bishop of Toronto, lived in a picturesque cottage, and the Bishop's Palace—at one time one of three brick buildings in the town—adjoined the Front Street entrance. At the corner of Wellington and Simcoe was the Hagerman mansion, and eastward at the corner of Bay was a small white house entirely by itself. There were other outlying residences, but apart from a few on Yonge and Church Streets there were practically no buildings north of Lot (Queen) Street.

Many Toronto business men still followed the old custom of residing over their stores, though others lived in small dwellings in the immediate vicinity, especially to the east of Church Street. Among prominent retail stores in the late forties was that of Betley & Kay, located at the corner of King and Yonge; while the chief other retailers were Walker and Hutchinson's, P. Paterson's, and Walter McFarlane's. These firms gradually became "one-price" establishments, though business was in general characterised by argument or bantering over the price. The good old sport of shopping, not unknown at present, was then in its heyday, and the amusement of going from Yonge Street to the Market before deciding what to buy or where to buy it was almost universal. One who was employed in a store at that time recalled that the expression "We will look around, and return if not better suited elsewhere" was commonly used by prospective customers. The anxiety of clerks to press sales was consequently painfully apparent, and the chief inducement was to offer a reduction in the price; while the lack of system in displaying goods, and the scarcity of customers, made business life "tiresome beyond description."[16]

[16]C. C. Taylor: *Toronto Called Back.* 1886. p. 49.

The practice of cutting prices was, of course, demoralising to both buyer and seller, and usually led to exaggeration and misrepresentation. Among other characteristics of business life in the early years of the city was the confusion caused by the various types of money in common use. In one of the establishments mentioned above the daily cash sales averaged £1,000 sterling; this was taken in at five cashiers' desks, usually by boys under sixteen years of age, whose rapid work in making change from the cheques handed in by some 400 salesmen was rather remarkable when one considers the difficulties:

"The coins were farthings, half-pence, pence, sixpences, shillings, half-crowns, crowns, half-sovereigns and sovereigns. Farthings were strictly charged on all amounts to 2s. 6d., and no salesman could omit them at 2s. 5½d. The desks have frequently been swept out to find a missing half-penny, as everything must balance. There being no Canadian Silver Currency at this time, the process of making change out of what was technically called 'specie' was a perfect study. There were Mexican and United States dollars and half-dollars; United States 6¼, 12½, and 25-cent pieces; English sixpences, shillings, half-crowns, with a miscellaneous assortment from every other country.

"Coin and bank note detectors were used in every place to ascertain the value of the coin and the genuineness of bank notes, especially those from the United States. As each had to make his own change in the absence of a cashier, this was found to be a work of great difficulty,—to know when a York shilling ceased to possess that value by reason of abrasion or defacement and became a 10-cent piece involved many a dispute; and the same with all the other coins. In payment of a debt the Mexican dollar would go for 5s. 1d., or $1.02, but in independent trading it was just one dollar.

"Anyone visiting New York at this time and buying a newspaper, if he gave a good 25-cent piece would generally lose in change through the manipulation of the boys from one to four cents, just as the boy happened to have more or less of the small coins. Toronto had no newsboys at this time. As for coppers I have no doubt a great many brass buttons found circulation just by flattening the shanks.

This state of things continued more or less for years, till the Decimal System was introduced by Act of Parliament, and the present silver coinage issued. Previous to this all wholesale or importing accounts were kept in sterling for French and English accounts, Halifax currency or $4 to the pound for Canadian, and in dollars and cents for the United States."[17]

Banking did not commence in Upper Canada until the early twenties, and for some years thereafter only the Bank of Upper Canada was available to the merchants of York. In the matter of loans there is no doubt that opponents of the Family Compact were at first discriminated against, but matters improved when the government connection was severed. The Bank of Upper Canada remained in business nearly half a century. John Ross Robertson gives the following account of the first building:

"At the legislative session of 1821 was announced the royal assent to the Act passed in 1819 for the institution of a bank which was to be situated at York, the seat of government of the province, and was to be known as the Bank of Upper Canada. The stock was not to exceed £200,000. It was to be opened when the deposit amounted to £20,000. The Government was allowed to subscribe for 2,000 shares, and it was declared that the institution might expire by limitation in 1848. The bank began business somewhere about 1822, taking the corner part of the building which is still standing at the south-east corner of King and Frederick Streets, the entrance to the bank being on Frederick Street. The vault of the bank—not much like vaults nowadays—may still be seen at the western end of the cellar. The wall is of brick, about a foot thick at the front, but much thicker at the sides and rear. The interior dimensions are about three feet square. The door is of iron, half an inch in thickness. Two locks, like ordinary door locks only stronger, were relied on to defend the treasure. At the point where the vault is located the outside foundation wall of the building is over three feet through and of stone. The bank occupied these premises quite a number of years."[18]

It was the middle of the century, however, before a

[17] *Ibid.*, pp. 70-1. See also page 261 of the present work.
[18] Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 268-70.

Stock Exchange came into being. On July 26, 1852, a small group of citizens met and resolved that "the gentlemen now present do constitute themselves an association to be denominated the Toronto Stock Exchange". The aims of the organization were "to expedite the transfer of stocks and extend the circulation of Canadian credit". It is a far cry from the stock market operations of that day to the heavy trading and the "bucket-shop" activities of modern times when "the markets" have become the great public gambling resort. In the early years of the Exchange speculative interest was but small, and a half hour spent each morning in one or other of the offices of the six members sufficed to carry out the transfer of bonds and stocks; while seats on the first Exchange were valued at five dollars each.

As cash was scarce it was usual for many years to pay wages in what was known as "store pay". The ramifications of this procedure are outlined by C. C. Taylor:

"Every builder or contractor made an arrangement with the various trades and stores for a line of credit, by which they could pay their workmen as much of their wages as possible with the smallest amount of cash. Orders were given on the stores, and mechanics' wives went to make their purchases, carefully concealing their written 'orders' as long as the knowing salesman failed to draw out the fact of their existence, the object of the caution on the part of the frugal housewives being to ascertain the 'cash' price of the goods. If the 'cat was let out of the bag' the salesman at once 'stood at ease', knowing well that the customer had no alternative but to take out the value of the order. A few immigrants, in perfect innocence, would present these orders at once, much to the satisfaction of the salesman. The block of buildings known as Ritchey's Terrace, and other large buildings, including churches, St. Lawrence buildings, etc., were largely paid for in this way."[19]

Ritchey's Terrace, it is of interest to remark, may still be seen on the north side of Adelaide Street, between York and Bay, and it has not been greatly altered since its construction in 1854.

Wages were, of course, much lower than the scales in force now, and there were no strikes for higher pay. The

[19]Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

first strike in Toronto is said to have occurred in 1847 when Messrs. Walker and Hutchinson introduced the first sewing-machine. The details are interesting:

"The tailors in their employment, regarding this innovation as contrary to all their time-honoured ideas of the manufacture of clothing, at once rebelled. Had not the old needle been used by hand since the fig leaves were made into garments in the Garden of Eden? Then why should a new-fangled machine be invented to supersede the ancient system? The machine was only in use a few days when Messrs. Walker & Hutchinson, finding it so objectionable, agreed to discontinue its use, and handed it over to their men to use it as they thought proper. A day was appointed for the display of their triumph over machinery, and the discarded machine was exhibited on King Street, in the centre of a procession of the workmen, after which it was returned to the manufacturers in New York. The firm, in order to remove every trace of dissatisfaction, treated the men to a banquet the same evening."[20]

The same writer gives an account of the characteristics of wholesale firms, of which Taylor & Stevenson was a prominent example, and of the difficulties attendant upon the introduction of commercial travelling in Canada in 1851:

"In 1850 the firm of Taylor & Stevenson was established, and their business was carried on at the corner of Yonge and Colborne Streets, in the building now occupied by Messrs. Buntin, Reid & Co. It was then newly built, and was one of the finest warehouses in the city. Mr. Stevenson having had extensive connections with all the straw goods manufacturers in London and Bedfordshire, that trade was made a leading branch. The first importations of these goods, in the spring of 1851, were the largest that had ever been made into Canada, and having sent out circulars, we had buyers from Windsor in the west to Brockville in the east. The whole importations were closed out in a few weeks, and such was the quantity to be entered and packed that all hands were obliged to work for several weeks every night except Saturday till 2 or 3 o'clock, so as to get the goods forwarded within a reasonable time. To

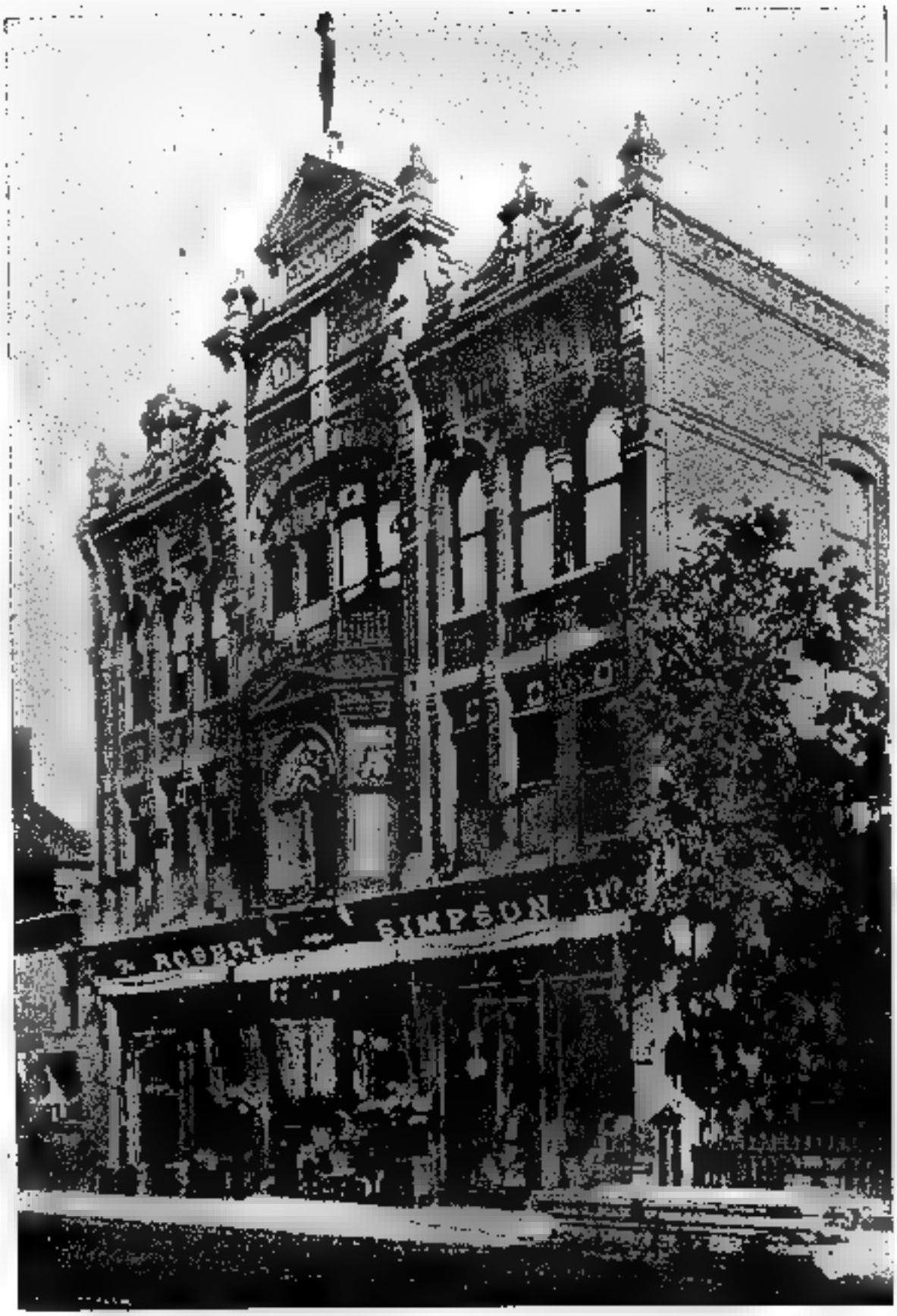
[20] *Ibid.*, p. 75.

obviate this in future the idea of taking the orders beforehand and shipping the goods direct soon took shape, and in the fall of that year samples were got out from the leading manufacturers, and the writer undertook to travel for orders.

"After the close of navigation there was only one regular mode of travelling. Weller's Line of Mail Stages left daily for Montreal and Quebec, and in this way the writer, who was the first commercial traveller in Canada, started from Toronto. In these days of Pullman cars and commercial hotels to hear travellers complain of the discomforts and annoyances is rather amusing to those who have ploughed through mud and slush, sometimes carrying rails off the fences to pry the wheels of the stages out of the ruts, and again, in snow, carrying shovels to dig out the horses when large drifts were encountered; all which is known to the writer by actual experience.

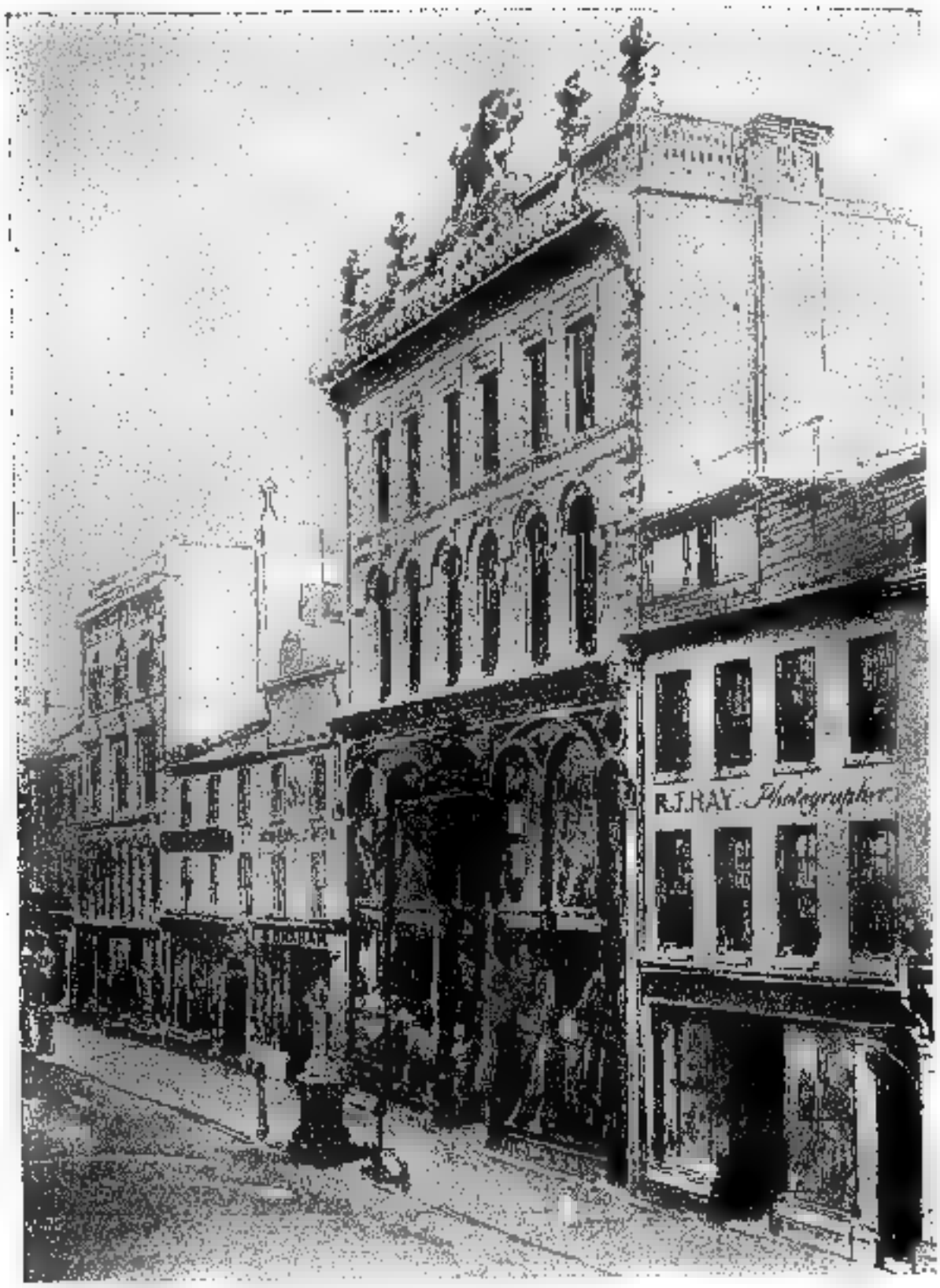
"The accommodation for baggage for nine or ten passengers consisted of a 'rack' at the back of the stage, so that baggage trunks and 300 lbs. weight of samples were never even thought of up to the time of the opening of the railroads. To meet this difficulty the writer had his samples sent out in miniature models, so small that samples representing thousands of dozens, for which he actually took orders, could all be carried in a small valise. The experiment was a great success; the goods were all packed in England to the various marks, and in the spring of 1852 were shipped in bulk to the various merchants from Quebec to Windsor, or sent to Toronto for distribution. During that fall not a single traveller was met on the whole road, but the following season a gentleman appeared as a competitor from a New York house, and one or two others, amongst them Mr. Darling, of Montreal, in the hardware trade, and Mr. D. B. Macdonald in fancy dry goods.

"The summer trips by steamers were very pleasant, but in the winter there was nothing but hardships, and in crossing the ice at different points very great danger. My rule was that wherever the mail driver would venture I would go. On one occasion, in crossing from Belleville to Picton, the ice had melted, and in the whole distance across the Bay of Quinté no ice could be seen—the horses being



Adam's *Toronto, Old and New.*

QUEEN STREET FRONT OF THE ROBERT SIMPSON STORE, 1891



John Ross Robertson Collection.

THE GOLDEN LION DRY GOODS STORE

This famous establishment was situated on the site of the King Edward Hotel. Robert Walker & Sons were the proprietors, and the firm long held a high place among Toronto stores.

almost knee deep in water. Again, in crossing from Kingston to Cape Vincent in the Mail Stage with four horses and a heavy mail with a large number of passengers, where the ice was cracking, the horses had to 'jump the cracks'. Many rivers and canals were crossed in this way.

"One adventure on the road will give an idea of snow drifts. The town of Brockville was always to me, whether in summer or winter, a delightful resting-place, a sort of oasis in my travels from east to west or *vice versa*. Young men away from home in a new country will appreciate my feelings when I say that to find a sort of Canadian home, when a young traveller, was indeed a delightful feeling. Here I always rested for a few days amongst my friends—the Hon. George and Messrs. John and James Crawford and their connections, and especially Mr. Sheriff Sherwood and the late Hon. John Ross, whom I had the pleasure of meeting there frequently.

"In the winter of 1853 I arrived there from the east in a heavy snow storm; it was the 23rd of December, and I wished to get to Toronto by Christmas Day. On the 24th the Mail Stage came along, and having supplied ourselves with wooden shovels we started for Kingston. Having got on a few miles we found the drifts getting worse, and after repeated efforts in literally digging the horses out we were compelled to put up at a small tavern on the road side, and here, with bitter regrets at my folly in not remaining at Brockville where I might have spent a pleasant Christmas, we were compelled to remain all Christmas Day. In the meantime the pathmasters had been notified by passengers that the track must be opened at their peril to allow Her Majesty's Mails to proceed. On the 26th we again started, having much the same shovelling as before, when, having got a few miles, we heard the sound of the down stage's horn and knew the track had been broken, and arrived in Kingston in a reasonable time.

"The formation of the Commercial Travellers' Association followed soon after the opening of the railroads, and has grown to immense proportions, as the annual reports of the various associations now existing abundantly show."[21]

Until after the middle of the century there were no

[21] *Ibid.*, pp. 91-3.

elevators or hoists in use in Toronto. All goods, including the heaviest furniture, had to be laboriously carried to the upper floors of stores, and passengers walked up the stairways. In 1853, however, hoists of the old wheel-and-rope type were introduced in two buildings—a warehouse and the Bank of Commerce,—and others were installed later.

It was a time, too, when orders sent by mail were long being filled, two weeks usually being the time required to obtain a reply to a letter sent to Montreal. The arrival of the English mail once a fortnight was an outstanding event for many citizens. The following interesting details of the Toronto postal service of that period have been preserved:

"In 1847, and up till 1852, the whole business of the Toronto Post Office was transacted in a small building on Wellington Street, where the present Exchange now stands. The delivery office was a room about 20 x 40 feet, and the distributing room was an old cellar-kitchen some 20 feet square. The staff up to 1850 consisted of a postmaster, three clerks, and a letter carrier. The postmaster was Mr. Charles Berczy, and the clerks John Armstrong, Christopher Walsh, and W. H. Pearson. John McCloskey was letter-carrier, and a charge of one 'copper' was made on each letter delivered by him.

"At this time, and up till 1850, the English mails were only delivered fortnightly—by stage from Halifax in winter, and partly by steamboats in summer. The rate of postage on English letters was 1s. 2½d. sterling, or 1s. 4 d. Halifax currency (about 27 cents); the postage to Halifax was 2s. 9d.; Quebec, 1s. 6d.; Montreal, 1s. 2d.; Kingston, 9d.; Windsor, 10½d.; the lowest rate being 4½d.

"In 1850 there were only about 400 boxes in the Post Office. Postage stamps were at this time unknown, and the postage on paid letters was written in red ink, and on unpaid in black. The only visible representative of Her Majesty on ordinary occasions was either Mr. Walsh or Mr. Armstrong, who for the time being combined in themselves the office of receiving, delivery and inquiry clerks; and, as every letter must be taken to the Post Office, these gentlemen were known to every man, woman and child in Toronto and Yorkville who ever posted a letter."[22]

[22] *Ibid.*, pp. 66-7.

Returning to the retail merchants, some account of the chief establishments of the late fifties will further illustrate the business conditions of other days. The credit system was still in vogue, and many customers ran up bills of thousands of dollars before any attempt at payment. Some firms suggest, like the Pantechnetheca, "'Tis the ready money does it!", but they must have had a difficult time competing with the great majority of credit merchants. The Pantechnetheca, it may be explained, was a dry goods store at 55-59 King Street East, operated by T. Hutchinson, Nephew & Co. Soon after its opening in 1853 an advertising "dodge" was perpetrated upon the public—much to the disgust of rival dry goods firms, who were more honest:

"They secured the services of a gentleman of colour who, arrayed in gorgeous raiment, marched up and down in front of the Pantechnetheca premises and was announced by a obsequious page boy to be no less a personage than His Majesty the King of Delhi, who had revolted against the British during the great Indian Mutiny, and had, after fearful conflict, been captured by Her Britannic Majesty's victorious troops."[23]

Late in 1858 the Pantechnetheca passed out of Toronto's mercantile picture, but the mention of Hutchinson's "Pantec", as the young bloods of the day delighted to call it, recalls a more famous store—the Golden Lion, a few doors nearer Yonge Street. The business was founded in 1836 by Robert Walker and Thomas Hutchinson. In the late forties the name "Golden Lion" was adopted by this dry goods establishment, and a massive gilt figure of a lion was placed over the front door to provide the symbol. The business did not pass out of existence until the closing years of the century, and during its heyday in the fifties and sixties it was "the one store in Toronto where the country people outside of Toronto habitually went. . . . They had confidence in the place, and the firm never did anything to show that this confidence was misplaced."[24] The partnership of Walker and Hutchinson was dissolved in 1853, and the ill-feeling between the two led to the establishment of the Pantechnetheca, which became a bitter rival.

[23]Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. V, p. 13.
[24]*Ibid.*, p. 14.

The business centre long continued to be King Street, but while in earlier years it had been as far east as New (Jarvis) Street, it now extended to shops west of Yonge as well, and the street as a whole was the fashionable promenade of the city for several decades. On King Street West, opposite the old *Globe* office, was S. P. Coleman, "London Practical Hatter and Furrier", who advertised "Hats that R Hats". Michie & Co.'s grocery store was in its present location. Founded by Alexander Ogilvie on May 1, 1835, as a first class grocery and liquor store, the establishment was located on land formerly owned by Jordan Post, pioneer watchmaker, whose wife Melinda is commemorated by the street near by. George Michie, senior clerk, became a partner in 1840, and for nearly a century the family has operated the business through the many vicissitudes of changing conditions. For many years, until the nineties, the parade ground of Toronto's rank and fashion led past the door, and, though the shopping district has to a very considerable extent moved up Yonge, Michie's has survived nearly a century of competition and depressions, department stores and chain stores—the only old grocery store still in operation. Dack's, Ltd., Shoemakers since 1835, and R. Score & Son, Tailors, founded in England in 1787 and in Canada in 1837, have also been a century on King Street.

Another old firm—Rice Lewis & Son—commenced its long career in 1847 "at the sign of the padlock" on the north-east corner of King and Toronto Streets, H. S. Scott & Co. having established the business under the name "Wellington House" a few years earlier. As was customary in those days, Rice Lewis' family resided in the rooms above the store. In 1858 the firm, "across from the post office" of that day, advertises among other hardware "Joseph Rodgers & Sons' cutlery, James Dixon & Sons' Electro Plate, and the newest designs of Papier Maché trays".[26] The sign over the main door on King Street was a padlock, and a large padlock stood on the sidewalk near the entrance. In 1888 the firm removed to a new building a short distance westward, at the north-east corner of King and Victoria Streets, and there, until the autumn of 1933, Rice Lewis & Son, Ltd., remained in business.

[26]See *Descriptive Catalogue of the Provincial Exhibition, 1858.*

Continuing the enumeration of some of the main mercantile establishments of 1858 we note that Rutherford and Saunders were Tailors and Hosiers at 52-54 King Street West, and advertised 15% discount for cash. Just west of Bay Street on King was J. H. Swann's "Ladies' Outfitting, Juvenile Clothing, and Baby-Linen Establishment", and the owner announces himself "Importer of French and English Infant and Juvenile Clothing. Ladies' and Childrens' Under-clothing of every description". In the St. Lawrence Buildings was John Ritchey's Dry Goods Store, where customers were assured quality goods "at such prices as will defy competition". At 14 King Street West, "at the Sign of the Three-dialled Illuminated Clock", D. G. Carnegie sold watches, clocks and jewellery "at about cost prices!"

Confectioners and caterers who were famous long before Coles', and previous even to Nasmith's and Webb's, are recalled by the advertisements of George Coleman, 69 King Street West, and A. Clark, 171 King Street East. Coleman specialised upon pastry cooking, and gave particular attention to "weddings, private parties, public soirées, etc." Clarke announced himself as "manufacturer of all kinds of plain ■ fancy bread, crackers, biscuits, tarts, sugar sticks, comfits, lozenges, almonds, mottoes, and all kinds of candies", as well as confectionery, pastry and bread. "Temperance drinks of all kinds" were also dispensed at this store.

Of special interest to females was the Beauty Parlour of that day—the "Antitinpacpliec, Misses Bates (from London, England), proprietors". Announcing themselves as "Ladies' Ornamental Hair Manufacturers", at 31 King Street West, the sisters advertise their capabilities as follows:

"Ladies' hair cut, shampooed, dyed and dressed. Families and schools attended. Children's hair fashionably cut. Fronts, bangs, bunches, caps and wigs made at the shortest notice. Hair dye and depilatory kept. Sole agents for Professor Liebeg's Hair Wash."

A fireside amusement long of outstanding popularity and still persisting in less sophisticated homes is called to mind by the advertisement of the Toronto Stereoscope Depot. In addition to views of Niagara Falls and vicinity,

and of British and continental scenery, there was a series of "magnificent views of Egyptian ruins". The establishment, operated by Thomas Maclear in "the Masonic Buildings, 2 doors north of the Post Office, Toronto Street", also carried a line of "Ladies' reticules, bags, portmonais, and other fancy goods, British manufactured writing and other papers, and a general stock of stationery wholesale".

In the eighteen-fifties Yonge Street was beginning to develop as a merchandising district, though for many years it did not rival King Street. At the corner of Yonge and Temperance was Dodgson, Shields & Morton, "whose stock of teas, coffees, sugars, tobaccos, and general groceries is large and choice, and imported expressly for their extensive retail trade". Their advertisement is suggestive of the abuses which frequently characterised business dealings in the fifties, for they state as one of their main aims, "to make no misrepresentations in effecting sales".

On Yonge Street also was J. & W. Cowan's Dry Goods Store. This firm was located on the west side, three doors north of Adelaide, then numbered 126 Yonge Street; and the unique part of their advertisement lies in its being in verse—in fact in the rhyming couplet. The allusions to competitors were no doubt appreciated by the readers of the day—and especially those to the "Pantec" and Golden Lion:

FACTS, NOT FABLES

"'Mongst American cities, in numbers a host,
Toronto, in puffing, of late rules the roast;
Such dodges as travelling circuses try
Are employed to entice the unwary to buy:
Coarse daubings of monsters, called Kings and Sepoys,
Adorn our shop fronts and amuse little boys,
While rival establishments rush to the fray,
With jolly old Lions and young cubs at play,
Fill our papers each morning with empty tirade,
Until lies are considered the staple of trade.
Must all Dry Goods Houses descend to pretence,
Nor dare advertise in the language of sense?
Not believing that clap-trap can carry much weight,
That our Fall Goods are here we beg plainly to state;
In Blankets and Flannels large stocks we now show,

Which will prove on inspection decidedly low.
White Shirtings at prices exceedingly rare;
Cloths, Ties, Shirts and Vestings for Gentlemen's wear;
New styles in Rich Dress Goods, too long to define,
From two to three dollars, and some eight and nine;
New Delaines and New Cashmeres, the cheapest in town,
The white spots on blue and the red spots on brown;
New Prints, in fast colours, of patterns quite killing,
Beginning at sixpence, up to a York shilling;
New Gloves and New Gauntlets and New Scotch Wool Hose,
The wearers we warrant will never be froze;
Shirt bosoms stitched neater than if made by hand,
From one and three upwards, attention command;
New Capes in Black Cloth which you've only to see
To acknowledge them cheap at eleven and three;
Felt Hats, Plumes and Flowers, the fair ones to grace,
Ribbons, Blondes, Veils, Sewed Collars, and Black and White Lace:
In short, every article known in the trade,
So low, no abatement in price can be made.
Then let all who are anxious good value to find
Bear Yonge Street and Cowan's Cheap Store in their mind."

Another Yonge Street establishment was that of J. T. Shapter, chemist and druggist, who announces himself as an "importer of English and Foreign Drugs, Chemicals, Patent Medicines, Surgical Instruments, Elastic Bandages and Stockings, Trusses, Enemas, Perfumery, and Druggists' Sundries". The patent medicines of the eighteen-fifties included the Castillian Hair Invigorator, Urquhart's Botanic Toothache Drops, and Dr. Buchan's Aperient & Digestive Bitters; of the last-named the ingredients "are exclusively from the vegetable kingdom", and the diseases cured included almost every complaint known to medicine (as well as many unknown)—from Lowness of Spirits, Heartburn and Flatulency, to "unpleasant sensation of fulness after eating", St. Vitus' Dance, and Marasmus, or "wasting of flesh in childhood and early youth".

For many years King Street remained the fashionable shopping district, and "doing King" appears to have been a major sport in the seventies and eighties. A contemporary

description outlines in an interesting if somewhat pompous and exaggerated style the social predominance of King Street:

"Between the two principal streets of the Western Capital is a great gulf, made by the inflexible laws of society and fashion—a gulf as great as separates the Bowery from Broadway, the Rue de Rivoli from Rue Montparnasse, or Regent Street and Rotten Row from the humble thoroughfares of Pentonville and the City Road.

"The buildings on King Street are greater and grander than their neighbors on Yonge; the shops are larger and dearer; and last but not least King Street is honoured by the daily presence of the aristocracy, while Yonge is given over to the business man, the middle-class and the beggar. Amid the upper classes there is a performance that goes on daily that is known among *habitués* as 'doing King'. It consists principally of marching up and down a certain part of that street at a certain hour, performing, as it were, *ko-tou* to the goddess of Fashion, and sacrificing to her sister divinity of Society.

"At three o'clock in the afternoon the first stragglers appear on the scene, which extends perhaps a quarter of a mile. These consists principally of young ladies, whose proper place should be at school, and young men attired in the height of fashion. By the time these ardent devotees have paraded a few times, the regular *habitués* make their appearance, and till six o'clock in the evening one side—for one side only is patronised—is crowded to excess.

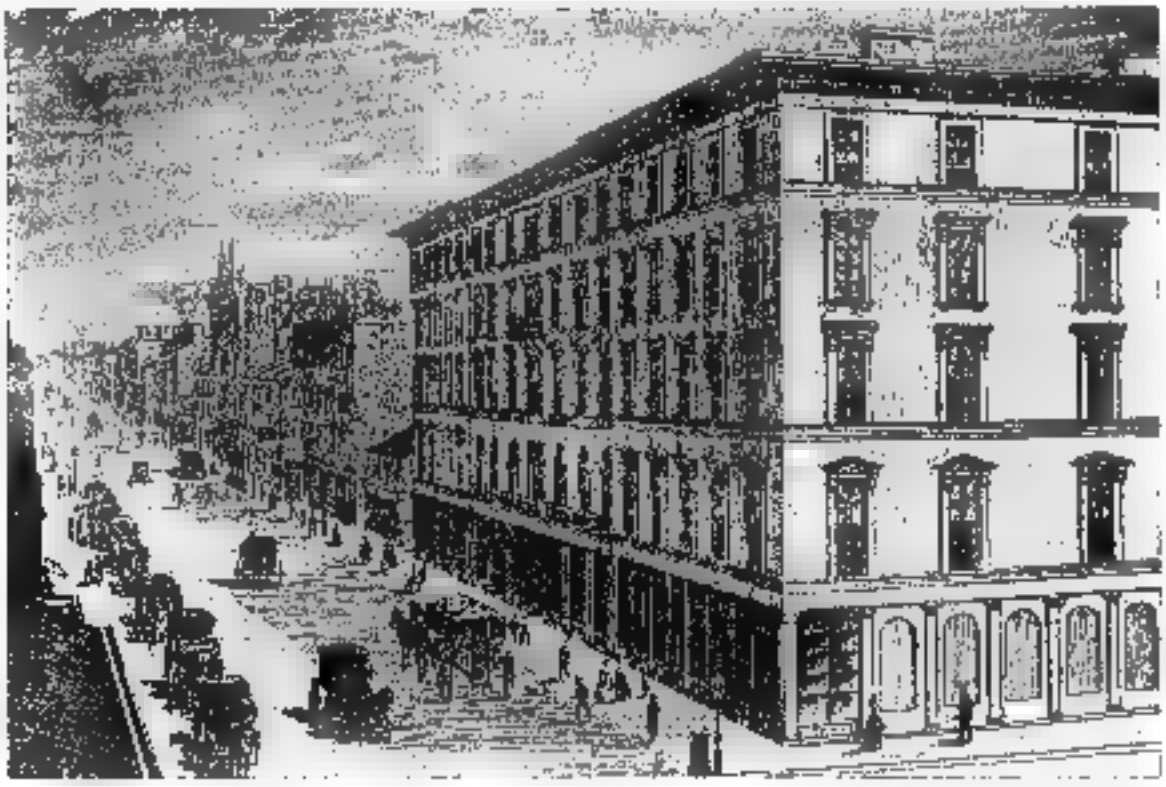
"It is rather considered 'the thing' to patrol King Street in this manner; and of a fine evening every one who belongs to the *élite*, as well as many who do not, may be seen perseveringly trudging up and down, no doubt to their great comfort and to the intense discomfiture and dismay of others less smiled upon by nature or less favoured by their tailors or their dressmakers. King Street is in a way a great social 'Change, where everybody meets everybody and his wife; where the latest fashions are exhibited, and the last quotations of the matrimonial market are exchanged.

"Would you see the newest style in hats or panniers? They are to be seen on King Street. And would you know

Canadian Illustrated News. G. Glazebrook.

"DOING KING" IN THE SEVENTIES

Promenading the south side of King Street was long a major sport. "Where everybody meets everybody and his wife; where the latest fashions are exhibited, and the last quotations of the matrimonial market are exchanged."



Canadian Illustrated News.

KING STREET IN 1870

In the foreground is the Rossin House, now the Prince George Hotel. The taxicabs of the day are lined up across the street. Horse-cars did not then operate on King West, but an omnibus may be seen.

JOURNAL

of the

COMMON COUNCIL

OF THE

City of Toronto,

Commencing on Thursday, the 3rd day of April 1834:

in the 4th Year of the Reign of King William IV.

William Lyon Mackenzie, *Esquire,*

Mayor;

SIR JOHN COLBORNE, K.C.B.
Lieutenant Governor.

FIRST MINUTE BOOK OF THE CITY COUNCIL, 1834

how many young swells are doing nothing for a living? You are sure to find them on King Street. Would you wish to hear the last imprudence of young Harum Scarum, or the progress of Miss Slowcome's engagement? You may be sure before you take half-a-dozen turns some conversant, intelligent busy-body of your acquaintance will have whispered the facts of the case in your ear, all of which he has 'On the best authority, sir'. It is on King Street that Clelius makes his appointment with Clelia for their afternoon walk; that Thersites, jealousy-stricken, scowls at Adonis; and that Pomponia depreciates the value of her dear friend Amaltheus' new silk and trimmings. There Cornelia, the careful mother, brings out her treasures and exhibits to the public gaze those desirable lots of which she is so anxious to dispose on advantageous terms. While far above all, Diogenes, in his garret, little more roomy or commodious than the ancient 'tub', looks down upon the motley throng, notices their petty follies and foibles, and thanks his lucky stars that he is not as other men."[26]

There are still many people living who have vivid memories of the Toronto of half a century ago, and who recall the King Street shopping district which has just been described. Fred Williams lists some of the business symbols which were in evidence at the time—and in some instances, notably in the case of barber shops, still persist:

"The Golden Lion of Robert Walker and Sons, the clothiers.

The padlock and key of Rice Lewis & Company.

The acorn of Oak Hall.

The mammoth of Thomas Thompson, the clothier.

The griffin of Petley & Hughes, the clothiers.

The Queen Victoria of Lawson's Victoria Tea House.

The book of Brown Brothers, the booksellers and stationers—all on King East.

And then on Yonge Street:

The golden boot of William West.

The bear of William Lugsden.

The Indian and the Highlander at two tobacconists.

The big hat at Perry's."[27]

[26] *Canadian Illustrated News*, September 3, 1870.

[27] Fred Williams: *In Toronto Fifty Years Ago.* (Toronto *Mail and Empire*, January 17, 1934.)

And there was, too, John Wanless' aluminum clock, and Ambrose Kent's "Indian clock" with two figures in the rear alternating in striking out the time on circular drums; both of these were on the site of the present Robert Simpson Company. James Scott's Golden Fleece store advertised woollens by a gilded lamb over the entrance, and Holt, Renfrew's establishment on King Street East spórted its sign "Purveyor to the Queen"—which has more recently become "By Special Appointment of His Majesty King George the Fifth."

In spite, however, of the undoubted predominance of the south side of King Street, it appeared to Timothy Eaton in 1869 that Yonge Street was the place to establish business. With the previous experience of a general store in St. Mary's, he announced a striking departure from generally accepted rules of business—"One price to all, and spot cash". On December 8, 1869, he personally unlocked the door of his dry goods store at 178 Yonge Street, then the south-west corner of Yonge and Queen. Seven years later the small store was extended forty feet in the rear, and the stock increased by the addition of floor coverings and bedding. In 1877 a second floor was devoted to a show room for cloaks, millinery and similar apparel, and the sales staff had increased from two men, a woman, and a boy to 20 clerks and a pony delivery wagon! In 1883 the business was removed to its present site, and in 1884 the first catalogue—of 32 pages—was distributed at the Industrial Exhibition. The original mail-order staff comprised a woman to select the goods and a boy to tie up the parcels. Eaton's great success undoubtedly resulted in part from the policy of purchasing for cash in world markets, but there are many other factors in the great development signified by the 40,000 employees under the Eaton name, and the hundreds of millions of dollars of annual turnover. An interesting survival of other times when people adhered very strongly to their convictions is found in connection with the Eaton name. The founder of the business decided that he would sell neither playing cards nor tobacco, and this remained the policy of the firm long after his death; even today, though cards are sold and one may obtain cigarette-lighters and other smokers' accessories, tobacco

does not form part of Eaton's stock. Until 1933, in fact, smoking was prohibited in that delightful restaurant—the Georgian Room—, but in that year the demands of women smokers led to the removal of the restriction.

Following close upon Timothy Eaton, a 38-year old Scotchman, Robert Simpson, established a small dry goods store near Queen and Yonge Streets in 1872. Toronto had then a population of 56,000 and the streets were just beginning to be improved by cedar block paving. Like Eaton, Robert Simpson had previous experience, having become a clerk in a dry goods store in Newmarket eighteen years before. His appearance was rather impressive, and he possessed a thorough knowledge of dry goods and the requirements of the public and their taste and fancy. By 1881 the business had so grown that he moved to a larger store to the southward, where he required thirteen clerks, and inaugurated a horse-and-wagon delivery service. In the new store he introduced ready-to-wear goods, millinery and groceries, as well as corsets and other intimate feminine apparel the display and sale of which embarrassed many a lady and shocked the general public.[28] These developments laid the foundation of the department system. In 1895 a severe fire destroyed a large new store erected just three months earlier, as well as all other Simpson buildings from Richmond Street to Queen, the fire having started in the motor room which provided power for the up-to-the-minute "cash railway". The store was immediately rebuilt, and in 1897, when Simpson died and his business passed into the hands of the Robert Simpson Company, there were 500 employees and a seven-storey building. From that time the growth of Simpson's was similar to the development of Eaton's, the

[28]Those who are interested in the steps by which *lingerie* has progressed from the unknown to the commonplace—from something unheard-of to a pre-eminent position in advertising placard and billboard,— and who would follow the vagaries of fashion in women's apparel down through the centuries, are advised to read *Unmentionables: From Fig Leaves to Scanties*, published late in 1933 from the pen of Robert Cortes Holliday, an American essayist of established reputation. While the book is written in a light and humorous vein, its pages are characterised by scholarly research worthy of any historian, and the result of the author's enthusiasm is a classic study of manners and customs as well as costume.

two great department stores having long since changed the Toronto shopping centre from King Street to Queen and Yonge.

Recent developments in merchandising are outside the scope of this chapter, but the facilities, conveniences and services provided by the modern department store show progress as great as in any other field of activity. In recent years chain stores have provided effective competition in many lines of business, and, with the department stores and their extensive mail order service, have made it increasingly difficult for the small independent shop—so characteristic of an earlier period—to operate successfully. We live in a day of big business—amalgamations, trusts and combines—but the small merchant with the personal touch has not yet followed the small tradesman into oblivion. Will the future see mass buying restricted and the "little fellow" protected by legislative enactment, or will the gradual disappearance of the smaller establishments be considered merely another evidence of economic evolution and progress?

CHAPTER XV

Tradesmen and Manufacturers of Other Days

Manufacturing in its early phases was in reality "making by hand"—as the word implies—and many of our Canadian pioneers were skilled mechanics as well as farmers. In the towns a citizen not infrequently engaged in several occupations—in fact he sometimes had to be a jack-of-all-trades if he was to support his family. In early days, too, relations between employer and employee more closely approximated the conditions which obtained under the mediaeval guild system than those of modern times. Apprentices were indentured for a period of seven years, and were to a considerable extent the property of the master. Several notices concerning escaped apprentices are to be found in the *Gazette*, and rewards of from 6d. to $10 are offered for their return.

There were a number of slaves in early York, largely personal servants of officials, for the Act of the first parliament, while providing for the gradual extinction of slavery, did not liberate those then in the province. Among notices concerning slaves is the following, offering a negro woman for sale in York in 1800:

"To Be Sold—A healthy, strong Negro Woman, about 30 years of age; understands cookery, laundry and the taking care of poultry. N.B.—She can dress ladies' hair. Enquire of the printers."[1]

The Hon. Peter Russell once advertised two slaves for sale, one of whom "perfectly understands making soap and candles":

"A Black Woman named Peggy, aged about forty years, and a black boy, her son, named Jupiter, aged about fifteen years, both of them the property of the subscriber. The woman is a tolerable cook and washer-woman and perfectly understands making soap and candles.

[1]*Upper Canada Gazette*, December 20, 1800.

"The boy is tall and strong of his age and has been employed in country business, but brought up principally as a house servant; they are each of them servants for life. The price for the woman is one hundred and fifty dollars, for the boy two hundred dollars, payable in three years with interest from the day of sale, and to be properly secured by bond, etc. But one-fourth less will be taken in ready money."[2]

In the days when many people were illiterate, trade symbols were commonly affixed to the entrance of shops, and in York customers were led inside not by a signboard indicating the name of the owner but by such old English emblems as the Pestle and Mortar, the Crowned Boot, the Tea-chest, the Axe, the Saw, the Fowling-piece, the Plough, the Golden Fleece, the Anvil and Sledge-hammer, and the Horse-shoe. There was one, too, which was not an English survival,—that of the Indian Trapper, which indicated the dealer in furs.

The first carpenters and builders in Upper Canada were the soldiers, and upon the arrival of settlers every man was his own builder. The construction of log houses did not call for much specialised skill, and there was in the earliest pioneer period but little variation in the architecture or appearance of home, workshop, store, church or mill. One of the first skilled tradesmen in York was Eliphalet Hale, who announces in the *Gazette* of March 30, 1799, that he will come from Newark (Niagara) to York "to receive proposals for, and commence bricklaying, lathing and plastering".[3] Hale was a very important and useful citizen of the early town, erecting many houses of improved construction, as well as receiving a number of contracts for the building of roads and bridges, the removing of stumps from the streets, and similar work. A few years later he advertises that he has become a shoemaker:

"Take notice: the subscriber takes this method to inform the public that he carries on the boot and shoe making business, the next door north of Alexander Wood's, Esq., where Suwarrow, common and half boots, fine and coarse shoes, slippers, etc., are made by Eliphalet Hale.

[2]*Ibid.*, February 15, 1806. [3]*Ibid.*, March 30, 1799.

"N.B.—Written or verbal orders from any gentlemen will be thankfully received and punctually attended to."[4]

Perhaps Daniel Tiers was the first chairmaker in York. Most manufactured articles were brought from Montreal by bateau, but Tiers announces that he is enlarging his business and can supply customers with "armed chairs, settees, and dining ditto; fan-back and brace-back chairs". The interesting fact is also mentioned that "he very shortly expects a quantity of different paints; it will then be in his power to finish his chairs in the best manner".[5] Paint, it may be explained, was not easily obtainable in early times.

Another famous early trade was that of the saddler and harness-maker. Calvin Banister, located on the north side of King Street, near George, was perhaps the first practical saddler in York. His announcement follows:

"The subscriber informs the inhabitants of York and its vicinity that he has taken the shop next door east of Mr. Mosley's dwelling house, and on the 1st of September next will commence the saddling business in all its different branches, and will be happy to supply all who favour him with their commands.

"Harness and all kinds of repairing will be done on the shortest notice, by the public's humble servant,

"Calvin Banister."[6]

Even a watchmaker was established in the diminutive capital of the province:

"Elisha Purdey—Watchmaker—begs leave to inform his friends and the public that he has taken a room in the house of Mr. Marther, where he repairs and cleans watches of all kinds in the best manner and on the most reasonable terms. All orders left for him at said house will be duly attended to. He has a small but elegant assortment of jewellery for sale."[7]

At least as early as 1799 York had a fashionable tailor, for one glorying in the unique name of Evean Eveans, with the added lustre of hailing from London, announces his business in a very neat note:

[4] *Ibid.*, March 15, 1806.
[5] *Ibid.*, January 30, 1802.
[6] *Ibid.*, August 22, 1807.
[7] *Ibid.*, April 19, 1800.

"Evean Eveans, taylor and habit maker, (From London), having taken a room in a small building belonging to Mr. Willcocks for the purpose of prosecuting the duties of his trade, begs leave to inform the ladies and gentlemen of York that he has commenced the above business, and to those who may honour him with their commands he flatters himself, from his experience, to afford satisfaction."[8]

A few years later we find a competitor, this time from New York:

"Samuel Bell, fashioner, lately arrived from New York, informs the public that he has commenced business at his shop, kept at the Widow Osborne's, facing Capt. Kendrick's, where he will carry on the fashionable tailoring business with the greatest despatch and on the most reasonable terms.—Ladies and gentlemen wishing to favour him with their custom may depend on the strictest punctuality.

"York, July 12th, 1805."[9]

Samuel Jackson commenced business as a hatter about the same time. He hopes to receive cash for his hats, will accept furs or produce, but will have none of credit:

"Samuel Jackson informs his friends and the public in general that he is commencing the hatting business opposite to Thos. Ridout, Esq., in the town of York, where he will take all kinds of furs, lamb's wool and country produce, or cash itself will be received for hats, but no credit need be asked."[10]

One Rock calls to our attention that there was at least one hair-dresser in York in 1800. In a day of wigs and beards, puffs and curls, the hairdresser had little of the barber about him, but his establishment was the beauty parlour of the day:

"Rock, Hair Dresser, from London, begs leave to inform the ladies and gentlemen of York and its vicinity that he will open shop on the 25th instant, in Mr. Cooper's house, next the Printing office. All orders left for him at said place will be punctually attended to. N.B.—Shop customers and others will be dressed on the most reasonable terms."[11]

York had bakers almost from its commencement, and

[8] *Ibid.*, June 8, 1799.
[9] *Ibid.*, July 20, 1805.
[10] *Ibid.*, February 9, 1805.
[11] *Ibid.*, April 5, 1800.

the early industry appears to have centred around Jordan's York Hotel, at one time the town's most important hostelry. In the rear of Jordan's, detached from the other buildings, there long stood a solid structure of brick, circular and dome-shaped without and vaulted within, and of considerable height and diameter. This was Paul Marian's public oven. Marian, or Morin, a Frenchman, was not the first baker in York, for he refers to a predecessor in his announcement of November, 1801:

"Paul Morin begs leave to inform his friends and the public that he has declined carrying on the baking business for Mr. Beaman and now carries it on in all its branches on his own account at the house formerly occupied by Mr. Beaman, where they may be supplied with bread at the rate of four lbs. for a shilling; biscuits, buns, cakes, etc. He hopes by assiduity and attention to his business to merit encouragement.

"N.B.—Any person sending flour to be baked by him will receive seven lbs. of bread for every six lbs. of flour."[12]

Morin was contemporary with another baker, François Belcour, who, though slightly outbid by Morin in the amount of bread given to those who brought flour to be baked (for he advertised only "pound for pound"), was yet, perhaps, a little ahead of him in service, for he delivered bread, cakes and buns, and also baked meat in his bake-oven for any who wished. For the convenience of small families Belcour made bread in loaves of two, three and four pounds' weight. In 1804 Morin advertised "nine loaves for a dollar, on paying ready money", but he does not state the size.[13] Many years after Jordan's ceased to function as a hotel, Morin's bake-oven, repaired and somewhat extended, rendered valuable service, for in it was baked by Messrs. Jackes and Reynolds a large supply of bread furnished in 1838-9 to the Regulars and militia in Toronto.

Imported wines were greatly favoured by the gentry of York, and breweries might consequently be expected to appear somewhat later than in other towns, particularly since there was a considerable manufacture of birch beer, a popular drink hardly to be classed with the regular prod-

[12] *Ibid.*, November 14, 1801. [13] *Ibid.*, May 19, 1804.

uct. The first advertisement relative to brewing is that of Robert Henderson in 1805, and it is probable that he had been in business for several years previous to that date:

"The subscriber informs his customers and the public in general that he has commenced brewing for the season; and is now ready to deliver strong and table beer in barrels and half barrels, of good quality, and intends to begin brewing his keeping ale for the ensuing summer, in the course of next month—and pledges himself that more attention than ever shall be paid the quality of his keeping beer. Robert Henderson. N.B.—Cash paid for barley, wheat and other country produce. An active boy wanted."[14]

In the *York Gazette* of November 13, 1811, appears an announcement by the Henderson estate, offering for rent for one year "a malt house, Brew House, etc. with all the implements and utensils for carrying on the brewing."[15] The site of this (probably the first) brewery is not given, but it was no doubt located on the south-east corner of Sherbourne and Duchess Streets. An authority describes the manufactory as consisting in 1820 of "a stone malt house and granary, a range of small frame buildings along Duchess Street, where the malt was ground in a handmill, and a row of arches dug in the bank, finished with masonry and covered with earth. These arches, which extended fifty feet along the south side of the lot, were used for storing the beer and fermenting tubs".[16] The malt house and granary was being used a century later as an automobile supply shop, but all the other buildings have long since disappeared. Thomas Stoyell and John Doel were among the later proprietors of the establishment, Doel removing to a brewery at the north-west corner of Bay and Adelaide Streets, adjoining his home.

Among the most typical manufactures of the pioneer period were the making of candles by the chandler, and of soap and potash in a potashery, the two types of work being frequently carried on in one plant. Many people, even in towns, made their own candles and soap, while some

[14] *Ibid.*, September 28, 1805.

[15] *York Gazette*, November 13, 1811.

[16] John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Canada: What Art Has Done for Canadian History*. 1917. p. 141.

farmers engaged also in the more complicated potash manufacture. Other householders were content to accumulate grease and exchange it for soap and candles when the chandler called at their door. Among the earliest tallow chandlers in York was William Smith, who followed that occupation at least as early as 1810. There was a great trade with England in wood ashes and potash, which is recalled by the following advertisement:

"Ashes wanted. Seven pence, Halifax currency, per bushel for house ashes will be given delivered at the Potash Works (opposite the jail), and five pence, same currency, if taken from the houses; also eight pence, New York currency, for field ashes delivered at the works. It is recommended to those persons who have ashes to be careful in keeping them dry, otherwise they will not be taken. Any quantity will be received at a time by W. Allan, York."[17]

W. Allan held in the following year (1801) the offices of Collector of Duties and Inspector of Pot and Pearl Ashes and Flour, and in later years he was Postmaster; but he was not the only dealer in ashes, for Duke Kendrick erected a potashery on lot No. 7, west side of Yonge Street, in December, 1799. Under the heading "Ashes! Ashes! Ashes!" he advertises the price he is prepared to pay, with the explanation (which had often to be made in pioneer days) that "he conceives it his duty to inform those who may have ashes to dispose of, that it will not be in his power to pay cash, but merchandise at cash price".[18]

In later years, just before York became the city of Toronto, Peter Freeland's soap and candle factory was erected on the wharf at the foot of Yonge Street. Freeland was born in Glasgow, Scotland, and in 1819 emigrated to America. Soon afterwards he removed to Montreal and, with his brother William, carried on the soap and candle business until 1830, whereupon Peter removed to York.

[17] *Upper Canada Gazette*, November 22, 1800. "N. Y. C." (New York currency) was $2.50 to the £, or 12½ cents to the "York Shilling"; while in "Quebec", "Halifax" or "Provincial" currency the shilling was 20 cents and the £ = $4.00. The £ Sterling had its traditional value of $4.86⅔, and there was in circulation a variety of miscellaneous coins which increased as the years passed. (See also pp. 238-9.)

[18] *Ibid.*, December 21, 1799.

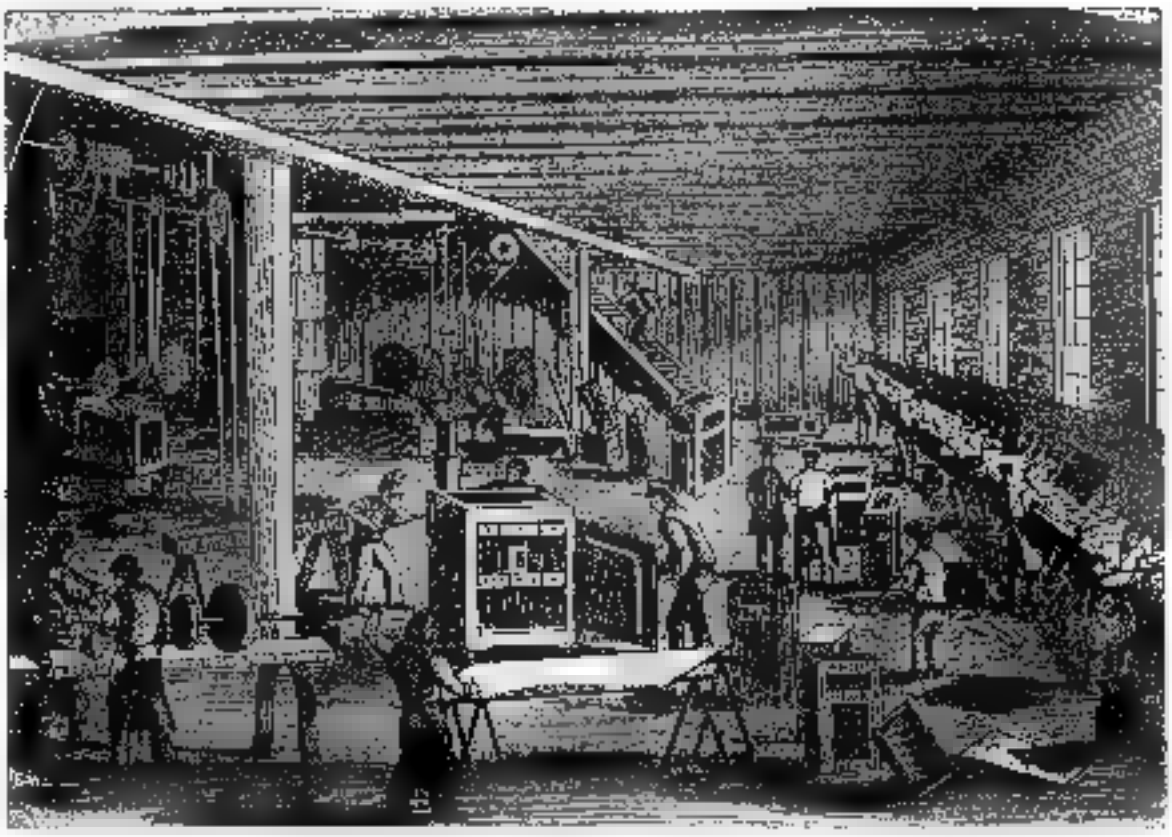
Concerning the factory which he opened here John Ross Robertson says:

"The land, and land covered by water, upon which the building was erected, was purchased, the west half from Judge Sherwood in 1832, and the east half in 1836 from Peter McDougall. The factory was frame and stood on the wharf at the foot of Yonge Street on the east side. The water lot extended from Scott to Yonge Street, and from the top of the bank to the Windmill Line, and, owing to the fact that almost the whole property was land covered with water, the soap works had to be built on cribs sunk with stone. The dimensions of the building were ninety feet by forty, and three storeys high, having large double doors in each end. Some of the iron soap-kettles and sections of kettles were imported from Scotland, as at that early date there were no facilities for making them in Canada. The balance of the machinery or plant was made in Canada, excepting the candle moulds, which had to be imported from the United States.

"The two large sheds shown in the foreground of the sketch, that is the long one to the right and that in the centre, were used for storing wood ashes; and alkali for converting the tallow, grease, rosin, etc., into soap was extracted. The lime was used for causticising the above-named alkali by mixing it in certain proportions with the ashes previous to leaching with water. The ice was used in warm weather for the purpose of hardening the candles in the moulds, so that they might be more easily extracted. The large shed to the left was a storehouse, where rendered tallow in barrels was stored, the supply being drawn from Canada, the United States and Russia. Other raw materials were used in large quantities, such as palm oil from the west coast of Africa, and rosin, principally from the Carolinas."[19]

The old factory recalls the merry days when Toronto Bay was full of wild ducks. It is said that they were "so plentiful around the wharf that Mr. Freeland used to shoot them from the factory door or windows. Mr. Richard Tinning was one day walking along the shore when some ducks

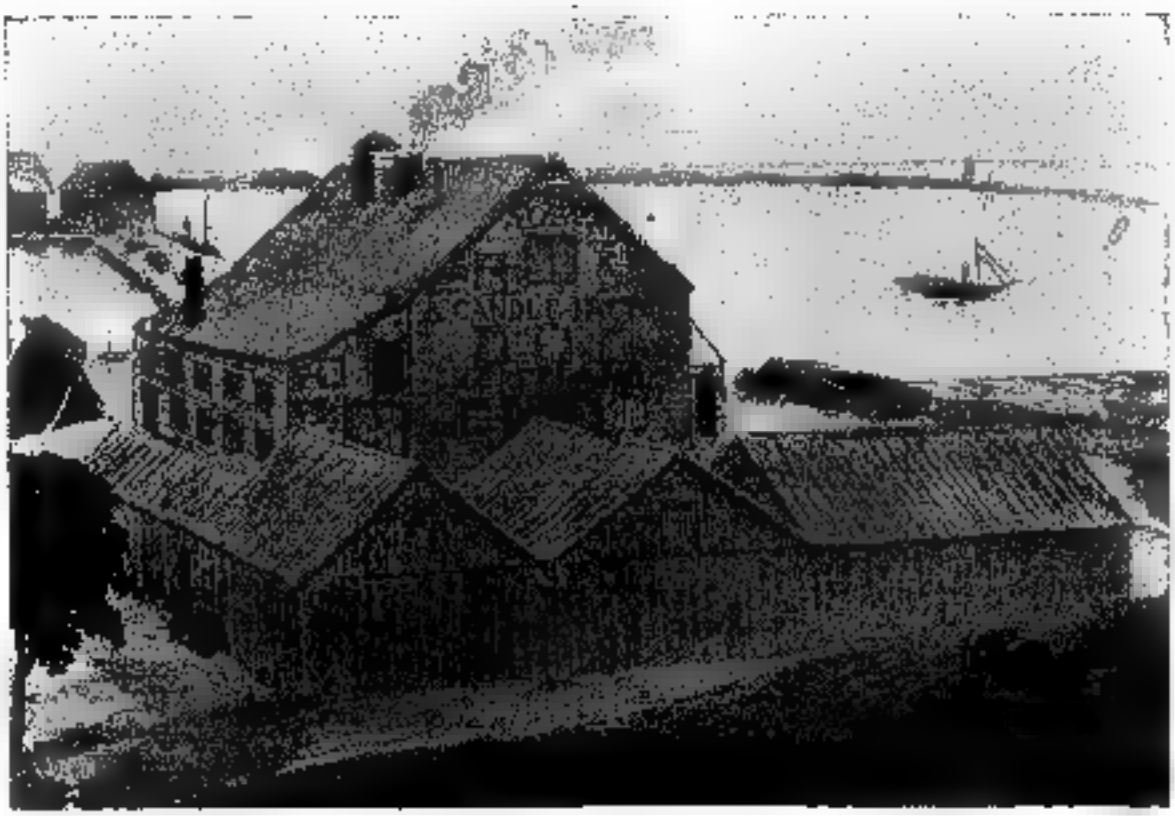
[19]John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto.* 1894-1914. Vol. I, p. 182.



Canadian Illustrated News.

INTERIOR OF THE TAYLOR SAFE WORKS, 1862

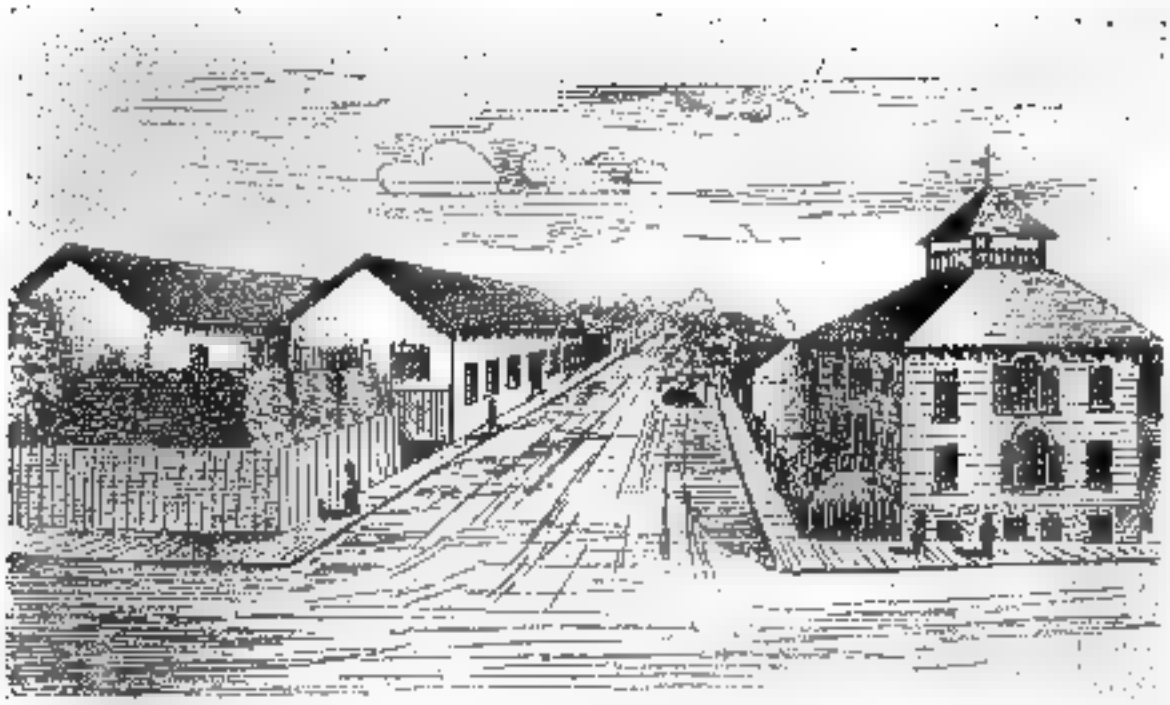
The days of hand labour and primitive machines are well exemplified in this illustration.



John Ross Robertson Collection.

PETER FREELAND'S SOAP AND CANDLE FACTORY, 1832-65

This well-known establishment was located on a wharf at the foot of Yonge Street.



Reproduced by Courtesy of James Acton, Esq.

Currying Shed
Piles of Tanbark

Bark Mill

Office

Jesse Ketchum's Home

Looking West at Yonge and Newgate (Adelaide) Streets in 1834.

This interesting sketch of the Ketchum establishment, which at one time furnished most of the Home District with leather, is based upon a description provided in 1889 by the 90-year old foreman.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

John Doel's Home and Brewery, Adelaide and Bay Streets

As the district was in the outskirts of early Toronto it was considered a secluded place for the meetings of William Lyon Mackenzie's "Patriots".

flew up from the water. He fired at them without looking where the shot was going, and it crashed into the windows of the factory. Mr. Freeland ran out with a number of men to repel the invaders. In the factory was a tame muskrat that used to dine on fish caught by the men. The fishermen dried their nets alongside of the factory, and one day the muskrat got into the net and was being hauled in. He swam around inside of the wooden floats trying to make his escape; finding that he could not dive under them, he suddenly sprang over and thus made his escape."[20]

Old inhabitants of Toronto remembered the days when the tallow for Freeland's factory used to be transported from Rochester in schooners. On one occasion "a schooner thus loaded was caught in a terrible storm off the Island, and the sailors threw the cargo of tallow into the lake. At the same time there was a considerable amount of salt on board, which might much better have been thrown overboard, instead of the more valuable tallow, the salt being in the hold and the tallow on deck. For weeks they were fishing up this tallow along the shore of the lake. Many tricks were practised by these 'Yankee' tallow merchants, as, for instance, on opening one of the barrels a large stone was found imbedded in it, weighing about one hundred pounds, which Mr. Freeland had paid for as tallow."[21]

During the Rebellion of 1837 there was a scarcity of labour, and Freeland was compelled to run the soap into boxes instead of cutting it into bars; it was then sold in large masses, just as the boxes had moulded it. After factory hours some of the men spent their time around the kitchen fire moulding bullets. But those who made soap at Freeland's would hardly recognise today's process of manufacture.

A number of York's early manufactories were located on the River Don, some of them outside the limits of the town. An editorial note, probably written by William Lyon Mackenzie, outlines the scope of enterprises in operation in 1827, and makes some suggestions for the expansion of industry in the Don Valley:

"About three miles out of town, in the bottom of a deep ravine, watered by the River Don and bounded also by

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 183. [21] *Ibid.*

beautiful and verdant flats, are situated the York paper mill, distillery, and Mr. Shepard's axe-grinding machinery, and Messrs. Helliwell's large and extensive brewery. I went out to view these improvements a few days ago and returned much gratified with witnessing the paper manufacture in active operation; as also the bold and pleasing scenery on the banks of the Don. The river might be made navigable, with small expense, up to the brewery; and, if the surrounding lands were laid out in five-acre lots all the way to town, they would sell to great advantage."[22]

Among old-time breweries Doel's—famous as the meeting-place of the organisers of the Rebellion of 1837—and Bloor's, from which the great east-west thoroughfare takes its name, stand out prominently in Toronto's history. Previous to 1830 Joseph Bloor, an Englishman, was proprietor of the Farmers' Arms Inn, conveniently situated near the market-place. In his time that section of the city was usually called The Devil's Half Acre. About 1830 he removed to the village of Yorkville, and soon afterward established a brewery in the ravine north of the first concession road, now Bloor Street. The building and its surroundings are well described by John Ross Robertson:

"It was a low red-brick building one hundred feet long and fifty or sixty feet wide. It stood at the bottom of the ravine, on the south side of the creek, a little to the east of the present iron bridge at the head of Huntley Street. It was in operation in 1835, and probably for four or five years previous to that date. The stream which was larger then than now was dammed up at this point to give water-power for grinding. A big pond several acres in extent was thus made, and in the spring the water would back up nearly to Yonge Street. The brewery was reached by a roadway running down the ravine from Bloor Street at the head of Huntley Street. Picturesque as the spot is even now, it was still more so at that time when the woods were thicker and nature in her primeval beauty. At the top of the hill on the northern side stood the cottage of Charles Jarvis, from which steps led down the steep declivity. There was an entrance to the brewery at the south side and also on the east side."[23]

[22]The *Colonial Advocate*, August 9, 1827.
[23]Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 211.

The highway near which Bloor built his brewery was early known as the Sydenham Road, and for a time as St. Paul's Road. He and Sheriff Jarvis were prominent in laying out the village of Yorkville, which narrowly escaped the name Bloorville—as well as Rosedale and Cumberland, which were suggested. Bloor operated his brewery only a few years. On one occasion, when he was drawing sand from the Island, his team of horses broke through the ice and were drowned. At that time, it may be explained, all sand used for industrial purposes in Toronto was hauled from the Island—or, more accurately, the Peninsula.

In the same locality, but somewhat northward—beyond the Blue Hill Ravine—was once to be found "Rowland Burr's Folly". This large unfinished frame building, gable towards the street, long stood on the west side of Yonge, with all its windows boarded up. It was to have been a carding or fulling mill, worked by machinery driven by the stream in the valley below; but either the poor wool supply or deficiencies in the building and its location rendered Burr's scheme abortive.

Rowland Burr was one of those men who are ahead of their time. A born engineer and mechanic, his ideas and schemes were frequently too advanced for the circumstances in which he was placed. He was from Pennsylvania, and was full of the energy and enterprise characteristic of Americans; but he lacked the training which might frequently have saved him from errors of judgment. He was foremost among projectors of a canal between Lake Ontario and Georgian Bay *viâ* the valley of the Humber and Lake Simcoe, and personally surveyed the route and published a report upon it. He suggested a plank tramway on Yonge Street north of Lot (Queen), and a short plank road was at one time constructed over the worst part of the highway between that intersection and Yorkville. He was responsible also for the cutting down of the Blue Hill, long a terrible ordeal to travellers. Concerning his factory enterprises it may be said that he built, either for himself or others, a considerable number, and obtained and installed the complicated plant of each of them at a time when such undertakings were not easy to accomplish, owing to the backwardness of the country and the few facilities for importing and transporting heavy machinery inland.

A small manufactory of special interest because of its situation was Samuel Carr's Glue Factory, which stood until 1851 on the eastern side of Church Street between Gerrard and Carlton. Just beyond this establishment was a large patch of bush land, a popular rendezvous of the idle youths of Toronto. Church Street then terminated at Carlton Street, but a narrow sand road led to the edge of Molly Wood's Bush, as the district was long locally known.

Mention of an establishment for the manufacture of glue recalls that in June, 1846, the erection of factories was regulated by Council to prevent noisy or malodorous establishments from being built near any street line; to insist that all manufactories, blacksmith shops, etc., should be constructed of brick or stone with metal-covered roofs; and stipulating that factories "emitting any disagreeable effluvia" should have chimneys of sufficient height to carry them off. The occasion for these regulations appears to have been the application of Edwin Bell for permission to erect a soap and candle factory.

An industry early among the most important was that of the waggon-maker. As civilisation advanced, the making of various types of carriages and buggies developed; while in modern times most of such manufactories have passed out of existence, or—as in the case of the McLaughlin Carriage Factory, Oshawa,—entered the new field of motor-car construction. Between 1837 and 1849 John Bell operated a carriage and farm implement factory on Victoria Street north of Adelaide, where the Confederation Life building was later erected. His products were famous throughout the Home District and beyond as being constructed in the newest designs and furnished with the latest improvements. John Ross Robertson gives a good description of the life and times of John Bell:

"He made not only reaping machines but ploughs, harrows, cultivators, horse rakes, and seed drills. Besides this decidedly miscellaneous assortment of goods he built heavy waggons, and he also was able to make far more carriages, buggies and gigs than he could find purchasers for, those who were able in those days to indulge in the luxury of a carriage being very few and far between. That was the time when in early spring the old title of 'muddy', as ap-

plied to York, would do equally well for Toronto. At that season of the year waggons drawn by oxen might frequently be seen stuck fast in the mud on both Adelaide and Victoria Streets, requiring all the assistance that could be rendered them to extricate both the oxen and the vehicle they were attempting to draw from their very uncomfortable position.

"It is said by old residents in Toronto that Bell built the first reaping machines ever made in Canada. He was an exhibitor of these implements at the Provincial Exhibition held in Hamilton in 1847, and obtained a diploma for the same. This honorary distinction is still extant and in possession of one of the members of Mr. Bell's family. Bell only lived to complete about twenty reaping machines; he fell a victim to the cholera epidemic prevailing in Toronto in 1849.

"The late Mr. George Crookshank was one of Mr. Bell's earliest customers. He purchased one of the first, if not the very first machine built at the Victoria Street factory, and placed it on his Yonge Street farm ten miles north of Toronto. There was a great prejudice against these machines in the minds of the working classes of the day, as they were fearful that their introduction would affect the rate of wages. Threats to burn the barns and other farm buildings belonging to Mr. Crookshank were freely indulged in, but were, happily for all parties, never carried into effect. Bell claimed for his reaper that it would cut ten acres of wheat, oats or barley daily. Whether it was quite as great a success as this is not known, but at any rate Mr. Crookshank was fully satisfied with his bargain."[24]

Bell constructed also some of the first cabs used on Toronto streets. Like all ships, as well as the earliest locomotives, these pioneer vehicles of city transportation were named. The first that Bell made was called *General Wolfe*, while subsequent creations were dignified by the appellations *Wellington* and *General Brock*. Cabs soon became too numerous to bother naming, but in modern times the motor-car has displaced the horse-drawn vehicle to such an extent that cabs and carriages have become curiosities.

William Dixon's "Longacre Carriage Works", 53-55 Adelaide Street West, next door to Grand's Sale Stables, was

[24]*Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 773.

among the best known in Canada in the seventies and eighties. A contemporary description states that the building "is one of the most imposing and best-arranged carriage factories in the Province of Ontario. The style of architecture is Venetian, and the materials are red brick and cut stone with white brick dressings. The building contains four storeys and a basement.

"The basement is used as the blacksmith's shop and iron-working department. The ground and first floors are used as show rooms, and the stock on hand embraces some fine specimens of the carriage-builder's art in buggies, phaetons, landaus and family carriages, some of them being marvels of beautiful finish and perfect workmanship. The upper floors of the building are devoted to the various departments of the trade, and the repairing of all kinds of vehicles, sleighs, cutters, etc.

"Mr. Dixon first began business in this city in 1857, at that time doing all the work himself, and since then the business has developed until now (1877) he is the head of the largest carriage-building establishment in the Dominion. . . . . A large number of carriages are built by Mr. Dixon, his average build at present being from 300 to 400 *per annum*, and these are shipped to all parts of the Dominion, and occasionally to the States and Europe."[25]

Among the most important early foundries was Good's, located on the east side of Yonge Street, a short distance north of Queen. Ploughs, stoves, and other heavy hardware were turned out by this factory for many years, but it is chiefly remembered now as the place where Ontario's first locomotive, the *Toronto*, was constructed. There may be a few people still living who can recall the notable sight as the *Toronto* was slowly and laboriously urged through the streets from Good's Toronto Locomotive Works southward to its destination on the line of the old Northern Railway. In an issue of the *Canadian Journal* is a lithograph of the locomotive, and the following account:

"We have much pleasure in presenting our readers with a drawing of the first locomotive engine constructed in Canada, and indeed, we believe, in any British colony. The *Toronto* is certainly no beauty, nor is she distinguished for

[25]J. Timperlake: *Illustrated Toronto, Past and Present.* 1877. p. 305.

any peculiarity in construction, but she affords a very striking illustration of our progress in the mechanical arts, and of the growing wants of the country. The *Toronto* was built at the Toronto Locomotive Works, which were established by Mr. Good in October, 1852. The order for the *Toronto* was received in February, 1853, for the Ontario, Simcoe and Huron Union Railroad. The engine was completed on the 16th of April and put on the track the 26th of the same month. Her dimensions are as follows: cylinder 16 inches diameter, stroke 22 inches, driving wheel 5 feet 6 inches in diameter, length of internal fire box 4 feet 6 inches, weight of engine 25 tons, number of tubes 150, diameter of tubes 2 inches."[28]

In 1832 Charles Perry was the proprietor of a foundry in York, and, in addition to the regular products usually associated with such manufactories, he entered into the work of supplying the latest type of printing presses to the printers of York and elsewhere. In the same year Messrs. W. B. Sheldon, F. R. Dutcher, W. A. Dutcher, Samuel Andrus, J. and B. Vannorman advertised their foundry, which was long among the most prominent factories in Toronto. Their announcement is interesting not only because of its description of the plant but also owing to its products, many of which are now old-fashioned—if not in the realm of curiosities:

"They respectfully inform their friends and the public that they have lately made large additions to their establishments. They have enlarged their Furnace so as to enable them to make Castings of any size or weight used in this province, and erected Lathes for turning and finishing the same. They have also erected a Steam Engine of ten horse-power, of their own manufacture, for propelling their machinery, which is now in complete operation, and they are prepared to build Steam Engines of any size, either high or low pressure. Having a number of experienced engineers employed, whose capabilities cannot be doubted, they hope to share the patronage of a generous public. They always keep constantly on hand and for sale, either by wholesale or retail, Bark Mills, Cooking, Franklin, Plate and Box Stoves, also, a generous assortment of Hollow Ware, con-

[28] *Canadian Journal*, Vol. II, p. 76.

sisting of Kettles, from one to one hundred and twenty gallons; Bake-ovens, Bake-Basins, Belly-Pots, High Pans, Tea Kettles, Wash-Kettles, Portable Furnaces, &c. Also are constantly manufacturing Mill-Gearing of all kinds; Sleigh Shoes, 60, 56, 30, 28, 15, 14 and 7 pound Weights, Clock and Sash Weights, Cranes, Andirons, Cart and Waggon Boxes, Clothiers' Plates, Plough Castings, and Ploughs of all kinds."[27]

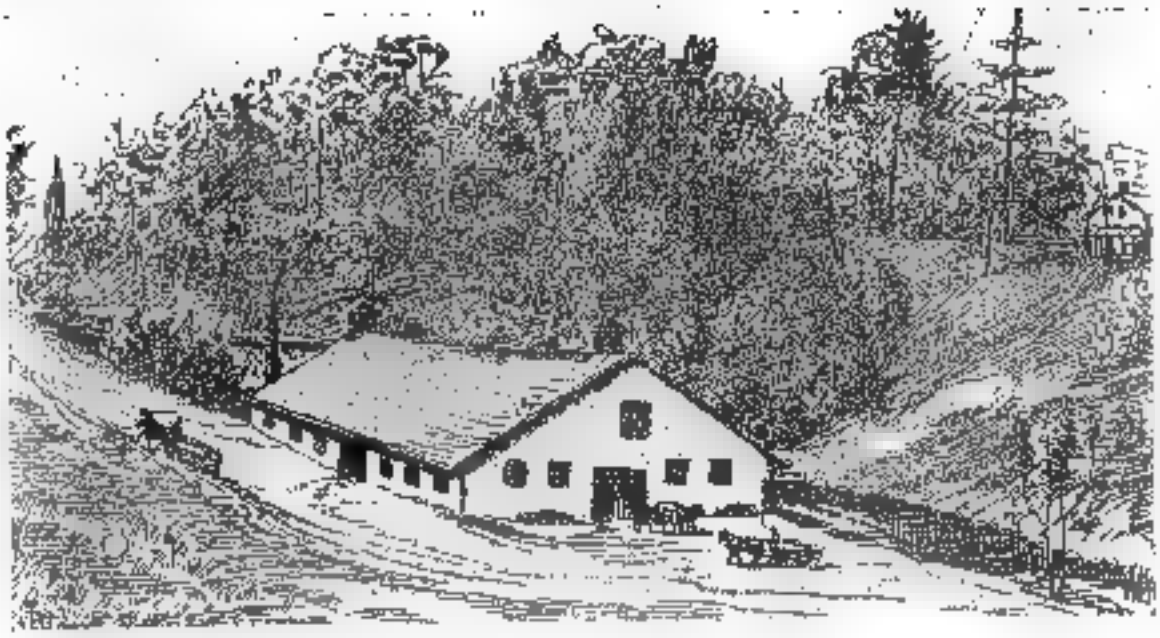
Concerning the stoves here mentioned it may be explained to the present generation that the square, unsightly box-stove was long the only type in use, and they varied from very small to very large. Coal, at first employed only by blacksmiths, was gradually introduced, and there was a coincident improvement in the shape and design of stoves. Those with open grates added greatly to the cheerfulness of living-rooms; while in general the heating of buildings gradually became a combination of scientific skill and ornamental art, developing health and comfort with adaptability and beauty in house furnishing. A writer in the eighteen-eighties outlines the progress of heating as follows:

"To witness the display at one of the annual exhibitions, or in one of the large manufacturing establishments, is to see in a most remarkable manner, as much as in any other branch of manufacture, the progress of taste and refinement, as well as in arrangements for comfort. The rarity and beauty of the designs, as well as the arrangements for promoting health, and the convenience of 'self-feeders', in which the fire need never go out the whole winter, are truly marvellous.

"The stoves of the present day are not only useful but highly ornamental, and other heating arrangements, whether from furnaces supplying hot air, or by steam, or hot water, all are made to appear as part of the furnishing of hall or drawing-room."[28]

Hot-air furnaces were being advertised in the eighteen-fifties, and by the eighties steam and hot water boilers were the specialties of many a stove and furnace manufacturer. Some of them used Bundy radiators, which could be "adapted to every building and to every part of any build-

[27]Quoted in Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old.* 1873. pp. 378-9.
[28]C. C. Taylor: *Toronto Called Back.* 1886. pp. 255-6.



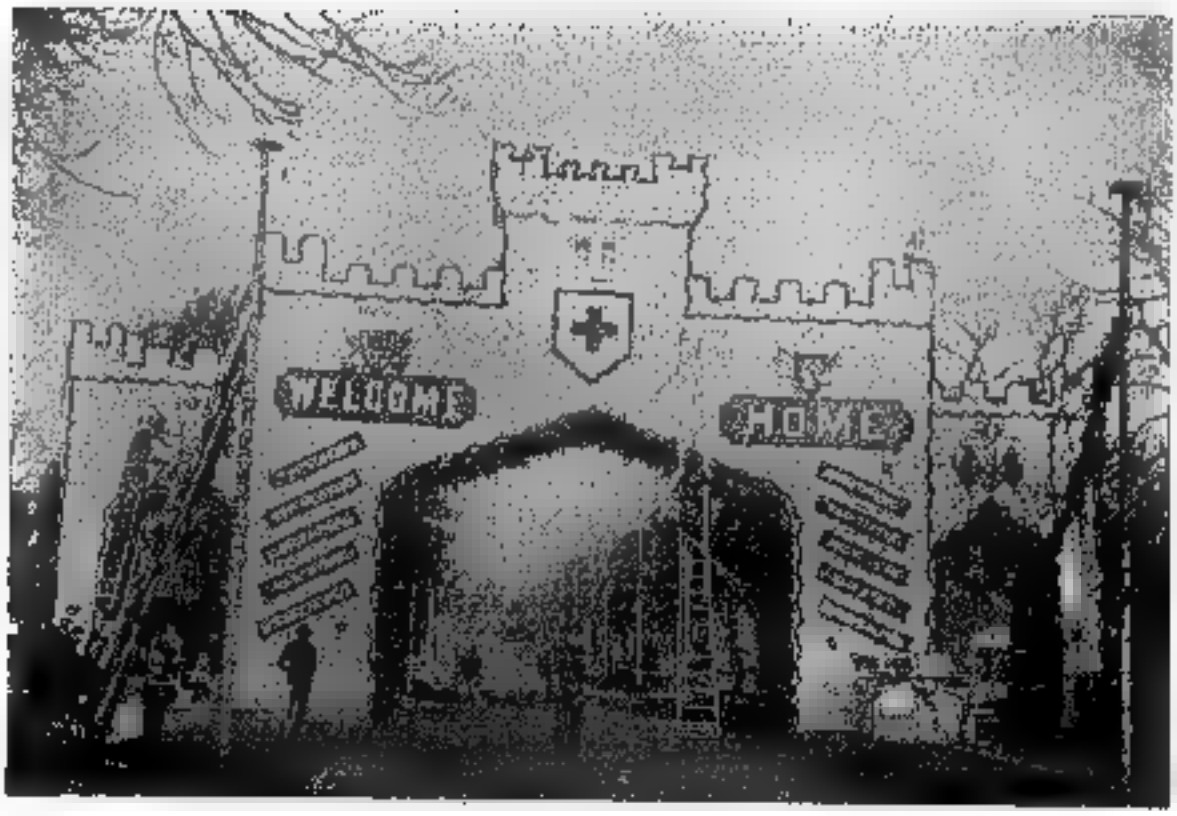
John Ross Robertson Collection. R. Baigent.

BLOOR'S BREWERY IN 1865

John Ross Robertson Collection.

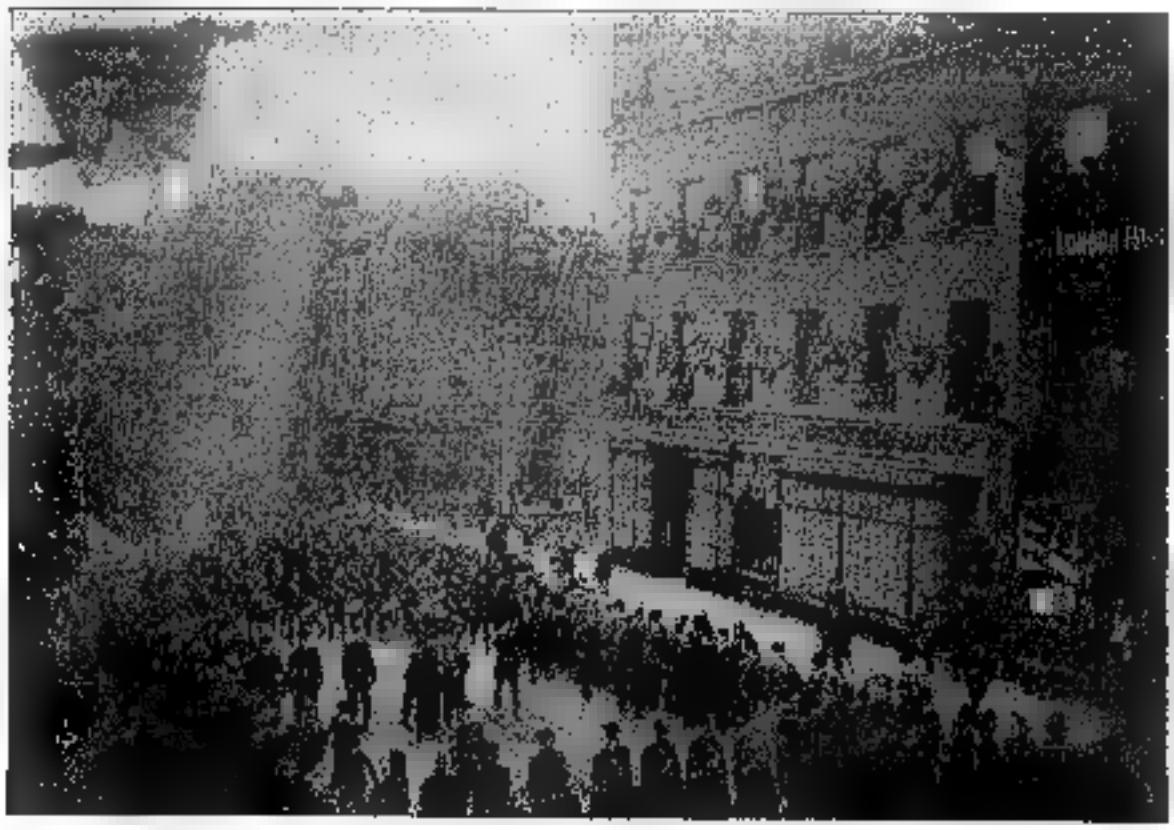
FIRST TORONTO MORGUE (DEAD-HOUSE)

At a meeting of the City Council on January 27, 1873, Mayor Alexander Manning recommended "that a new dead-house and fish market be erected without delay".



ARCH OF WELCOME TO SOUTH AFRICAN VETERANS

The return of the troops in 1901 was greeted in characteristic fashion. Here are evident some of the preparations on University Avenue.



THE RETURN OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTINGENT, 1901

The procession is shown near the corner of Yonge and Adelaide Streets. The Queen's Own Rifles may be seen carrying one of their heroes shoulder high.

ing; and these, when ornamented with the new coil screens, whether in hall or drawing-room, may be made to correspond with the most luxurious furniture, and become an attractive feature in the general effect."[29]

In the late fifties lower Yonge Street was the location of a number of factories, several of which have already been mentioned. An old trade is recalled by the advertisement of H. G. Booth, Coppersmith, at 181 Yonge. He was also a worker in tin plate, sheet iron, brass, lead and zinc, and advertises for sale brewing coppers, refrigerators, worms, stills, pipes for steam engines, metal roofing, cornice, guttering and conductor pipes, as well as a large assortment of "planished, japanned, stamped and common tinware".[30]

At 132 Yonge Street W. P. Marston manufactured guns, pistols, revolvers, target and hunting rifles, ammunition, etc. Among other products of interest he advertises hunting knives, walking stick guns, Colt's revolvers, powder flasks, shot belts, game bags, dram flasks, and dog calls.[31] Another Yonge Street manufactory of 1858, and one that calls to mind a well-known family and business, was the Leather Works of Beardmore & Co., which advertises "a varied assortment of Spanish and Slaughter Sole, French Calf, Upper, etc.", at the establishment then located at the corner of Queen and Yonge Streets.[32]

Perhaps the first dealer in pianos in York was T. Browning, whose announcement in 1832 advertises imported pianofortes for sale to "the nobility of York", a phrase which possibly portended an indication of their cost:

"T. Browning, pianoforte manager, begs to inform the nobility of York and its vicinity that he has brought from London a few superior instruments, grands, cabinets and squares, which will be sold at a very low price. N.B. Instruments repaired and tuned. Applications, if by letters postpaid, at Mr. Mills', No. 187 King Street, York, U.C., November 27th, 1832."[33]

Among the early piano manufacturers in Toronto was

[29] *Ibid.*, p. 257.
[30] *Descriptive Catalogue of the Provincial Exhibition, 1858.* p. 76.
[31] *Ibid.*, p. 70.
[32] *Ibid.*, p. 22.
[33] *Upper Canada Gazette*, December 6, 1832.

William Matthews, from London, England, who was the inventor and sole manufacturer of "the new patent cottage pianoforte". His establishment in 1858 was at 58 Elm Street, and he advertises that, after "many years in business both in Hamilton and Toronto, wherein his time and attention are devoted to the improvement and manufacture of Cottage Piano Fortes to suit the extremes of this climate, he has much satisfaction in announcing to his friends and the public generally that he has at length succeeded in making several most important improvements which he is confident will insure to this most useful and elegant of all musical Instruments a strength and durability heretofore unattainable, while for sweetness and brilliancy of tone and elasticty of touch, W. M. will challenge its being equalled by any Cottage Piano Forte of either foreign or home manufacture". Among other attractions his pianos had "Patent Metallic equal tension and string plates and iron bracing, elegant feet, octagon legs, carved trusses and elegant fret work",[34] and the price varied from £45 to £85.

The occupation of blacksmith has almost passed away, but so recently that most people can remember when every village had several, and all rural highways a representative of the trade every few miles. William Richmond, wheelwright, and Robert Richmond, blacksmith, were long located in a shop at the north-east corner of Queen and William (now Simcoe) Streets. The locality was long remembered because the notorious Brown-Cameron election riot of 1857 took place near by. The Richmonds were as good workmen as could be found in the city, and were fondly recalled by Upper Canada College old boys of 1845-60, for the little plot of ground in front of the shop was a favourite resort for marble-playing and other sporting activities. "Old man Richmond" was popular with the boys, and with good reason, for "when they wanted their sleighs fixed they always brought them to Richmond, and if the boys had been out cutting shinnies near the White bridge, or in the neighbourhood of Rosedale, or Ridout's Bush, now Sherbourne Street, they always had the shinnies trimmed by one of the Richmond boys, who were not very heavy in their charges; in fact they were so good-natured that unfortunately their

[34] *Descriptive Catalogue of the Provincial Exhibition, 1858.* p. 80.

good nature was frequently imposed upon. The old shop disappeared when Jones' Hotel was put up some years ago."[35b]

Mention of a blacksmith recalls a trade which flourished in the days when every farmer was a shoemaker, and frequently a harness-maker as well. Among Toronto tanners Jesse Ketchum stands out prominently—not only because he once supplied most of the Home District with leather, but also for his strength of character. Where his evil-smelling tannery stood in the outskirts of the early city, at Yonge and Newgate (Adelaide) Streets, a Honey Dew now dispenses delicious food; and facing Yonge Street were then high piles of hides and tanbark in front of the tanning sheds. In 1889 James Acton obtained interesting reminiscences[36] from the 90-year old foreman of the tannery, who recalled an occasion when Mr. Ketchum, finding the men in his employ with a keg of beer (Doel's Brewery was near by, and it was election week), poured the liquor into a tanning-vat, and forthwith delivered an exhortation on Total Abstinence!

Before factories began to supplant the small tradesman there were large numbers of tanners, cabinet-makers, saddlers, shoemakers, wheel-wrights, coopers and similar manufacturers in Toronto. The city directories from the eighteen-thirties onward enumerate hundreds of men engaged in these trades. There were, too, numerous blacksmiths in the city; while among women's trades may be found a considerable number of milliners, dressmakers and "stay-makers" (referring to corsets). From an analysis of William Brown's *City Directory for 1856-7* we learn the numbers engaged in the chief trades and professions: Accountants, 18; architects, 11; artists, 13; bakers, 37; bankers, 11; barristers and solicitors, 108; blacksmiths, 96; boot and shoe makers, 240; builders, 66; brewers, 15; bricklayers, 91; brickmakers, 55; cabinetmakers, 82; cabmen and proprietors, 33; carpenters, 496; carters, 137; clerks, 119; clergymen of all denominations, 57; dressmakers and milliners, 62; dry goods merchants and importers, 103; grocers and provision dealers, 255; labourers, 892; painters, 84; printers, 73; tailors, 203; tinsmiths, 37. This list does not include all the avocations followed in the city, but it

[35b]Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 46.

[36]See the *Canadian Shoe and Leather Journal*, June, 1889.

is sufficiently explicit for our present purpose. When classified it shows of professional persons, 427; of mechanical, 1,681; and of industrial other than mechanical, 2,001. Among tradesmen of more highly specialised occupations listed a few years earlier are many which have long since disappeared: portrait, landscape, historical, animal, house, and coach painters; wood, seal, and bank-note engravers; farriers, curriers, and wood-turners; wheel-wrights, carpet and fringe weavers, brush and broom makers, sail-makers, gilders and map-mounters; maltsters, well-sinkers, and sausage-makers; as well as one each of the trades of making bellows, nails, scales, whips, fanning-mills, blacking, mathematical instruments and lucifer matches.[37]

Workmen were gradually concentrated in larger plants. Among the prominent manufacturers of sixty years ago may be mentioned J. & J. Taylor, Safe Manufacturers; Gooderham & Worts' Distillery; Robert Hay & Co., Furniture Manufacturers; Christie, Brown & Co.'s Biscuit Factory; Lyman Brothers & Co., Manufacturing Chemists; Booth & Sons, Brassfounders; J. D. Nasmith, Biscuit Manufacturer, (the firm was established by his father in 1844); the Phoenix Coffee and Spice Mills; the Don Paper Mills; G. D. Morse & Co.'s Soap and Candle Works; Messrs. Davis & Co.'s Toronto Packing House; H. E. Clarke & Co.'s Trunk and Bag Factory; Lamb's Blacking and Glue Factory (established in 1837); Todhunter, Black & Co., Manufacturers of Chocolate and Cocoa; Wilson's Brush Factory; Heintzman & Co.'s Piano Manufactory; Copp, Clark & Co., Printers, Stationers and Booksellers (established in 1842 by Hugh Scobie); Charles Boeckh's Brush Factory; Messrs. Northrop & Lyman's Patent Medicine Warehouse; and Wilson's Vinegar Manufactory. A considerable number of these are names which still have a very familiar ring.[38]

A few of the more enterprising and successful tradesmen, many of whom were in those days "real Old-country men", gradually accumulated a little capital and rose above their fellows, becoming the proprietors of small factories; while the many met changing conditions by seeking em-

[37]See *Henry Rowsell's City of Toronto and County of York Directory, 1850-1*. 1850. p. xx.

[38]See Timperlake, *op. cit.*, pp. 267-310, for valuable material concerning these factories, and, in many cases, flattering illustrations.

ployment therein, either at their own trade or as skilled or unskilled labourers in any occupation that offered. To close this account of trades and industries in Toronto it is appropriate to illustrate the development by showing how Harvey Shepard's skill as an axe-maker gradually led, in characteristic fashion, to the establishment of an axe factory which was in successful operation long after his death. Sheppard Street, connecting Adelaide and Richmond, commemorates this famous worker in iron, whose imprint on axe, broad-axe or adze was a guarantee of its temper and quality. Dr. Scadding[30] outlines the progress of this interesting industry:

"Harvey Shepard's axe factory was on the west side of this short street. Before his establishment here he worked in a smithy of the customary village type on King Street, on the property of Jordan Post. Like Jordan Post himself, Harvey Shepard was of the old-fashioned New England mould, elongated and wiry. After a brief suspension of business, a placard hung up in the country inns characteristically announced to his friends and the public that he had resumed his former occupation and that he would, 'by the aid of Divine Providence', undertake to turn out as good axes as any that he had ever made; which acknowledgement of the source of his skill is commendable surely, if unusual. So, also, there is no one who will refuse to applaud an epigrammatic observation of his, when responding to an appeal of charity. 'Though dealing usually in iron only, I keep', he said, 'a little stock of silver and gold for such a call as this.' The factory on Shepard Street was afterwards worked by Mr. J. Armstrong, and subsequently by Mr. Thomas Champion, formerly of Sheffield, who in 1838 advertised that he had 'a large stock of Champion's warranted cast-steel axes, made at the factory originally built by the late Harvey Shepard, and afterwards occupied by John Armstrong. As Shepard's and Armstrong's axes have been decidedly preferred before any others in the Province', the advertisement continues, 'it is only necessary to state that Champion's are made by the the same workmen, and from the very best material, to ensure for them the same continued preference'."

[30]Scadding, *op. cit.*, p. 311.

CHAPTER XVI

Fairs and Exhibitions

Though Governor Simcoe supported the establishment of an Agricultural Society at Niagara in 1793, early government encouragement of agriculture in Upper Canada was largely restricted to the growth of hemp, which it was hoped this province would supply in quantities sufficient for the use of the British navy. Legislation in 1830 and later years aided the establishment of Agricultural Societies, and this broader recognition of the importance of the industry was the chief impetus leading to the development of fairs.

Some exhibitions had been held in the Niagara district previous to 1800, but if any occurred in York before 1820 they received no mention in the *Upper Canada Gazette.* There was, however, an Upper Canada Agricultural and Commercial Society holding meetings in York previous to 1808 when it was dissolved from lack of support, and some small fairs may have been held under its auspices; but the American occupation of the town in 1813 had a very depressing effect for several years, and it is unlikely that any initiative was exerted in that direction prior to 1818, when the Agricultural Society was formed. In any case the first agricultural exhibitions in the capital passed almost unrecorded, and we have no details concerning them. From references in early publications we learn, however, that a Cattle Show was held in the town on May 7, 1820, and in following years semi-annual fairs. Fothergill's *York Almanack* states that they were held "the third Monday in May, and the first Monday in October, for six days each period." Prizes and premiums were usually awarded the first day, and, during the balance of the fair, days were assigned to live stock, vegetables and fruits, the sale of horses and other stock, and similar departments of agricultural enterprise. The old Fair Green was located near the shore of the Bay immediately west of Berkeley Street. According to Fothergill the only other regular fairs in

Upper Canada in the early twenties were four-day exhibitions in Cobourg and Port Hope.[1]

Among the many associations formed as a result of legislative encouragement in 1830 was the Home District Agricultural Society, with headquarters at York, and it was this organisation that in May, 1846, passed a resolution favouring a province-wide association. Three years of discussion had preceded this move, and public opinion had been aroused in its favour; and, as other local and district societies were equally enthusiastic, a meeting of delegates convened at the Toronto Court House on July 15th, to be followed by an organisation meeting in Hamilton on August 16th, when "The Provincial Agricultural Association and Board of Agriculture for Canada West" came into being. Its membership was to be composed of persons subscribing annually 5s. or more, and the first yearly show was arranged to take place in Toronto on the 21st and 22nd of October of the same year.

The first fair may be considered the real progenitor of the Canadian National Exhibition, though, since it was for thirty-three years an itinerant show held in the more important towns of the province in turn, it is not generally considered to be the origin of Toronto's modern exposition; and, of course, the fact remains that the 1879 show was the first of the series of annual exhibitions under Toronto management exclusively. The Exhibition of 1846 was originally advertised to be held at the Caer Howell Grounds, just west of College (now University) Avenue, but handbills distributed a day or two prior to the fair announced a change of location to the Government House Grounds, at the Corner of King and Graves (now Simcoe) Streets. The cattle show was held in a meadow in the rear of Upper Canada College, then located near the north-west corner of King and Simcoe, across from Government House.

The first prizes were in cash and totalled £278, while agricultural books were offered for second place in the various classes, and the Association's diploma for third. The best aged bull was awarded £7 10s., the best ram £5, and the best stallion £10. Entries to the number of 1,150

[1]Charles Fothergill: *The York Almanack and Royal Calendar of Upper Canada for 1823*. p. 158.

were received, and all but £50 of the prize money expended. £69 13s. 1½d. (about $280) was received from tickets sold at the gates, and £200 was contributed by district societies, so that there remained a balance of £102 1s. after providing for prizes and general expenses.

Many hundreds of Toronto's citizens patronised the first fair, and the numbers were swelled by a good representation from other parts of the province, who made their way thither by steamship, stage coach or in their own conveyances. They were regaled by exhibits of wagons, carriages, "light and chaste" one-horse vehicles, stump-raisers, chaff-cutters and self-opening gates; "beautiful, ornamental and fantastic productions of the needle", including representations of King David playing upon his harp, and "Joseph's dream surrounded by sheaves of wheat nodding obeisance". Concerning the latter a reporter considered that "the face of Joseph was too feminine"; but he found fruit and flowers of wax "almost the very perfection of imitation". There were, of course, plenty of horses, cattle and sheep; "specimens of Stilton Cheese such as to make one fancy, had there been a little Burton Ale, that we were 'at Home' again"; tweeds, fulled cloths, cadet and gold mixed cloths, and blankets equalling the finest importations; and among the manufactures were cooking stoves and furnaces described as having attained "a greater degree of perfection than is to be found in any branch of manufactures in Canada".[2]

In suggesting that perhaps the fair could hardly be compared to those long established in the United States and Europe, the *Globe* noted that "the exhibition of stock, of the farm and of the dairy, was highly creditable to the yeomanry of the Province". The account in this newspaper mentioned that the exhibits of manufactures included woollen goods, stoves, tinware and carriages. Portraits executed by local artists were among the items of a small Fine Arts display; there was also "a map of Peterborough, by Mr. Fleming, a young and promising artist from Scotland. . . . It is a beautiful piece of workmanship, giving a very interesting view of that rising town and neighbourhood. It was lithographed by Messrs. Scobie and Balfour".

[2]V. M. Roberts: *The Trail of the C.N.E.* 1925. p. 15.

(Mr. Fleming later became Sir Sandford Fleming, one of Canada's greatest civil engineers). Embroidery, collars and veils, and numerous other articles were found in the exhibit of Ladies' Work; and "the wax flowers of Miss Elliott, Yonge Street, Toronto, gained much admiration". The rooms in which the exhibits were placed are described as "in general too small; and the crowds so great as to make it uncomfortable". But the efforts made by the Committee had made it possible to stage an exhibition "which must have gladdened the heart of every true friend of Canada".[3]

Altogether the first Provincial Exhibition was a great success, and the 200 notables who sat down to a public dinner in Government House at the close of the first day of the fair were enthusiastic in their praise of Canada and its prospective development. Chief Justice John Beverley Robinson enumerated Upper Canada's advantages, and noted that "even with London and other towns far removed, the inhabitants had the advantage of good plank roads by which the produce reached the great waters, on whose surface it was borne to Europe."

Some of the references in the addresses were by no means complimentary to many Reformers present, for those were the days of bitter political opinions; and the Liberal press was vehement in expressing that when it came to the dinner "the arrangements were too Tory. Sixteen speeches were delivered before the Hon. Robert Baldwin was called on to say a word, and the meeting seemed electrified when his name was mentioned, for he was the only speaker who received cheers at the commencement of his address". The *Globe*, too,—nobly democratic—would like to have heard some of those worthy pioneers speak—"the grey heads in that assembly, with the furrows of many winters and of much hard toil marked in their countenances. It would have been interesting to all to have heard of the difficulties which they encountered in their settlement, and how they had by patient and persevering industry been enabled to overcome them all".[4]

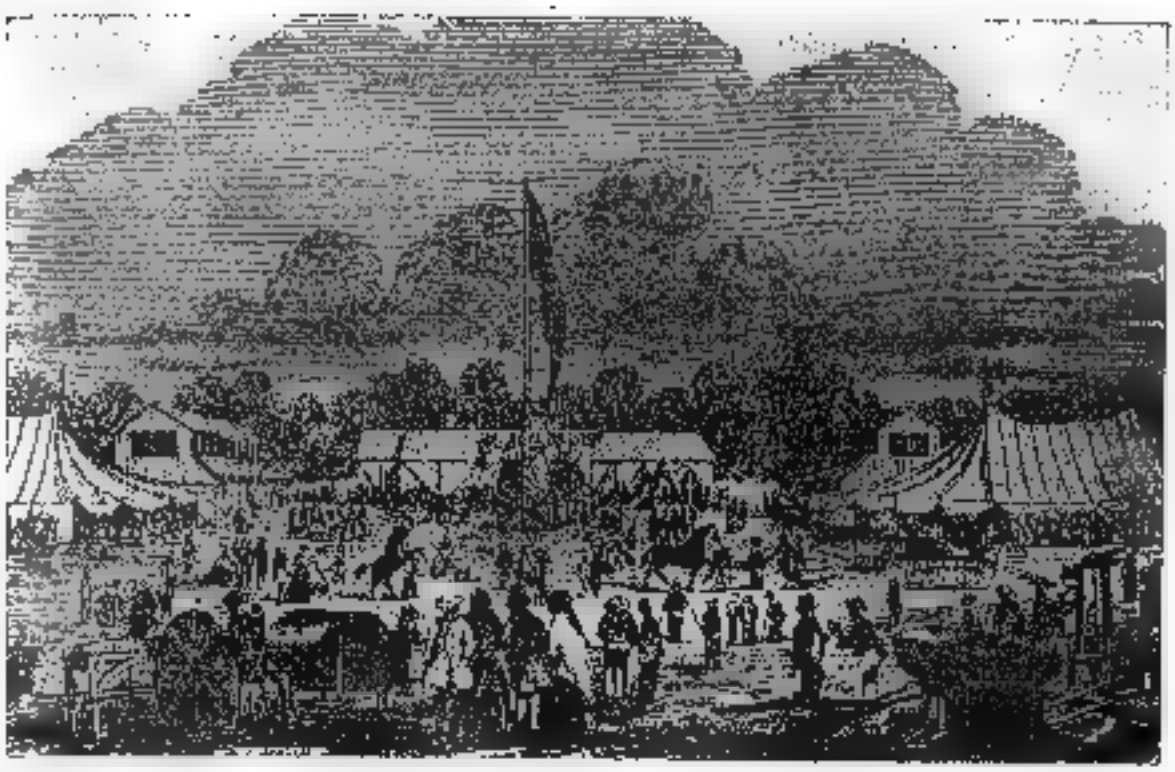
The next five exhibitions were held at Hamilton, Co-

[3]The *Globe*, October 27, 1846, quoted in the *Banner* of October 30th.
[4]*Ibid.*

bourg, Kingston, Niagara and Brockville, respectively, but in 1852 it was again Toronto's turn. Upon this occasion the show lasted four days, September 21-24, and was held in the Exhibition Grounds on the west side of College (University) Avenue. Mrs. D'Arcy Boulton, of The Grange, loaned some of her estate touching upon the west side of the grounds in order to provide the Horse Park. The grounds are described as "oblong in shape, comprising, exclusive of the horse parade, about seventeen acres. They were divided almost equally into two parts by a winding, shallow ravine, through a portion of which a stream ran. The southern half was clear of trees, and the northern prettily wooded. . . . The entrance was at the 'office', about the site of the old Erskine Presbyterian Church. The grounds were bounded on the east by College (now University) Avenue; the western boundary was a short distance west of Dummer (now William) Street. The northern boundary was the Toronto Cricket Grounds, College Street, and the Caer Howell Pleasure Grounds, just north of the present Hydro building in the avenue".[5] During the four days thousands of people, including many from a considerable distance, visited the fair; though "but few of them," says the *Canadian Journal*, "permitted their thoughts to wander back to the time when the spot so densely occupied by the 'palefaces', and crowded with their works of patient industry and skilful art, was a wild and marshy forest, tenanted only by a few wandering Mississaugas; or, at a later date, and in the memory of numbers present, the forest suburbs of a village which numbered but a few hundred enterprising settlers".[6]

The number of entries in the various exhibits was 3,048, or more than double those of the previous year. It was estimated that 30,000 people were in attendance on Thursday, the principal day of the fair. The prizes offered had increased to £1,479 9s. 9d., and the exhibition was considered much more successful than any of those which had preceded it. A contemporary description of the fair names the buildings which had been erected to house the exhibits, and informs us of the "grave fears" that the

[5]J. Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Canada*. 1917. pp. 533 and 536.
[6]*Canadian Journal*, October, 1852.



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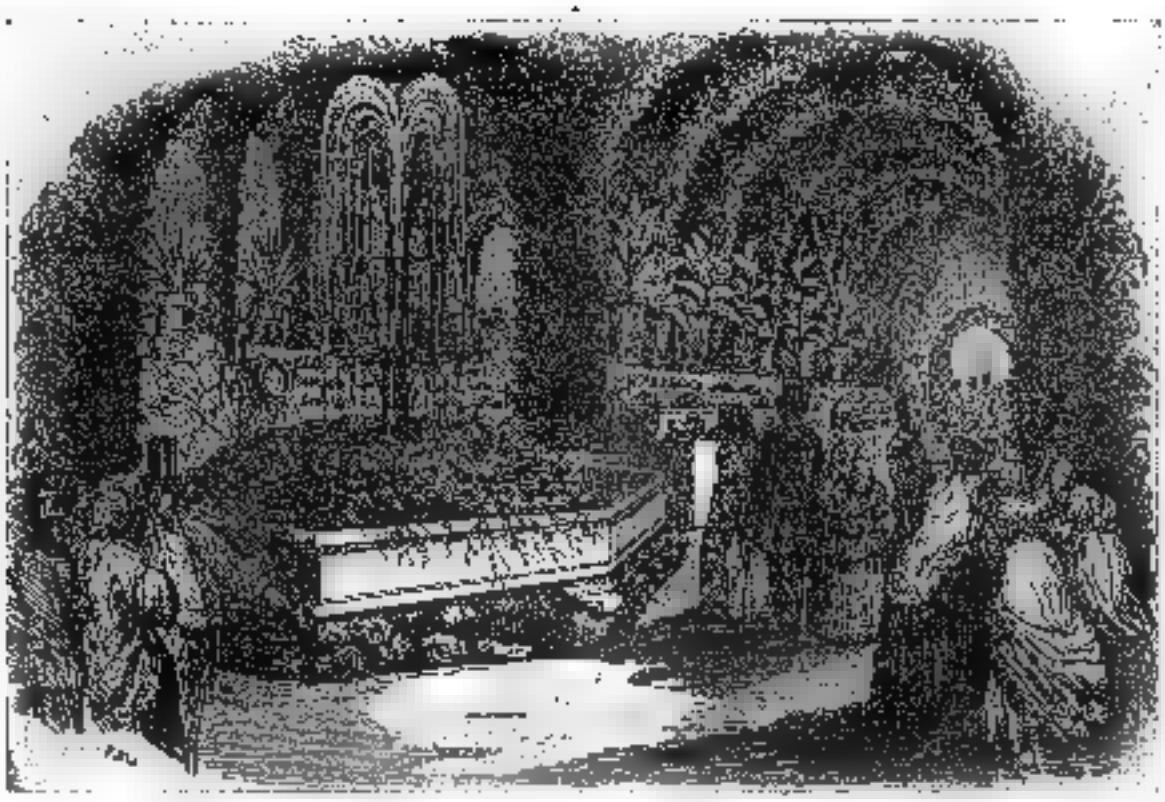
THE PROVINCIAL EXHIBITION OF 1852

The exhibition grounds were on the west side of College (University) Avenue. Nearly 30,000 people were in attendance on the principal day of the Fair, and "grave fears" were entertained that the crowd would break down the fence as they were entering the grounds.

Reproduced by Courtesy of V. M. Roberts, Esq. *Canadian Journal.*

THE AGRICULTURAL HALL, EXHIBITION OF 1852

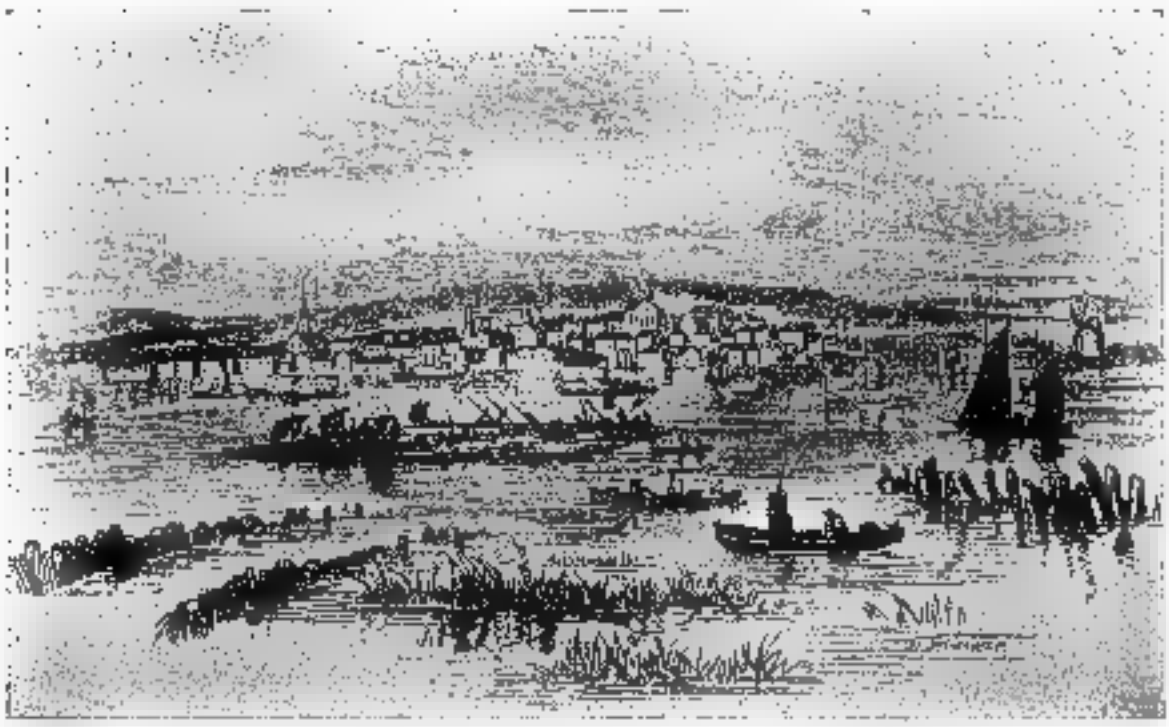
It is evident from these illustrations that the seventh Provincial Exhibition was but little different from the rural fairs of half a century later.



Reproduced by Courtesy of V. M. Roberts, Esq. *Canadian Journal.*

FLORAL HALL AT THE EXHIBITION OF 1852

The florists of the city and the private greenhouses of wealthy inhabitants provided flowers and plants in profusion, and the fountain greatly enhanced the effectiveness of the display.



Reproduced from an old Woodcut by Courtesy of V. M. Roberts, Esq.

A TIMBER RAFT LEAVING THE HARBOUR, 1848

Large quantities of timber hauled to the harbour on sleighs or transported on the Northern Railway were rafted at the foot of Bathurst Street.

fence would give way under the pressure of the crowds attempting to enter:

"The buildings erected by the local committee for the display of those articles which would have been injured by exposure were five in number: the Fine Arts hall, the Floral hall, the Agricultural hall, the Mechanics' hall, and a small building attached to the Fine Arts hall for the display of school apparatus. Grave fears were entertained that the fence would not have been able to sustain the pressure of the vast body of people anxious to obtain admission, and delayed by the necessity of giving up their tickets to the constables in charge of the narrow entrance doorways, of which there were but two. Eighteen thousand single tickets were sold on Thursday, besides upwards of 2,000 member's badges which admitted the member and his family."[7]

From the *Globe* we obtain many other interesting details. Most of the stock and other exhibits arrived by boat in very stormy weather Monday night; but conditions improved on Tuesday, and every boat that entered the harbour had its complement of visitors to the Fair. At [illegible] a.m. on Wednesday, with late exhibits still streaming into the grounds, "the proceedings of the day were commenced by the judges, members of the Committee, and others sitting down to [illegible] substantial breakfast prepared by Mr. Beard, in a great tent erected on the Bowling Green at Caer Howell." This forerunner of the Canadian National Exhibition Directors' Luncheon inaugurated the buildings, and the general public flocked into the grounds, when soon afterwards the prize list was read to the assemblage.

Each side of the Agricultural Hall was divided into compartments, in which were the exhibits of wheat, flour and vegetables. In the centre of the building dairy products were tastefully arranged on [illegible] large table, fifty feet by six. Simple and effective decorations characterised the interior of the Floral Hall, and a fountain added greatly to the pleasing appearance of the exhibits. The florists of the city, and many private greenhouses and gardens, provided plants and flowers in considerable profusion. Many exhibits of interest were described in the *Globe*:

"Mr. Palmer's Daguerrotypes excited much attention,

[7] *Ibid.*

from their perfect style of execution and the well-known faces which they exhibited. . . . Mr. Paul Kane had some of his best paintings exhibited, but in a miserable light, the common fate in such cases. . . . Mr. Hugh Miller of King Street showed some of Kelly's first-rate cod-liver oil, all the way from Gaspé. . . . Mr. Morrison, Silversmith and Jeweller, had some very pretty silver work, including the spade belonging to Mr. Capreol, with which the first sod of the Northern Railway was *not* turned."[8]

The itinerant system of holding Exhibitions was beginning to meet with considerable criticism. In describing the fair of 1852 "a member of the Press" pointed out the numerous disadvantages. He noted that the temporary buildings erected annually at considerable expense "have always been exceedingly inconvenient. At the last exhibits in Toronto the halls were altogether too small to accommodate a crowd. . . . The exhibitors, too, were often grievously disappointed, some of them at having their productions disposed beyond the line of vision, others with having their more delicate handiwork destroyed by the rain pouring through the leaking structure".[9] There were no steam railways in Canada West at that time, however, and difficulties of transportation almost excluded some sections of the province from participation in any remote exhibitions; so that, in spite of the fact that Toronto attracted most exhibitors and visitors, the rotary system long continued to appeal to many who thought it preferable to have some of the fairs near home rather than all of them at a central point.

In 1847 and subsequent years the City Council of Toronto carried on negotiations with the Imperial Government in an effort to obtain part of the old Garrison Reserve for park purposes. After a long-term lease at a nominal rental had been obtained in 1848 there arose a dispute with the Ordnance Department, but a compromise was finally effected by which the city obtained a grant of 55 acres in two properties. The first of these became Stanley Park, the second, to consist largely of a park for the holding of the

[8]A full account of the Fair may be found in the *Globe*, September 23rd and 25th, 1852.

[9]Roberts, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

Provincial Exhibition, was located immediately south of the Provincial Lunatic Asylum. In the original lease the condition attached to the agreement stipulated that the land was "for the purposes of pleasure, recreation and amusement to the inhabitants of the City of Toronto, and with a view to the ornament and salubrity of the City", and the same condition was applied to the grant in more definite wording.

Hamilton, London, Cobourg, Kingston and Brantford were the respective locations of the fairs of 1853-57, but in 1858 Toronto had an opportunity to use her new grounds. The first permanent exhibition building, the Palace of Industry—more commonly called the Crystal Palace—was erected for the occasion, and was quite an imposing structure of cast iron and glass, with a circular tin roof. Built in the form of a cross, it was 256 feet long by 96 feet wide and enclosed an area of some 44,000 square feet. A contemporary description of the building states that it "looks very low, and as if crushed down by the superincumbent mass of roof. It would have been greatly improved in effect had the glass walls been carried up by the line of the gallery floor some three or four feet, or had the roof been broken by perpendicular lights to relieve it from that heavy dome appearance".[10]

The interior of the Crystal Palace was divided by columns reaching to the roof and forming a nave with northern and southern transepts and two extended aisles. A central parallelogram 80 feet by 32 was flanked by two side ones 80 feet by 16, and the nave was 64 feet square within the columns. One can readily imagine the pride of Torontonians in a new building which contained the following up-to-the-minute features:

"In the eastern corner of the northern transept there is a saloon 16 feet square fitted up for the accommodation of the ladies in attendance at the exhibition; in the western corner there is an office of similar dimensions for the Secretary; and in the centre of this same transept an

[10]A good description of the Crystal Palace and its construction may be found in [G. P. Ure]: *The Handbook of Toronto*. 1858. pp. 199-204. A considerable portion of it is quoted in the *Descriptive Catalogue of the Provincial Exhibition, 1858*. pp. 1-8.

orchestra 32 feet by 20 is erected, having a semi-circular front of plain truss railing, supported by a row of wooden columns. It contains four rows of seats, also semi-circular, for the accommodation of the performers, and immediately behind these there is a platform seven feet square for the reception of an organ. In the centre of the nave and immediately in front of the orchestra a fountain is erected to play during the exhibition."

The same writer notes further that Smith, Burke & Co. completed the building in slightly over three months, and "it is, in fact, one of the few public works constructed in Toronto to the spirit and letter of the contract, without the slightest scope for even the suspicion of a *job*".[11]

The Exhibition of 1858 was inaugurated with elaborate ceremony.[12] An address was presented to the Governor-General, Sir Edumund Head, a prayer was offered by the Bishop of Toronto, and the Metropolitan Choral Society, composed of 250 vocalists and instrumentalists, performed with great success. A descriptive catalogue of the exhibits and exhibitors reached two editions, and it gives in great detail all information of interest concerning the show. Among the exhibits which attracted attention was Parson Brothers' Coal Oil Lamps, claimed to be "superior to those of English or American manufacture in the diffusion of light"; W. H. Rice's "ingenious rat-trap, well-calculated to deceive the most wary of those very troublesome customers"; Joseph Archer's "anti-friction grease, which neither freezes on the machinery in winter nor drops off it during the hottest days of summer—a rare combination of qualities"; and the new sewing machine of Messrs. Butler & Co., of Newmarket, "an improvement on the many improvements made on stitching machinery since the 'song of the shirt' saw the light".

There was, too, Thomson, Keith & Co.'s "gasometer", which manufactured gas at $2 per 1,000 feet, and "might be used with advantage and profit in some of the imperfectly lighted hotels with which the province abounds". Reflecting religious conditions of other times was "an in-

[11] *Ibid.*

[12] The description which follows is based upon the *Descriptive Catalogue*,

genious portable stool, exhibited by G. C. Campbell of Niagara, who specially recommended it to Methodist Camp Meeting devotees". The prisoners of Kingston Penitentiary sent examples of their handicraft in both wood and steel. Several gentlemen exhibited "self-acting car-couplers, by the employment of which it would seem to be a matter of the utmost difficulty for railway carriages to play truant to the engine". The electric telegraph, introduced into the province in 1846 and still something of a wonder, was exhibited by Messrs. Wiman & Co., King Street news agents, who had instruments in operation "communicating with their store in the city, and then with 45,000 miles of wire in America and 55,000 in Europe—that is, presuming that the Atlantic Cable is in working order".

It would hardly be appreciated at the present day that it was remarkable for a confectioner to show "no less than ten kinds of biscuit and thirty-five kinds of sweetmeats". Ale and porter were exhibited by S. Grey, Toronto, while Messrs. Hall & Clark displayed "the teetotal drinks, or 'double-aerated summer beverages', as it is more respectful to call them". There were, of course, plenty of exhibits of maple sugar, as well as almost every other farm product and domestic manufacture. Ladies' fancy sewing, wax flowers, paintings and other artistic creations occupied a prominent position; while the horticultural department provided an extensive collection of the best flowers, fruits and vegetables. In the prize list appears the name of Mrs. Catharine Parr Traill of Rice Lake, well-known author and naturalist and a pioneer settler in the "backwoods" of the old Newcastle District. Upon this occasion she was awarded the prize for "the best collection of native plants dried and named".

Cabinet-makers exhibited large numbers of choice pieces of work which would now be highly-prized antiques. In fact the great number of exhibits unrelated to farming exemplify the connection early made between the arts, manufacturers and commerce on the one hand and agriculture on the other. The showing of farm implements at the 1858 exhibition is described as "not unusually large, but exceedingly creditable". Iron ploughs, as well as many

of wood, horse rakes and hoes, fanning mills and cultivators, many of them from the establishment of H. A. Massey, Newcastle, forerunner of the Massey-Harris Co., divided the interest of farmers with root-cutting and stumping machines, and new types of churns, threshers and separators.

It would appear from all accounts that more pickpockets were at work at this exhibition than ever before. Many serious robberies were reported, one farmer being relieved of over $500. Such activities were no doubt encouraged by the large attendance, some 20,000 being present on the second day. A newspaper, commenting on the success of the fair, said:

"Not only was the Crystal Palace itself crammed to overflowing, but the entire city presented a scene of animation which in all probability has never before been equalled. King Street especially, from the number of pedestrians who paraded it all day, wore an appearance which reminded one strongly of Cheapside or Broadway at the busiest hour of the day".[13]

Horse-races at Gates' course, yacht races on the Bay, a bazaar in the Romain Building, a torchlight parade at night, and a notable firemen's procession in which visiting brigades from London, Hamilton and Cobourg participated, combined to increase the attractions of Exhibition week. As for the bazaar we are told that "young ladies in the daintiest of costumes acted as amateur saleswomen, dispensing coffee at 25 cents a cup and cakes at 10 cents each, with the most praiseworthy perseverance. There was no charge to go in, or, if so, it was a very small one, but there was a great deal to pay before one could get out. But the public liked the fun, the young ladies enjoyed the work, and the funds of the church were benefited".[14] An interesting account of the city as it would appear to exhibition visitors is given by a contemporary writer:

"Toronto presents a somewhat straggling aspect, only a few of the principal streets being as yet fully built. The earlier erections were of wood, and present a striking

[13]Quoted in John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*, 1894-1914, Vol. II, p. 1094.

[14]*Ibid.*

contrast to the tall and stately rows of houses or the beautiful villas of more recent date. During last year not many short of 1,000 new houses, stores, hotels, and churches have been erected, a large proportion of which are of white brick and present a very elegant appearance. The public buildings are very fine, and upon a scale which shows that their projectors anticipated for the city a greater expansion than it has yet obtained. It boasts the largest Church of England cathedral in the province, a handsome Romish cathedral, and some forty other churches, chiefly Protestant. It has also the finest pile of school buildings in Canada, two magnificent and richly endowed colleges, a university, a lunatic asylum, two splendid courthouses, and various other institutions and charities, betokening a population appreciating the benefits of moral and intellectual culture."[15]

At that time the population of Toronto was nearly 50,000. The Parliament Buildings on Front Street west of Simcoe, erected in 1830, were still in use, though greatly renovated in 1855. The old Hospital on King Street, the Mechanics' Institute at the corner of Adelaide and Church Streets, and a building on York Street opposite the Rossin House, housed various government offices in the absence of better accommodation. The new University buildings (now University College) were in process of construction, and old Trinity College, old Knox College, St. Michael's College, "recently erected on Clover Hill, between the city and Yorkville", Upper Canada College on King Street west of Simcoe, and the Normal School on Gould Street, were the other principal educational institutions, as well as among the chief "sights" of the city. The old City Hall on Front Street south of the Market was no particular credit to the city, but St. Lawrence Hall was considered a handsome edifice and was the social centre of Toronto. The Lunatic Asylum, the old Post Office on Toronto Street, Osgoode Hall, the new Hospital on the Don and Danforth Road, the Toronto Exchange on Wellington Street, and the four banks (Upper Canada, Montreal, Commercial and British North America), made up the chief other buildings which would be pointed out to visitors in 1858.[16]

[15]Rollo Campbell: *Two Lectures on Canada*. 1857. pp. 27-8.
[16]See *Descriptive Catalogue*, p. 49.

In enumerating the chief Toronto hotels and saloons the *Descriptive Catalogue* of the Exhibition observes that "we believe there is no city of its size on the continent which is pestered with so many saloons and taverns". The best hotels at the time were the Rossin House and the American House, while the Wellington Hotel and the Robinson House were "comfortable, quiet houses" of a less ambitious nature.

The regular amusements available in Toronto at that period were neither numerous nor of very high order. Visitors to the Exhibition are advised that two of the more pretentious saloons are the Terrapin and the Apollo, both on King Street. In addition to the eating, drinking and smoking usually associated with such resorts, the Apollo put on a cheap show each evening. For 12½ cents patrons were entitled to "a smoke or a drink", as well as to witness some negro minstrelsy, etc., as performed by two "inimitable" actors; and altogether the place is recommended as "well worthy of a visit". There was, too, the Royal Lyceum Theatre, which "although small, is an exceedingly pleasant resort". There, under Manager Nickinson, a half dozen "first-rate actors" presented the "general run of pieces" in a manner "always characterised by morality and good breeding".[17] Otherwise, unless some entertainment of a higher type chanced to be sojourning at St. Lawrence Hall, visitors to town would have to depend upon the private parties arranged by their friends.

Again in 1862 the Provincial Exhibition was held in Toronto, the course of its perambulations having been restricted to Toronto, Kingston, Hamilton and London. The area of twenty acres had proved too small for the show, so the entire 32½ acres of the government grant was now devoted to the exposition. Visits to the other three centres of population followed in succeeding years, but the cramped accommodations available at London in 1865 caused great dissatisfaction and led to suggestions of permanent quarters for the Provincial Fair.

In 1866 it was Toronto's turn for the fifth time since the inauguration of the Association in 1846. Those who could recall the very limited scope of the first show were able to make remarkable comparisons. Numerous smaller build-

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 79.

ings now supplemented the Crystal Palace, and over thirty acres of ground was devoted to the housing of exhibits and the accommodation of visitors. The evil characteristics of modern fairs were becoming more prominent, too, for a contemporary account describes the fakirs and hangers-on to be found in every Midway:

"In the immediate vicinity of the main gates, booths and tents are being put up with amazing rapidity in order that no opportunity may be lost in turning an honest penny—and, it is to be feared, many dishonest pennies also. In this booth will be sold intoxicating liquors, and in that jugglers and thimbleriggers will doubtless ply their nefarious trades. In fact 'wide-awakes' who infest every city during exhibition times may be expected in large numbers on the present occasion also. Thieves, pickpockets, gamblers, swindlers, and vagabonds generally, may be expected to hold forth in the neighbourhood of the main gate, and consequently it is to be hoped a large number of detectives will be kept in that quarter to look after them and protect the unwary citizen or credulous countryman from being fleeced by those who live by picking and stealing."[18]

On October 3, 1870, the 25th Provincial Exhibition was held in Toronto, and $14,000 in prizes was offered for the best among the seven or eight thousand entries which the fair attracted. English and Canadian turnstiles were for the first time used to register attendance, and of these the English proved the more accurate. Four years later the fair was once more in Toronto, but before the perambulation was again completed a discussion arose in the city over the comparative suitability of the grounds. In 1877 Toronto did not extend into regions now thickly populated, and among the alternative sites suggested was a large sandy tract of land north of Bloor near St. George Street, High Park, Woodbine Park, and several locations on Carlton Street and the Kingston Road. All of these were rejected, however, and instead the City Council memorialised the Dominion Government to set apart as an Exhibition Park at least fifty acres "of the vacant land not at present required by, or under lease to the Ontario Rifle Association, and known as the Ordnance Reserve, immediately west of

[18]Quoted in Roberts, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

the New Garrison, and south of the Great Western Railway track."

A deputation to Ottawa finally secured a lease of the desired land, the frontage on Lake Ontario being 450 feet, and the Great Western Railway and Dufferin Street being the other boundaries of the triangular-shaped grounds. Guelph and Ottawa attempted to obtain the 1878 exhibition of the Agricultural and Arts Association, but Toronto had been successful in securing it with the understanding that the old grounds and buildings would not be used. The elaborate plans for the development of the new location called for an expenditure of $150,000, and, in spite of the continued opposition of the electors, the City Council proceeded with the work. After three months' activity the finest fair ground in Canada was created. There were only four actual days of the fair, but the attendance was from 30,000 to 45,000 a day. It is interesting to know that the chief means of reaching the grounds was in the special trains run every hour by the Great Western Railway, or by the excursion steamers which left Yonge Street wharf from time to time. The exhibition was in many respects the most successful of the thirty-three held since 1846, but the Association chose Ottawa for the next fair, and disappointed the hopes entertained in Toronto that at least two or three consecutive shows would be held in the new grounds.

Meanwhile, however, the Toronto Electoral District Society and other groups were advocating a permanent annual exhibition in the city, and the Industrial Exhibition Association of Toronto was formed by representatives of the Mechanics' Institute, the Horticultural Society, the Manufacturers' Association, the Poultry Association, the Ontario Society of Artists, and the Toronto Electoral District Society. The first annual fair was to take place during the first three weeks of September, 1879. Grants and subscriptions were made by the city and county councils and numerous other corporations and persons who benefited by the influx of large numbers of visitors, and the enterprise was immediately placed on a strong financial basis.

The first Exhibition comprised twenty-three buildings, of which the Main Building, opened the previous year, was

of a style of architecture similar to that of the old Crystal Palace, and had, in fact, the upper part of the old building. Manufactures, arts, implements and machinery were on exhibit for the entire three weeks; agricultural and dairy products, flowers, fruits and vegetables were to be seen during the second and third weeks; and the show of live stock, poultry, dogs, etc., took place in the third week. Twenty-five cents admission was charged, and the following notice appeared in the newspapers: "Visitors will provide themselves with twenty-five cent pieces, as no change is given at the gates." The exhibition was a great success. Over $19,600 was awarded for the best of the 8,234 exhibits, and about 80,000 people paid admission.

During the course of the Exhibition of 1879 the Princess Louise, wife of the Governor-General, the Marquis of Lorne, visited Toronto, and a ball was given in her honour in the Pavilion in the Allan Gardens. Over 500 guests were present, and the Princess danced quadrilles with Lieut.-Governor the Hon. D. A. Macdonald, Commander A. R. Boswell, R.C.Y.C., and Senator Macpherson. Before leaving the ball she also took part in a polka "played in fast time", Captain Harbord, A.D.C., being her partner. Among the nineteen dances on the program the waltz was prominent.

In 1880 the length of the show was reduced to two weeks. Two years later it was no longer necessary to close up at dusk, for the electric lights supplied by the Fuller Electric Light Company of New York and the Ball Company of London enabled the show to remain open until 10 p.m., and kept the buildings and grounds in a state of unprecedented illumination. Many unable to attend in the daytime could now do so in the evening. For several years afterward the bright appearance of the grounds at night remained something of a novelty, and particularly to visitors from rural communities. At this period of the Exhibition's history an attendance of 30,000 was considered "a big day".

In 1883 the program of the Exhibition included the inauguration of an electric railway, the first in Canada. This is described in detail elsewhere,[10] but it may be said

[10]See Chapter VIII, pp. 135-8.

here that the undertaking was largely a failure in that year. Those who were attempting it had merely examined one in operation in Chicago, but a few people enjoyed the novelty of a ride on the small locomotive before its use was discontinued from lack of sufficient power to enable the hauling of a car. In 1884, however, the inventor, C. J. Van Depoele of Chicago, supervised the construction and operation of the line, and it was described as "one of the principal attractions of the Exhibition; . . . . nothing could be more satisfactory." Until 1892 it supplemented the horse-car line half a mile away, and for a fare of five cents carried passengers from the entrance at Strachan Avenue through the grounds to the vicinity of Dufferin Street. The extension, in 1892, of the King Street line down Dufferin made the little railway unnecessary, and at the same time remedied the inconvenience which had long characterised the approach of visitors to the Exhibition.

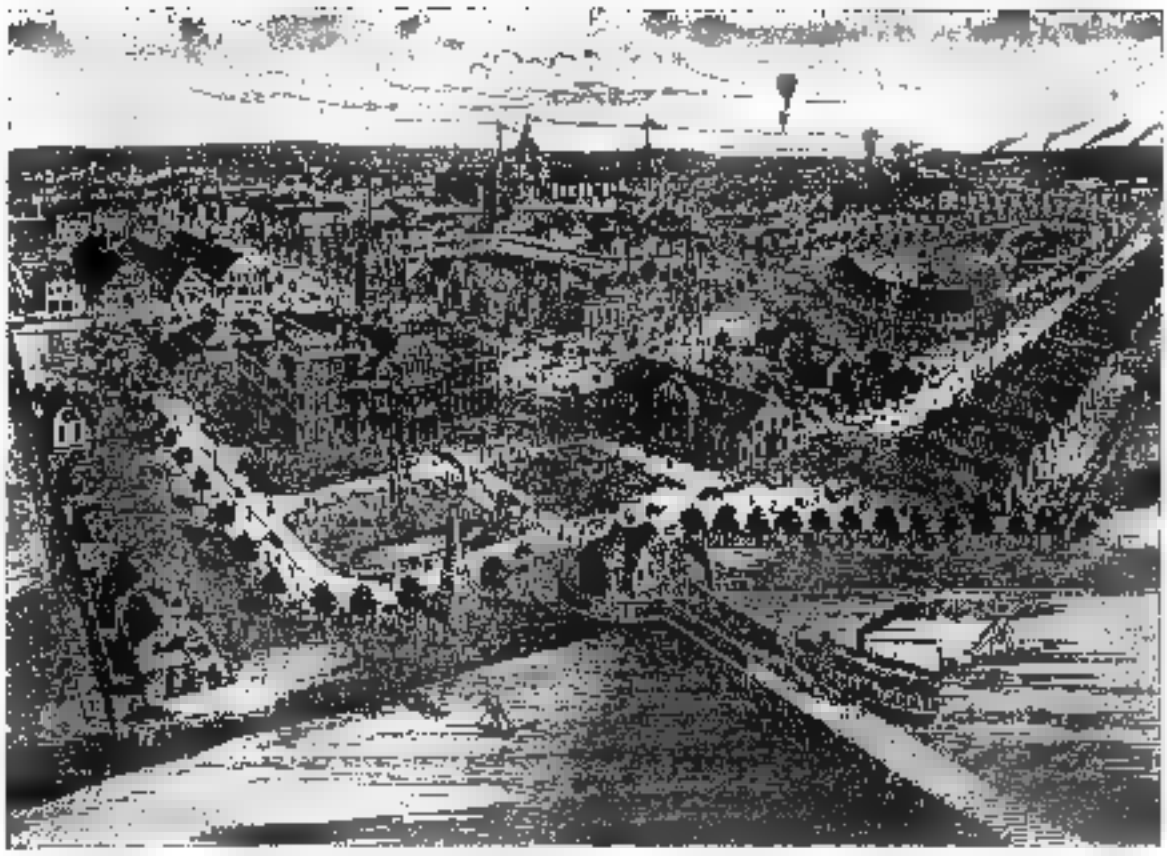
For many years it had been easy to obtain intoxicating liquor at the grounds, for one or more special licenses rendered it legally available. In 1883 the *Globe*, true to its temperance principles, commented editorially on the abuses which had resulted:

"The Exhibition Association cannot afford longer to run counter to public feeling in the matter of liquor licenses; still less can it afford to put itself in the position of actually evading the law by converting one liquor license into sixteen licenses. It is a question whether public opinion is not ripe for a legislative enactment entirely prohibiting the sale of intoxicating liquors at fairs."[20]

The seventeenth Exhibition, 1895, may be taken as typical of the middle period of its history. The buildings and other equipment were then valued at $600,000 and the total attendance was approaching a third of a million people. It was then advertised[21] as "the largest annual exhibition in the world", and "the people's great annual carnival of instruction, business and amusement". In front of the grandstand was a characteristic presentation—"The Relief of Lucknow"; while among the other items in the grandstand performance was Mons. Ernesto Baldanza,

[20]*Globe*, September 24, 1883.

[21]See *Official Programme for Canada's Great Industrial Fair, 1895.*



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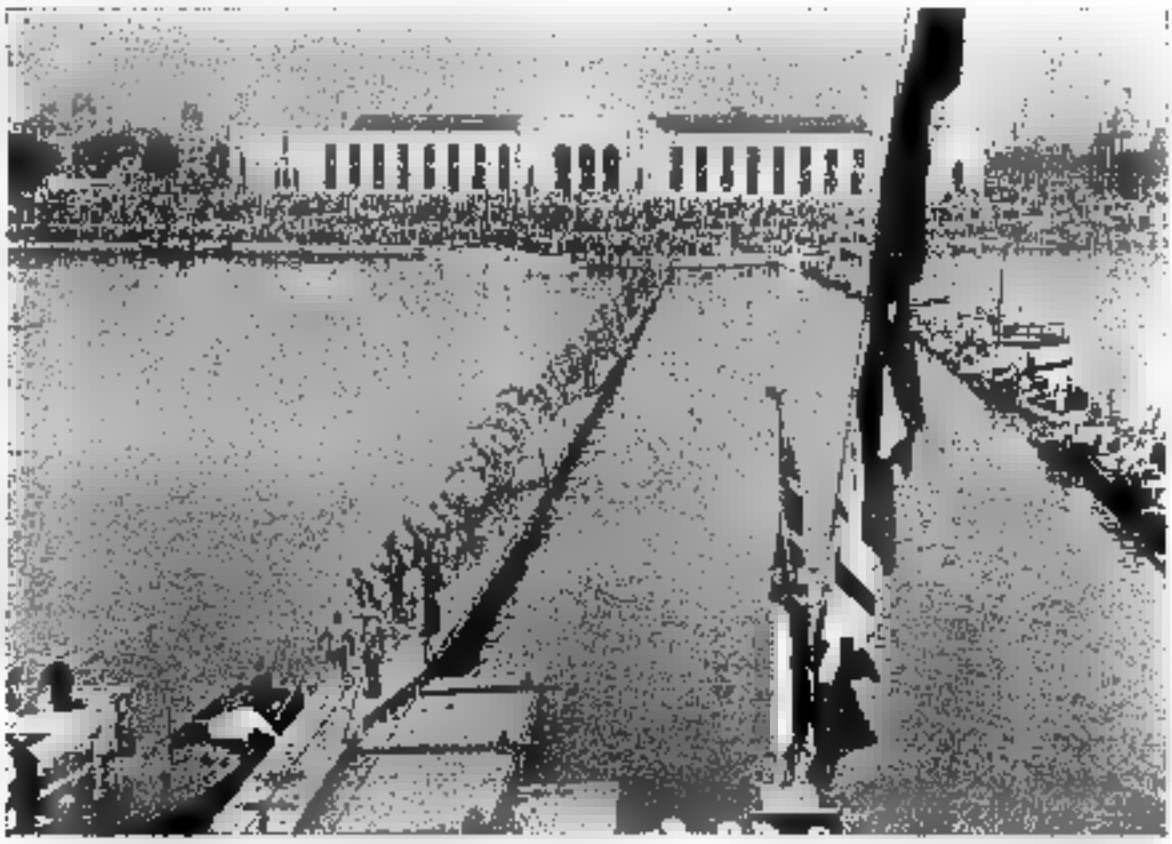
VIEW OF THE EXHIBITION GROUNDS, 1891

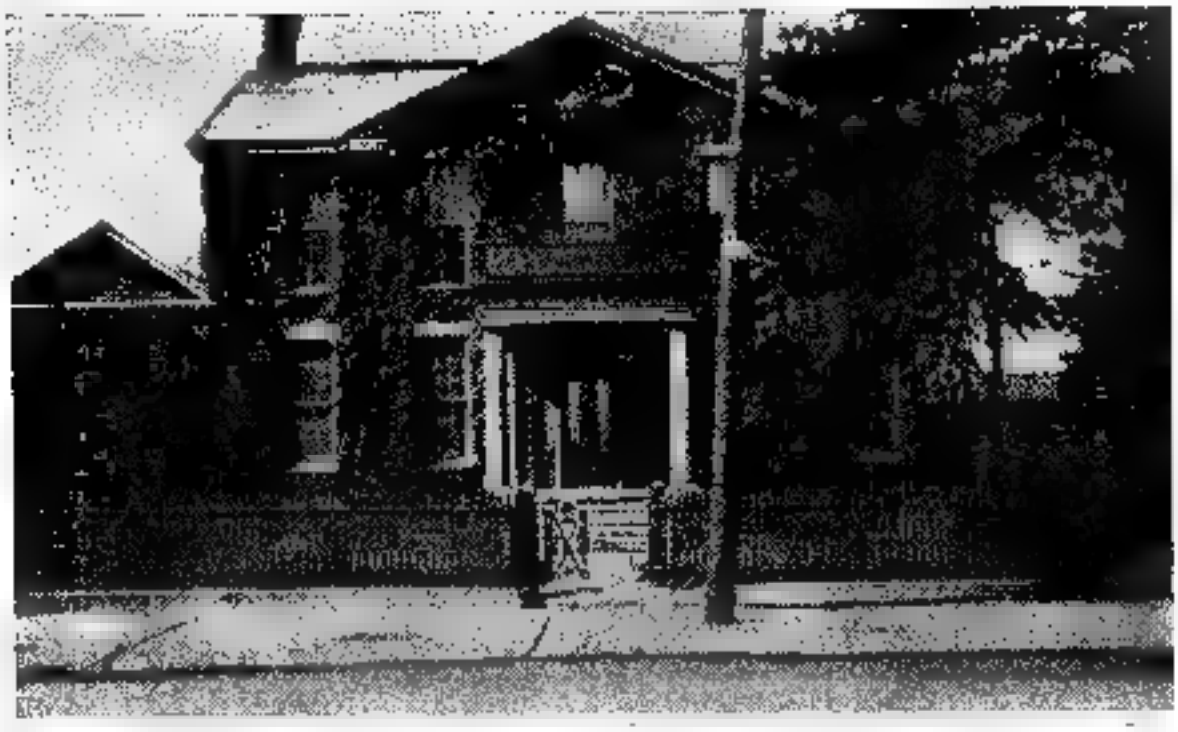
In the foreground is the Dufferin Street Wharf, an important feature when many citizens reached the Exhibition *viâ* excursion steamships.



Reproduced by Courtesy of the Toronto Harbour Commissioners.

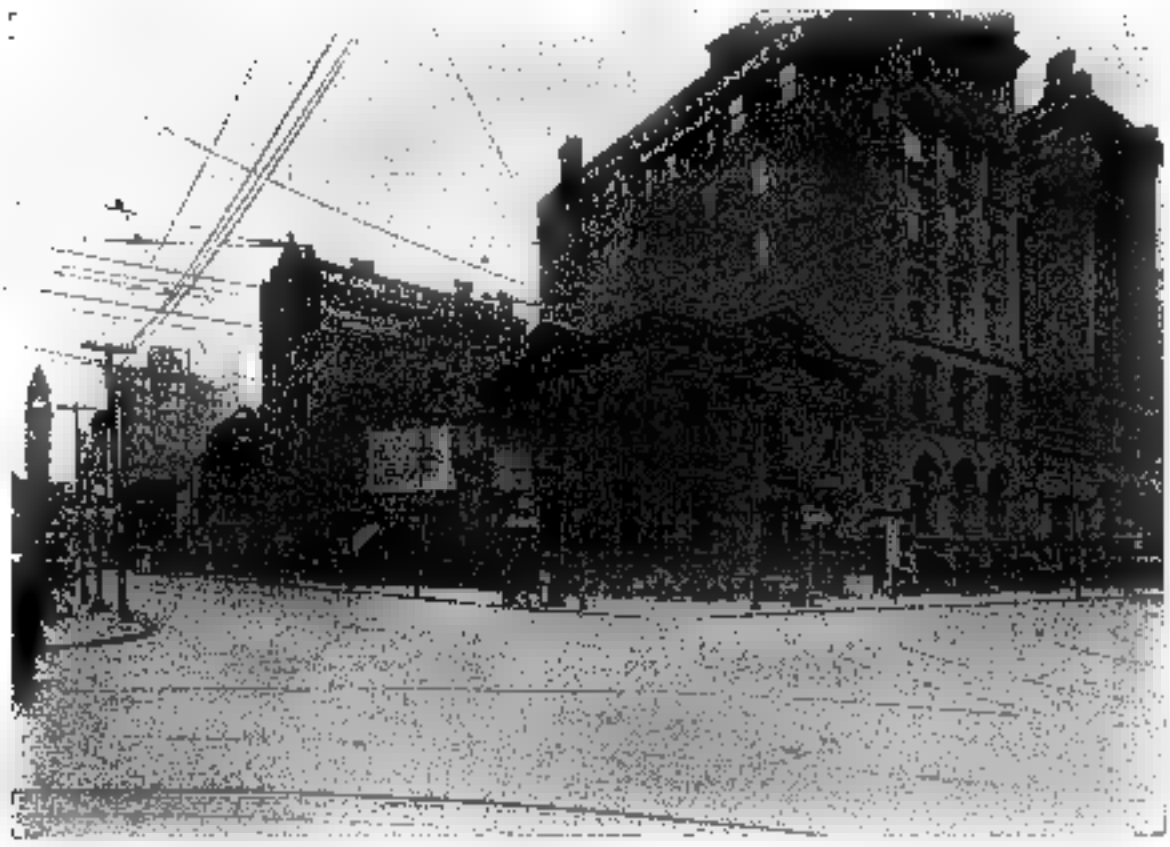
THE START OF THE MARATHON SWIM,
CANADIAN NATIONAL EXHIBITION

The magnificent Automotive Building may be seen in the background.



HOME OF CHIEF JUSTICE SIR WILLIAM CAMPBELL, 1822-34

This interesting house still stands at the head of Frederick Street. It has for many years been occupied by the Capewell Horse-Nail Company, but its original appearance has not been altered.



THE CAWTHRA HOME, KING AND BAY STREETS

An excellent piece of architecture, this old home recalls the days when Bay Street was a residential district. Its neighbour, the Canada Life building, shared with the present *Mail and Empire* building the distinction of being the chief skyscrapers of the "gay nineties".

"phenomenal Robusto Tenor, of Bologna, Italy", a troupe of Japanese acrobats and entertainers, and a considerable number of divers, singers, dancers and comedians. The Royal Dragoons' Musical Ride and Lance Drill was also to be seen in front of the grandstand.

Among other features at this exhibition was "Society Row"—the headquarters "of all the principal fraternal societies on this continent". This popular section was to be found on the lawn in front of the Main Building. Another somewhat ephemeral feature was the International Bicycle Exhibit which occupied 6,000 square feet of space in the Carriage Building; and there was also a great bicycle tournament. "Exciting single, double and triple" balloon ascensions formed the counterpart of the aeroplane flights of some fifteen or twenty years later. The twelve bands which performed from time to time during the show were entirely from Ontario, and included the best military and civilian organisations.

The section denominated "Exhibition Pointers for the Guidance of Visitors" gives us some interesting information relative to the times. It is announced with great pride that "many of Toronto's main streets and private thoroughfares are asphalted", and that a person may ride on the electric street car for five cents, but "be sure you get a transfer ticket if you want to go from one car line to another". It was the heyday of bicycles, and those who arrived by pedalling themselves along could check their vehicles "just inside the Western Entrance". Private boarding houses were to be had in abundance at from $3 to $5 per week; while under the head "Some of the Hotels of Toronto" the Queen's and the Rossin House top the list at from $3 to $4.50 per day. Thirty-five others are named, including such survivals as the Black Bull and the Bay Horse. Bringing up the rear is the "Y. W. C. Association, 34 Elm Street (ladies only)". The passing of the open bar wrote *finis* to the activities of many of these inns, though a considerable number of the buildings may still be identified, and a few of the hostelries remain in business.

Among the places of interest which visitors were recommended to see in 1895 were the Lieut.-Governor's Residence, King and Simcoe Streets, and "the New City Hall and

Court House, at the head of Bay Street"; the latter, however, was still some years from completion. The Provincial Lunatic Asylum, Queen Street, had been a building of prominence since its erection in 1846, and the educational and religious buildings, together with the Ontario Parliament Buildings, Osgoode Hall, and St. Lawrence Hall and Market, comprised the chief other places of note. The skyscrapers of that day were the *Mail* Building and the Canada Life Building, at King and Bay Streets, and a view of the city might be obtained from their towers. The places of public entertainment were mainly Massey Hall, Toronto Opera House, Grand Opera House, Princess Theatre and Moore's Musée. Times have greatly changed even in forty years!

In 1904 it was recognised that the Toronto Industrial Exhibition was distinctly national in character, and the name was consequently changed to Canadian National Exhibition. After negotiations lasting three years over 200 acres of the Garrison Common was purchased from the government for $200,000, and this made possible the great modern development of the Fair since 1906, the year of a disastrous and spectacular fire on the grounds. The exhibitions of today are consequently held in a beautiful 350-acre park which, with its buildings, represents an investment of $21,000,000. Almost 2,000,000 visitors annually visit Exhibition City, a self-contained community with its own police force, fire and street-cleaning departments, hospital, post office, bank and telegraph offices, ten miles of paved boulevards, and a mile and a half of waterfront where world-famous aquatic events are held. The entire show has become almost international in scope, and affords a remarkable contrast with the early fairs from which it developed.

CHAPTER XVII

Inns and Taverns

In early days the wayside tavern and the town inn were centres of the social life of settlements to an extent which is hard to realise in modern times. The inn, like the mill, formed the nucleus around which developed many a village; and not infrequently the tavern-keeper, a man of high status in the community, was the best-known and most popular inhabitant. The first church services, elections and circuses were conducted at taverns; while dances, banquets, and the meetings and festivals of Agricultural Societies, lodges and the National Societies of St. George, St. Andrew and St. Patrick were seldom held elsewhere. The conviviality of the general run of innkeepers, together with the pleasures of eating, drinking and smoking, made the hotel an attractive place to many people, and those who, like Sir John Falstaff, enjoyed taking their ease at their inn had plenty of choice in a day of taverns. Though the drinking habits of the period frequently rendered inns anything but pleasant resorts, yet if one avoided the bar-room and centred his attention upon the living-room he might at times find that the roaring logs of the winter fireplace created an attractive atmosphere for the discusion of the questions of the day as well as the gossip of the neighbourhood.

Abner Miles' Inn was for some time the most important, if not also the first hotel in York. His diary and day-book for 1795-98 has survived to give us many interesting details of early life in the town.[1] Whether his establishment was at first more than saloon and store is uncertain, for the entries in his day-book for 1795 note chiefly the sale of goods and liquors. In fact in her memoirs[2] Mrs. Breakenridge stated that York had no inn in 1798, but there are

[1]This interesting relic of early times is in the Toronto Public Library, and may be found in print in John Ross Robertson's *Landmarks of Toronto*, 1894-1914. Vol. I, pp. 445-53.

[2]Quoted in William Canniff: *History of the Settlement of Upper Canada*, 1869. pp. 530-1.

numerous references in the day-book for that year which make certain that the establishment was then a hotel.

Some of the gentry were accustomed to give little dinners at Miles', and the charges for these and for liquor were frequently left unpaid for many months. Messrs. Bâby and Hamilton and Commodore Grant are jointly billed in July, 1798, for "twenty-two dinners at Eight shillings, £8 16s. Sixteen to Coffee, £1 12s. Eight Suppers, 16s. Twenty-three quarts and one pint of wine, £10 11s. 6d. Eight bottles of porter, £2 8s. Two bottles of syrup-punch, £1 4s. One bottle of brandy and one bottle of rum, 18s. Altogether amounting to £25 5s. 6d."

Among other events in Miles' Hotel was a "St. John's Dinner", for which Thomas Ridout, Jonathan Scott, Colonel Fortune, Surveyor Jones, Samuel Heron, Mr. Secretary Jarvis, Adjutant McGill and Mr. Crawford are each charged 16s. Chief Justice Elmsley was a prominent patron of the establishment, as was also Judge Powell. A reverend traveller's call at the inn is entered: "Priest from River La Tranche, a quarts corn and half-pint wine. Breakfast, 2s. 6d."—a notably frugal order in comparison with the others. Characteristic of the times is an item denoting the giving to "Major Small's soldiers" of a quart of rum "towards digging cellar". A sad entry is that noting the supply to one Hunter of a "small coffin for his child, 8s." The innkeeper was somewhat careless in his spelling, items being frequent for "flower", "nales", "bred" and "chees"; while carrying "frate" to the "skooner" is another example which calls to mind the fact that education was not widely diffused at that period.

Those interested in the names of the drinks of other days will find charges entered in the day-book for "gin slings", "rum slings", "sour punch" and "syrup-punch". The genial landlord occasionally advanced cash to his customers, and carried on in his inn a general store from which butter, eggs, beef, leather, buttons, "cassimere", lumber and other commodities were supplied at the prevailing high prices. His tavern was also the rendezvous for auction sales, town-meetings and club dinners. Miles' Hotel was located on the north side of King Street, between Berkeley and Ontario Streets. He is not mentioned among the

tavern-keepers in 1801, but on December 28, 1805, he was licensed to conduct a tavern on Yonge Street, Thomas Stoyell having taken over the management of Miles' old establishment on King Street. Abner Miles died in the autumn of 1806, an announcement concerning the settling of his estate appearing in the *Gazette* of November 29th.

The issuance of tavern licenses was a matter usually controlled by the Court of Quarter Sessions rather than by the town-meeting, though the records show that it was not done annually but every few years. On March 30, 1801, it was decided that "six persons are a sufficient number for Keeping Tavern in the Town of York", and Hannah McBride, James and Eli Playter, John McDougall, William Cooper, Joseph Hunt and Elisha Beman were approved for the purpose, the applications of John Horton (who had a shop license) and Titus Simons being at the same time rejected. The right to sell wines and liquors was, of course, included, and, "in order that the persons who have been recommended for Tavern Licenses might keep good rule and order in their respective houses, they are appointed Constables in and for the Town of York for the ensuing year," (Hannah McBride excepted).[3]

William Cooper, who was wharfinger, auctioneer and one of York's first schoolmasters, improved the accommodation at his tavern late in the same year, and on December 12, 1801, advertises his "Toronto Coffee House" as ready for business. This combined inn and general store was probably located on Wellington Street. Customers were promised "genteel board and lodging", and "the best liquors, viands, etc."[4] In November, 1802, Cooper inserted the following advertisement in the *Gazette*:

"Toronto Coffee House—William Cooper begs leave to acquaint his friends and the public that he has erected a

[3]Minutes of the Court of General Quarter Sessions, March 30, 1801. See *Report of the Archives of Ontario, 1932*, pp. 16-17. The tavern-keeper of early days was almost always highly respected in the community. As an illustration of the point it may be mentioned that Elisha Beman's wife was a clergyman's daughter whose first husband was Christopher Robinson, and one of whose sons was to become Sir John Beverley Robinson. The status of innkeeper was such that it was no doubt considered that Mrs. Robinson was marrying at least a social equal in accepting Mr. Beman as her second husband.

[4]*Upper Canada Gazette*, December 12, 1801.

large and convenient stable on his own lot opposite the Toronto Coffee House, and stored it well with hay and oats of the very best quality. Travellers will meet with genteel and comfortable accommodation at the above house, and their horses will be carefully attended to.

"He has just received from New York a large supply of the best wines, brandy, Hollands, shrub, fresh lime juice, London porter, oysters, anchovies, red herrings, Devonshire, Navy and Cavis sauces, segars, pipes and tobacco. He has also received a very general assortment of groceries and dry goods, which he will sell cheap for cash or exchange for country produce."[5]

Hotel accommodation in the town was considerably improved at this time by the opening of the York City Hotel. For many years Jordan's was the most fashionable inn in Upper Canada; and in it was held a session of parliament in 1814, after the destruction of the Government Buildings during the American occupation of the previous year. The hotel was located on the south side of King Street, between Berkeley and Ontario Streets, and among its many uses we find that the town's first Sunday School was held there under the direction of a Methodist, the Rev. John Lever.

Another of York's early public houses was that of Daniel Tiers. His establishment was quite distinguished, for he had a billiard table as well as an extra fireplace! His announcement of January 13, 1808, has an English ring:

BEEF-STEAK & BEER HOUSE.

"The subscriber informs his friends and the public that he has opened a House of Entertainment next door east of Mr. Hunt's, where his friends will be served with victualing in good order, on the shortest notice, and at a cheap rate. He will furnish the best strong beer at 8d. N.Y. currency per quart if drunk in his house, and 2s. 6d. N.Y. currency per gallon taken out. As he intends to keep a constant supply of racked beer, with a view not to injure the health of his customers, and for which he will have to pay cash, the very small profits at which he offers to sell will put it out of his power to give credit, and he hopes none will be asked. N.B.—He will immediately have entertainment for man and horse. Daniel Tiers. York, 12th January, 1808."[6]

[5] *Ibid.*, November 27, 1802. [6] *Ibid.*, January 13, 1808.

By 1812 the licensed tavern keepers in the town had increased to nine, as follows: William Smith, Jr., John Evens, Joseph B. Abbott, Seth Cook, Andrew OKeiffee, John Jordan, Joseph Hunt, Osborn Cox, Thomas Hamilton. The Court of Quarter Sessions at the same time refused the applications of Thadeus Gilbert, John Decriver and Haynes Bennett.[7] As will be recognised in connection with certain of these names, spelling was in early times seldom consistent, and many a person knew but little and cared less how his name was spelled. The classic example is to be found in the same record, under date of May 16, 1809, and is worthy of a short digression:

"John Hart, otherwise John Hait, who was appointed Constable for Pickering, appeared in Person and said that his name is John Hait and that he was Constable for Gwillimbury the last Year under the name of John Heath, but whose real name is JOHN ALLAN HAIGHT, and therefore prayed to be discharged from his present appointment; and he is discharged accordingly."[8]

A number of early Toronto hotels were located close to the waterfront. In the winter of 1829-30 one Pinder took over from F. T. Billings the house and premises "facing the York Bay", and advertised that he was making extensive additions and intended opening therein the British Coffee House as a hotel and boarding house. He announced in the *Gazette* of December 17, 1829, that "the house is well fitted up, and furnished in a very superior style, and will be ready for the reception of company by the opening of Parliament. Mr. P. feels confident that ladies and gentlemen and families who honour him with their patronage will find every comfort and accommodation. Among the attractions which he intends to add to the establishment will be a reading-room, which will be furnished with the principal English and provincial papers, periodical works, maps, charts, etc., etc. Boarders can be accommodated with or without lodging, by the day, week, month or year, on reasonable terms".[9]

Farther west there was in later years a well-known hotel on the Esplanade, at the foot of Simcoe Street. Erected in 1861, it was kept by a German, John Betz, until 1872,

[7]*Ontario Archives Report*, 1932, p. 204. [8]*Ibid.*, p. 138.
[9]*Upper Canada Gazette*, December 17, 1829.

when it had to be moved to make way for the second Union Station. Like many an inn, Betz's may be assumed to have attracted more thirsty than hungry men; and another tavern on Front Street of which the same might be said was the Rescue, located a little to the east of Bathurst Street. In the fifties it was in charge of Mrs. Hickman, and was a favourite resort for soldiers from the Garrison in the vicinity. The most conspicuous feature of the Rescue was its signboard, "noticeable not only for its great size but for the wonderful and sensational style of its drawing. The subject was the rescue of her infant by a mother from the nest of some enormous eagles in a rocky pass at the head of some apparently inaccessible mountains. How the woman had climbed the mountains was a mystery, and how she was going to descend them was even more mysterious still. But the sign served one good purpose at any rate, and that, as far as the proprietor was concerned, was the chief one —it drew attention to the house and custom to its proprietor. . . . It was always the first place a picquet made for when soldiers were reported as being absent from tattoo."[10]

Another small hotel, which had much in common with the Rescue, was the Halfway House, midway between the Garrison and the old City Hall. The sign of this tavern carried the legend:

"Within this hive we're all alive—
Good liquor makes us funny;
If you be dry, step in and try
The flavour of our honey."

Needless to say, many stepped in and steeped themselves in the "honey", particularly soldiers passing to and from the Garrison—many of whom consequently spent their nights in the guardhouse.

Along the waterfront also, but at an earlier period, was the Steamboat Hotel, at the present site of 64 Front Street East. It was a two-storey building, remarkable for the spirited delineation of a steam packet of vast dimensions extending the whole length of the building just above the upper verandah. In October, 1828, Ulick Howard adver-

[10]Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 35.

tises for rent his "elegant establishment, unrivalled in this part of the country".[11] Some months later he was successful in letting the hotel, for John Bradley announces on June 11, 1829, that he has taken it over from Ulick Howard, "and begs leave to acquaint the public that he has engaged Mr. Dixon as cook, and his other servants are of the best description. His house will be found at all times supplied with the best provisions, wines and all other sorts of liquors, and neither pains nor expense will be spared to render his establishment worthy the patronage it has so long enjoyed". In a foot-note it is further explained that Mr. Dixon "is well known to be a first-rate cook, having lived with the Governor for three years, and also with other gentlemen of the first respectability in the province". In fact the reputation of the house for "elegant and extensive accommodations" will evidently be more than maintained by John Bradley.[12] The sign of the steamboat was soon after removed, and the inn became known as the City Hotel.

Near by, at the north-west corner of Wellington and Church Streets, was the Ontario House—the Royal York of the eighteen-thirties. David Botsford, late of the Promenade Tavern, Niagara, announces on May 27, 1830, that he has taken over the establishment and fitted it up in a superior style "for the reception of genteel company". In addition to the proximity of the steamboat wharf and public buildings Botsford advertises as an inducement "the extensive view from the galleries, which overlook the town and bay" and render his hotel "particularly delightful". Further, "he has taken care that every department is filled with active and faithful servants, and nothing shall be wanting on his part to render it a fashionable place of resort". He invites visitors to Niagara Falls to make the short and comfortable trip across the lake on the steamer *Canada* and visit his hotel in "the capital of the province, the headquarters for the military, who have a superior band of music attached", the voyage over being attended by "every facility that is necessary for comfort".[13]

There were other special inducements to guests in the

[11] *Upper Canada Gazette*, October 8, 1828.
[12] *Ibid.*, June 11, 1829.
[13] *Ibid.*, May 27, 1830.

Ontario House. In the *Patriot* of May 23, 1837, Botsford advertises that "the parlours are spacious and elegantly furnished with bedrooms attached, airy and pleasant. The beds are large and double, well suited for summer and winter, and it may not be amiss to state that they are warranted free from vermin or insects of any kind, and will be kept so. . . . A splendid pianoforte with a choice selection of music for the use of ladies or gentlemen. . . . For the accommodation of the country gentry wishing to dine before leaving town the dinner hour through the summer season will be at 2 p.m."[14]

The proprietors up to the time that the hotel changed its name from the Ontario House to the Wellington Hotel were Messrs. Campbell, Deering, Pearson, Bernard, Hutchinson and Botsford. In 1845 Russell Inglis refurnished the building and opened it as the Wellington Hotel, and it was patronised by members of the Legislature as well as by frequent visitors from such neighbouring towns as Cobourg, Whitby and Hamilton. The dining arrangements are described by John Ross Robertson as follows:

"On the ground floor at the corner of the main building was the dining-room, a large hall with one great table running down its length where all the guests sat, each, as was the custom of the day, with a bottle of sherry or port before him, for claret was but little drunk, and champagne had not reached its subsequent popularity. Unlike the custom of the present time all the dishes were placed on the table at once and everyone helped himself. The meals were breakfast, lunch, dinner and tea. The price for transient guests was a dollar a day, or for permanent from four and a half to five dollars a week."[15]

A private sitting-room in the Wellington Hotel is notable from the fact that there William Lyon Mackenzie was first received by several members of his family on his return from exile. He proceeded to McIntosh's house on Yonge Street, where a reception of another kind—a riot which the police made no effort to stop—awaited him.

For many years, since it was located close to Weller's Stage Office in the Coffin Block, the Wellington was of great

[14]The *Patriot*, May 23, 1837.
[15]Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 276.

importance to travellers as the leading stage coach hostelry, and stages from all directions brought from eighty to one hundred visitors daily to the establishment. The manager consequently rented the two upper floors of the Coffin House Block as extra accommodation for his guests. The hotel's extensive stables were on Colborne Street, near Church.

Mr. Inglis was still proprietor of the Wellington Hotel in 1858, when it was described as "a comfortable, quiet house, where the charges are moderate and the accommodations good".[16] The establishment gradually sank to the level of a tenement house, however, and in 1861 its demolition to make way for the Bank of Toronto prompted the *Globe* to recall that the "Old Wellington" had been "twenty-five years ago the most popular hotel in Toronto, but it had in time to give place to the three first-class establishments we now possess—the Rossin, American and Revere Hotels".[17]

A hotel of considerable importance at the middle of the century—and earlier—was the North American, on Front Street near Scott. William Campbell was the proprietor in 1836, Thomas Pearson between 1839-1845, and G. C. Horwood in 1846. Evidence that it was a hostelry of prominence is afforded by the fact that on August 8, 1850, when some 200 leading citizens of Buffalo were entertained by the City Council, the dinner which followed the procession of welcome was held there, and the North American was the headquarters of the visitors during their two-day visit to Toronto. W. H. Pearson, whose father was proprietor of the hotel in the early forties, recalled some interesting information about the North American:

"I used to go up to the flat roof, where a view of the whole city could be obtained, and on a clear day the opposite shore of the lake was quite visible. It was a large four-storey building and the principal hostelry in the city. Connected with the hotel, at the corner of Scott and Front Streets, was a one-storey building which was used for ball and assembly rooms and occasionally as a theatre. . . . On the North American a bell was fixed in a frame on the top

[16] *Descriptive Catalogue of the Provincial Exhibition, 1858*, p. 77.
[17] *Globe*, November 29, 1861. The Revere was renamed the Queen's in 1862, the name Revere later passing to the present Iroquois Hotel.

of the roof, which was rung half an hour before dinner-time in order to notify the guests".[18]

A number of important hostelries were early established on the great route of travel—Yonge Street. The northwest corner of Queen and Yonge Streets, now the business centre of Toronto, was in early times the site of the Sun Tavern, where county meetings and elections were frequently held. It was erected about 1825 by John McIntosh, one of three brothers all of whom were captains of Great Lakes sailing vessels. The building was a large, square, white frame structure, and Charles Thompson and one Wilson were later proprietors. Thomas Elliott, the builder's brother-in-law, took over the hotel about 1830, and under his management business greatly improved. The Sun became headquarters of the Reform party, for McIntosh was a brother-in-law of William Lyon Mackenzie; and Mackenzie, speaking from an upper window of the hotel, frequently addressed crowds of supporters in the street below. In later years the inn was known as the Falcon, and then as the Craven Heifer. In 1855, while conducted by Henry Fulljames, it was destroyed by fire. A large open space to the north of this tavern was well-known in the twenties and thirties as the stopping-place of itinerant menageries and circuses.

Another "house of entertainment" on Yonge Street was the Green Bush Tavern, some distance north of the Sun Hotel. The name had originally applied to a hostelry far northward on Yonge, where its proprietor, Mr. Abrahams, had formerly kept tavern at the sign of the pine or spruce tree, a formal painting of that nature occupying a prominent place near the inn. Nearly a mile above the Green Bush Tavern—just below Charles Street, on the east side of Yonge—was the Gardeners' Arms. Its sign exhibited an

[18]W. H. Pearson: *Recollections and Records of Toronto of Old*. 1914, pp. 33-4 and 44. Probably the North American is the hotel described by "An English Visitor" in December, 1834, as "newly erected . . . . and equal in size, elegance and convenience to the Commercial Hotel in Kingston". In general he found the Toronto hotels "numerous and clean; and their prices are by no means extravagant, at least if we judge by the bill rendered at the one we staid at". His very interesting description of Toronto as it was a few months after the city's incorporation was printed in the *Christian Guardian* in December, 1834, and is reprinted in the Toronto Centenary Number of the *New Outlook*, March 14, 1934, p. 168.

heraldic arrangement of horticultural implements, and the building itself was a two-storey frame structure, with a narrow one-storey extension in front and a small wing at the north end. It was described as an unpretentious house of good repute, and troughs and a pump for watering horses and cattle rendered it, in Dr. Scadding's words, "a sylvan halting-place for weary teams".[19] John Ross Robertson gives us a word-picture of the locality as it appeared in 1894:

"For some years the Gardeners' Arms has not been a place of public entertainment. The building has been utilised for various trades and occupations. It is still standing, the second building below Charles Street on the east side of Yonge, but wearing an air of dilapidation in the weather-stained framework, the broken windows and the rickety roof. Waggons of all kinds by the dozen, old and broken, litter up the yard. At one end is a cobbler's little shop. In the wing is a rag shop with piles of rags heaped about, which women and children are assorting.

"Just north of the Gardeners' Arms was the Vauxhall Gardens, a resort conducted in connection with the tavern and deriving its name from the celebrated London gardens, where readers of Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* will remember Joseph Sedley drank too much arrack punch. The garden, with an orchard in its rear, was surrounded by an ordinary fence. The entrance was on Yonge Street, through an archway on which was painted 'Vauxhall Gardens'. Nothing remains of orchard or garden but a reminiscence, as it is flashed into momentary existence by the magic wand of memory."[20]

A directory issued in 1850 mentions this place of amusement with the comment that "the city has also her Vauxhall Gardens (Yonge Street) which have been lately opened to the public, and on the evenings of Monday and Thursday they are tastefully lighted with variegated lamps, and musical entertainments are given."[21] It is of interest to know that the tavern in connection with which the

[19]Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old*. 1873. p. 408.
[20]Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 19-21.
[21]*Henry Rowsell's City of Toronto and County of York Directory, 1850-1*. p. xx.

Gardens operated—the Gardeners' Arms—was still standing in 1924, when it was being used as a blacksmith shop, the only one within a radius of several miles. The building was then in an advanced state of dilapidation, and was soon afterwards demolished.

A short digression to the westward brings us to the site of a notorious tavern. On the north-west corner of Bloor Street and Avenue Road, where for several years a "depression skyscraper" has stood in a half-finished state, was once the Tecumseh Wigwam, a small low one-storey log cabin with a verandah or "stoop". Erected about 1820, this tavern continued to be a drinking-place for over half a century, and it was a favourite resort, especially on Sundays, of numerous young men of York and vicinity. In the fifties its keeper was David King. His son George joined a band of robbers called the Townsend Gang, at one time the terror of the country, and a few years later he was hanged at Cayuga for the murder of a stage-driver. In 1874 the Tecumseh Wigwam was torn down, and we may safely state that no one was the loser by its demolition.

Proceeding northward from the Gardeners' Arms, the early traveller was almost immediately opposite the Red Lion Tavern. This, the most notable of Yonge Street inns, was located on the northeast corner of Yonge and Bloor Streets and was originally operated by Daniel Tiers, who removed thither from the Beef-steak & Beer House, in York; subsequently it was known as Price's, and it became a very important halting-place for teams which had survived the tremendous struggle involved in hauling loads through the Blue Hill Ravine. Dr. Scadding comments thus upon villages and inns, with special reference to the location of the Red Lion:

"In old European lands, in times by-gone, the cell of a hermit, a monastery, a castle, became often the nucleus of a village or town. With us on the American continent a convenient watering or baiting place in the forest for the wearied horses of a farmer's waggon or a stage-coach is the less romantic *punctum saliens* for a similar issue. Thus Tiers', at which we have paused, may be regarded as the germ of the flourishing incorporation of Yorkville. Many a now solitary way-station on our railroads will probably

John Ross Robertson Collection.

THE CRAVEN HEIFER, FORMERLY THE SUN TAVERN, QUEEN AND YONGE STREETS, 1855

The site is now occupied by Woolworth's, and an open space where the Eaton store is situated was an early stopping-place for itinerant menageries.

John Ross Robertson Collection. F. V. Poole.

THE GARDENERS' ARMS TAVERN

Located on the east side of Yonge just below Charles Street, the old building, last used as a blacksmith shop, stood until recent years.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

THE BAR-ROOM OF THE RED LION HOTEL, YORKVILLE

Reproduced by Courtesy of the King Edward Hotel.

A SUPPER DANCE IN THE OAK ROOM, KING EDWARD HOTEL

The rhythm of a good orchestra, a floor show, excellent food, soft lights and beautiful girls combine to make the supper dance one of the most enjoyable of modern social activities. In this instance Luigi Romanelli is providing the music, which is being broadcast—there is even a torch singer at the microphone!

in like manner hereafter prove a centre round which will be seen a cluster of human habitations."[22]

There were numerous reasons for the importance of the Red Lion Tavern:

"By staying at the Red Lion instead of going at once to town the farmers evaded double toll at the Bloor Street gate, as they could go to market and return the same day. Thus it happened as the Home District grew in population the patronage of the Red Lion increased, and nightly it was crowded with farmers, who over their glasses discussed the future prospects of the country, the political questions of the day and the personnel of the officials of the time, while frequently no doubt 'news much older than their ale went round'. These nightly assemblages made the Red Lion the most important political centre in the district when party feeling ran high. The Red Lion was one of the polling-places for the election of representatives for the Home District, and in these days, the balloting being prolonged for a week at a time, the wayside inn was an animated and excited place."[23]

In the early seventies Dr. Scadding found that the Red Lion, "the *Hotel de Ville* of Yorkville", had a Flemish appearance:

"It might have strayed hither from Ghent. Nevertheless, as seen from numerous points of view, it cannot be characterised as picturesque or in harmony with its surroundings. The shield of arms sculptured in stone and set in the wall above the circular window in the front gable presents the following charges arranged quarterly: a Beer-barrel, with an S below; a Brick-mould, with an A below; an Anvil, with a W below; and a Jackplane, with a D below. In the centre, in a shield of pretence, is a Sheep's head, with an H below. These symbols commemorate the first five Councillors or Aldermen of Yorkville at the time of its incorporation in 1853, and their trades or callings; the initials being those, respectively, of the surnames of Mr. John Severn, Mr. Thomas Atkinson, Mr. James Wallis, Mr. James Dobson, and Mr. Peter Hutty. Over the whole, as a crest, is the Canadian Beaver."[24]

[22]Scadding, *op. cit.*, pp. 408-9. [23]Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 92.
[24]Scadding, *op. cit.*, pp. 409-10.

But the memories of the old hotel are best described by John Ross Robertson, writing only two years after it lost its tavern license in 1892:

"The famous old Red Lion Hotel was the first place for the accommodation of travellers to the district subsequently known as Yorkville, and a hostelry which for nearly eighty years kept its doors and gates open for the accommodation of man and beast. Deprived of its license two years ago, the old building now stands silent and mournful, thronged with the ghosts of bearded, bronzed farmers, patriotic Reformers, intriguing politicians, bright-eyed girls, and spruce young men—all classes that made up the society of York and its environs. Its walls echo with strains of music and the merry flick-flack of dancing feet, with fierce political harangues, noisy disputes and wine-provoked laughter. The façade of the building" (See illustration p. 128) "stretches along Yonge Street over one hundred feet. At first it consisted of the central or main buildings; afterward wings and extensions were added. Originally this famous old tavern was clap-boarded and painted white, but, as is so frequent with old Toronto buildings, its walls were stuccoed. In the windows are the antique little square panes of glass as they were put in the black sashes at the beginning of the century, before anyone now living can remember. Only a small portion of the ground floor is now utilised, a little part as a fruit store, and the northern part, which once was the bar-room with its heavy oak beams, as a flour and feed store.

"Perhaps to-day the most interesting feature of the old inn is the ballroom in the second storey. This is an apartment about 40 x 20 feet in dimensions, and 18 feet high, with a ceiling arching from the sides. At each end is a large old-fashioned chimney and fireplace. The walls are covered with panels of wallpaper with narrow blue borders. At the basis of the arch is a painted flaming red border. From the centre of the arch depends hooks for sconces, for the old hostelry was in its prime before the days of oil, when candles were in universal use. This ballroom attracted the devotees of the dance, who drove out or walked in pairs from York to attend the entertainments given there. How many times through those antique windows have floated out the sounds of revelry! How many a couple whose voices are

now hushed in the tombs have whispered soft words in this room! Perhaps here many a maiden has breathed that wonderful 'Yes'. Many an officer from the garrison, or half-pay officers settled in the neighbourhood, frequented these social gatherings and lent to them an air of aristocracy."[25]

A concession farther north, on the south-west corner of St. Clair and Yonge, was located a tavern which was in its heyday in the eighties and nineties, when the Red Lion's existence was drawing to a close. Mike O'Halloran's was in a strategic situation, for it was the last drinking-place before the city was reached; but there was another reason for the extensive patronage enjoyed by "Little Mike". Just south of the tavern was St. Michael's Cemetery, and just north was Mount Pleasant, and the presence of the two burying-grounds greatly increased business. It was a standing joke in Toronto that the driving-shed was always full of hacks after funerals, for the attendants—not to say the mourners—were accustomed to adjourn thither and drown some of their sorrow for the departed. Mike's tavern was also a great rendezvous for sleighing parties from the city, and many a "hoe-down" took place in the ball-room over the driving-shed.

Returning again to the town, we may notice a few more well-known hostelries. In 1831, on the north-east corner of York and King Streets, was erected a two-storey frame building which, until 1843, was known as the Mechanics' Boarding House. In that year James Mirfield, an Englishman, established therein the Shakspeare Hotel. In later years Thomas Kerr was landlord. The house was patronised particularly by theatrical companies which visited Toronto, and for a time there was a large frame theatre at the rear of the hotel, the entrance to which was by a lane from King Street. In 1876 the Shakespere was rebuilt and refurnished (even the name was re-spelled!), and James Powell conducted therein a hostelry of somewhat higher reputation. The Imperial, by which name it is now known, is still in business on the corner with two other old-timers—the Prince George and the Iroquois.

A hotel known as the Beauchamp House stood until 1902 on the northwest corner of Front and John Streets, the

[25]Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 88.

site now being part of the railway freight yards. It was a plain two-storey frame building, and had been an inn from the time of its erection in 1825. Edward Wright was the original proprietor, and the place soon took the name Greenland Fishery owing to the chance visit of a sailor. The seaman, in need of money and possessed of some artistic ability, was engaged to paint a signboard for the inn. Being familiar with whaling voyages he accordingly painted an arctic or Greenland landscape on one side, while on the reverse was a representation of vessels engaged in the capture of a whale. The name of the proprietor and the words "Greenland Fishery" were inscribed near by. The whole work, considered to be both spirited and well executed, attracted considerable attention, and added not a little to the landlord's revenue. Mr. Wright, the proprietor, was elected alderman during 1834, the year in which the town of York became the city of Toronto.

Still standing on the north-east corner of York and Richmond Streets is a frame building of a reddish brown hue, in recent years Abiscot's second-hand bookstore. Built about a century ago, it was for many years Crispin's Tavern, a popular resort among gentlemen's servants, butlers and the like, for Richard Crispin —or "Coachman Dick" as he was familiarly known to his patrons—had come out with Lieutenant-Governor Sir John Colborne in 1828, and had served some years as driver of the official coach. He was a big sandy-haired jolly Englishman, and his wife had formerly been employed in Sir John's household. Originally a bright yellow, the dingy building is now largely hidden by signboards, but has not otherwise been altered materially since its erection; and when it was built the York-Richmond-Bay-Queen block was chiefly vacant land owned by two men—a negro named John Long and one Crowther, a carpenter,—the former being in possession of the western portion. To Helliwell's Brewery on the Don, which supplied the tavern with beer, the proprietor was known and entered in the books merely as "Coachman" Crispin. Soon after his death the corner portion of the building became a shop, and its present tenant dispenses soft drinks—as close as possible, under modern laws, to the tavern's traditional activities. To the northward on York Street, as one approaches Os-

goode Hall, have long been located at the sign of the three gilt balls (though the symbol may be missing), numerous small but interesting pawnshops, characteristically overloaded with a conglomeration of second-hand goods which would defy classification.

In 1833, when York had a population of 8,731, the taverns and inns numbered forty, two of which had bowling alleys. There were also, we are informed in George Walton's *Directory*,[26] seven "respectable" boarding houses, and no doubt a considerable number of the other variety! A complete list of the taverns during the early years of the city will be of particular interest to those who appreciate the quaint in names, though but little of romance was inherent in most of the establishments themselves. The following list, totalling twice as many as existed four years earlier, has been compiled from Walton's *City of Toronto and Home District Directory for 1837*:

Albion Inn, Church Street; Anchor Inn, Church Lane; Antrim Inn, near the Catholic Church; William Atkins' Eating House, Market Square; Auld Lang Syne Tavern, Church Street; Argyle Inn, Newgate Street; Black Swan Tavern, 211 King Street; King Alfred Tavern, 197 King Street; Bay Horse Tavern, Yonge Street; Belfast Tavern, Market Lane; Black Bull Tavern, Lot Street; Blue Bonnet Tavern, Yonge Street; Blue Bell Inn, Lot Street West; Ontario House Inn, Market and Church Streets; Bull's Head Inn, 129 King Street; Red Lion Tavern, Yonge Street Road; Queen's Head Tavern, Sandford's Corner, Lot Street; North American Hotel, Front Street; Cavan Arms Tavern, King Street East; Alex. Chisholm's Tavern, 127 King Street; City Hotel, Front Street; Stag Tavern, Market Square; Cotter's (New) British Coffee House, Front Street; Grantham's (Old) British Coffee House, King Street; Cross Keys Inn, York Street; Crown Inn, King and New Streets; Dog and Duck Tavern, Market Square; Edinburgh Castle Tavern, Church Street; Farmers' Hotel, Market Square; Farmers' Arms Inn, 88-90 King Street; City of Toronto Tavern, Front Street; Peacock Inn, Church Street; Burns' Tavern, 8 King Street East; Ship Tavern, Market Street; Greenland Fishery

[26] *George Walton's York Commercial Directory for 1834*. 1833. Facing p. 125.

Tavern, near Parliament Buildings, Front Street; Half Moon Inn, 2 New Street; Camelion Tavern, Church Street; Mansion House Hotel, Newgate Street; William the Fourth Tavern, Market Square; Three Loggerheads Inn, Yonge Street; Four Alls (Awls?) Tavern, March Street; White Swan Tavern, 26 Lot Street; Michael Keating's Tavern and Chop House, King Street West; G. Kendrick's Tavern, Lot Street; John Kerr's Tavern, Palace Street; York Hotel, King Street East; Toronto Inn, Yonge Street, Teamsters' Inn, Market Lane; John McDonald's Inn, Market Lane; Rob Roy Tavern, 70 Yonge Street; Neptune Inn, New Street; White Horse Tavern, King Street West; Michael O'Connor's Inn, Market Lane; Harp and Crown Tavern, Newgate Street; Old Countryman Inn, 127 King Street; Joseph Palin's Hotel, on the Peninsula; All Nations' Tavern, 92 King Street; Harp Tavern, Church Street; Race Horse Inn, Church Street; Raye's Tavern, Yonge Street Road; Red Lion Inn, Market Lane; Rising Sun Inn, Newgate Street; Carpenters' Arms Inn, 210 King Street; Rockingham Arms Tavern, March Street; Union Hotel, Market Square; S. T. Smith's Inn, 14 King Street; Steamboat Inn, Bay Shore; Royal Saloon, Church Street; City Arms Tavern, Market Lane; St. Lawrence Hotel, Market Square; St. George and the Dragon Inn, Church Street; Sun Tavern, Lot and Yonge Streets; Crown and Anchor Tavern, Yonge Street; Yorkshire Arms Tavern, Newgate Street; Toronto Inn, Yonge Street; Toronto and Trafalgar Inn, Church Street; White Lion Inn, March Street; and Golden Ball Inn, Yonge Street.

These establishments, many of which were no more than bar-rooms, total seventy-eight, and the population of the city in 1836 was only 9,652, exclusive of the military, those confined in the jail, and such transient persons as immigrants *en route* to other parts of the province. Included in the list is Joseph Palin's Hotel, on the Peninsula. The mention of this inn recalls that it was first called The Retreat on the Peninsula and had an interesting manager. Early press announcements are usually exceedingly entertaining, and not infrequently contribute much to the delineation of the character of "the subscriber", as he commonly called himself. Reflect upon this neat advertisement of Michael O'Connor, proprietor of the first hostelry on the

Island, and operator of that grandiloquently-named horse-boat, the *Sir John of the Peninsula*:

"Michael O'Connor, formerly Steward of the Steam Packet *Canada*, begs leave respectfully to announce to the Inhabitants of York, and to strangers visiting the capital of Upper Canada, that he has opened a Hotel on the Peninsula, opposite the town; where he will be ready to accommodate Sportsmen, Parties of pleasure, and individuals who may wish to inhale the Lake breeze, with every kind of refreshments. His Wines and Liquors are particularly selected and will be found equal, if not superior, to any in the country. He trusts that from long experience, and strict attention to business, to merit a share of public favour, and that the Retreat on the Peninsula will be patronized especially by those whose recollection of the Spanish Peninsula will ever be dear to their memory, as recorded in the pages of British History.

"N.B. As the proprietor has established a Horse Boat to run regularly between York and this place, ladies and gentlemen can make certain of returning to suit their own convenience.

"Peninsula, Sept. 7, 1833.

"The York Papers, *Montreal Herald, Kingston Chronicle, Gore Mercury* and *Niagara Gleaner* are requested to give the above three insertions, and send their accounts to the proprietor."[27]

On the north-west corner of Church and Colborne Streets, (the latter formerly known as Market Lane), there once stood a frame hotel, the landlord of which was a negro with the somewhat inappropriate name of Snow. In 1848 Joshua Beard erected a brick hostelry on the site, and its upper floors were for a time occupied by the Masonic and Orange Lodges. Among the later proprietors of this inn was John Montgomery, formerly associated with the tavern on north Yonge Street which was the rendezvous of the rebels of '37.

The mention of Snow's Inn recalls the fact that negroes were not infrequently successful tavern-keepers in early Toronto. Another well-patronised tavern of which the landlord was a negro was that at the head of Toronto Street,

[27]The *Courier of Upper Canada*, October 5, 1833.

where the Post Office now stands. In the early forties the frame hotel on that location was run by James Mink, and adjoining it were extensive stables. Mink retired from business with quite a fortune, and appropriated $10,000 of it to attract a respectable white man as husband for his daughter. One was found and the pair set out on their wedding trip to the Southern States, where the man (as John Ross Robertson tells the story), "with a villainy that we are pleased to say characterises few white men, sold his bride into slavery and abandoned her. Through the efforts of Mink's friends in Canada, and the payment of a large sum of money, Miss Mink was freed and brought back to Toronto, and lived for years with her father in the old home on the hill, on the east side of the Don and Danforth Road."[28]

The Chewett Buildings, structures of red brick at the corner of King and York Streets, first housed John Cotter's New British Coffee House. Commenced in 1833, the building was opened for business in the following year. During the Rebellion of 1837 the Coffee House was closed, and in later years it was used as a barracks, and then as officers' quarters. In 1842 John Ellah carried on a boarding house, private hotel and club-house in the building, the club-rooms later developing into the home of the Toronto Club; and in 1852 a dancing academy occupied part of the old Coffee House. Three years later the Rossin brothers purchased the property with the intention of erecting a hotel, and the Rossin House, opened in 1857, was the result of their enterprise.

A publication almost contemporary with the opening of the Rossin House gives an enthusiastic description of its merits; it says, in fact, that "from its capacity, and the completeness of its arrangements for accommodating travellers and permanent boarders in the most perfect style of modern hotel-keeping, it has superseded and shut up nearly the whole of the other first-class hotels of the city". Referring to it as "among the chief architectural ornaments of the city", the account states that the land and building cost £55,000, the hotel being "five stories in height, faced with white pressed brick, with substantial dressings of Ohio freestone, handsome iron pillars, cornices and balconies".

[28]Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 50.

The frontage on King Street was 202 feet 5 inches, and on York 151 feet 10 inches. We are further informed that "the ground floor comprises a number of handsome shops, varying from 14 to 23 feet in width, and 50 to 60 feet in depth, each elegantly furnished with large plate-glass windows, and having a cellar attached. The offices of the hotel are also on the ground floor. The main entrance, 20 feet wide, is on York Street. The whole number of rooms for the reception of boarders, exclusive of reading-rooms and the principal parlours, is about 220, and during the Exhibition the proprietors will be able to accommodate as many as 500 guests. Fare $2.50 per day."[29]

The enthusiasm of one man for the Rossin House carried him away into intricacies of extravagant language seldom equalled:

"Within its walls is congregated every appliance which affluence can desire, every pleasure which luxury can crave. Here are alluring condiments to tempt the most fastidious taste, vinous acidities to lubricate, and gastronomic ponderosities to titilate the palate! The prandial morceau here ceases from troubling, and the sated stomach is at rest. What magical transformations here await human deglutition!"[30]

In a somewhat more conservative tone the same writer notes the elaborate equipment of the hostelry: the two commodious private entrances . . . . an extensive reading room, lighted by a large and handsome glass dome . . . . fifteen elegantly furnished stores on the ground floor . . . . a long row of parlours and reception rooms, the principal of which is a ladies' parlour. . . . a dining-room 100 feet by 38, and 18 feet high, adjoining which is the carving room, dish room, dessert room, and a glazed gallery connecting these with the kitchen and china pantry . . . . three staircases, two for the use of guests and the third for servants . . . . 220 rooms for the reception of boarders . . . . a very ex-

[29] *Descriptive Catalogue of the Provincial Exhibition, 1858*, p. 77. For an account of the charges and living conditions—even to washing clothes—in Toronto hotels prior to the Rossin House, see the Rev. Henry Christmas' description in his *Canada in 1849: Pictures of Canadian Life, or the Emigrant Churchman.* 1850. Vol. I, pp. 68-70.

[30] Alfred Sylvester: *Sketches of Toronto.* 1858. pp. 18-19.

tensive bar-room, with billiard table underneath . . . . a barber's shop and gentlemen's bathing-room containing ten baths . . . . and a Book and News Depot where one may obtain local or European journals, or handsomely bound volumes "which address alike the students of light or abstruse literature".[31] Such advantages in the eighteen-fifties placed the Rossin House far in advance of the general run of inns and taverns—it was, in fact, for some years considered the best hotel west of New York.

The disastrous fire of November, 1862, destroyed the building, and the Rossins, disheartened, left the reconstruction of the hostelry to Dr. Chewett. The Rossin House was rebuilt in 1863 and continued to operate under that name until 1909, when it was re-named the Prince George Hotel. During the century since the British Coffee House was established on the corner the site has been a centre of the social life of the city. Early a fashionable resort, the Coffee House was noted as a gathering place of the St. Andrew's and St. George's Societies and of the Toronto Club; indeed it is said that each of these organisations was inaugurated in 1835-36 in the rooms of the establishment. The Rossin House was for many years the headquarters of the Liberal party, and the scene of many historic political meetings, banquets and balls. Among the proprietors after Marcus and Samuel Rossin were G. P. Shears, the Nelson brothers and the Thompsons, father and son, Samuel Thompson having earlier been closely associated with Henry Winnett of the old Queen's, the famous contemporary hostelry. The Prince of Wales' suite were quartered at the Rossin House in 1860, the Prince himself being entertained at Government House. Nine years later Prince Arthur of Connaught was a distinguished guest at the same hostelry.

The only hotel in Toronto in the late fifties which could be considered a competitor of the Rossin House was the American House, at the corner of Yonge and Front Streets. In the *Descriptive Catalogue of the Provincial Exhibition* (1858) it is referred to as a hotel of great "intrinsic merit".[32] It was a brick building erected about 1840 by Mr. Rennie, who was succeeded as proprietor by A. F. Pearson in 1853. After five years under his management it passed into the

[31] *Ibid.*, pp. 19-20.

[32] *Descriptive Catalogue*, p. 77.

hands of Messrs. David Walker (later of the Walker House) and Paterson, "who have refitted and refurnished it in all those details which add so much to the comfort and pleasure of its inmates". Ninety rooms, many of them quite spacious, and a dining-room 60 feet by 30, and capable of seating 200 persons, placed this hotel in the first class. Its situation near the docks and railways, as well as its comfortable and home-like atmosphere, rendered it popular. Board was $2 per day, and the American could accommodate 150 guests. It remained a well-known hostelry until 1889, when it was demolished. During his visit to Toronto in 1842 Charles Dickens was a guest at this house.

Among private hotels and boarding houses in 1858 probably the Robinson House, near the corner of King and Bay Streets, was outstanding. Those who wished to avoid the formality and bustle of the regular hotels were assured of every comfort in the Robinson House, which contained forty-eight bedrooms. It was "presided over by Mr. John Montgomery, whose experience and well-known urbanity are a sufficient guarantee of the comfort of his guests".[33]

The regular amusements available in Toronto in the late fifties were closely associated with saloons, two of the more pretentious of which were the Terrapin, (formerly the St. Nicholas, and situated on King Street near the site of the present King Edward Hotel), and the Apollo Saloon and Concert Room on the same street. In describing the attractions of these places of entertainment a contemporary publication introduces the subject by noting that "we believe there is no city of its size on the continent which is pestered with so many saloons and taverns; and, if the morals and habits of our people were to be judged by this criterion, the stranger would form a very unfavourable and unjust opinion".[34]

The Apollo Saloon appears to have staged nightly a show which may be called the forerunner of the night club, though it was available upon much more reasonable terms. The price of admission was only twelve and one-half cents, and from his modest investment the patron was entitled to "a smoke or a drink", as well as to witness a "performance of negro minstrelsy, comic and sentimental singing, etc". The

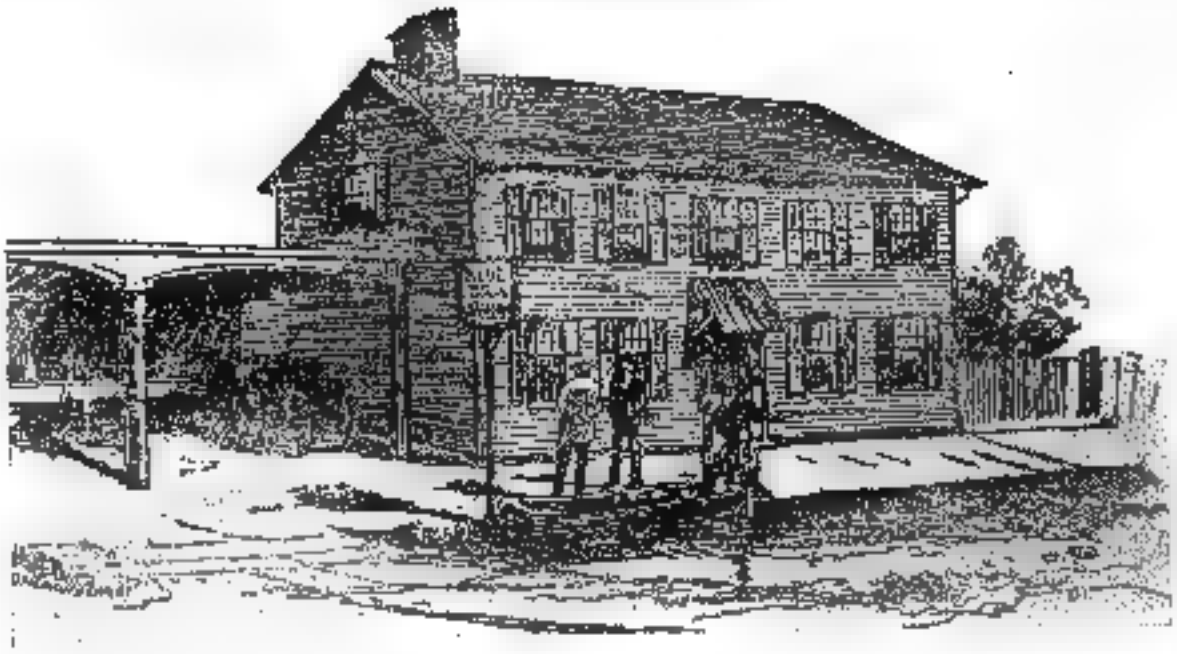
[33]*Ibid.* [34]*Ibid.*, p. 79.

actors, Mr. Burgess and Mr. Den Thompson, are described as "inimitable in their way . . . . the one as a negro performer, and the other as a 'broth of a boy' from the Emerald Isle".[26]

Eastward and westward of the town were numerous well-known inns. To the west, where the roadway along Lot (Queen) Street turned northward, was early located Sandford's Inn, a watering-place on the east side of the bend which was particularly welcome to teams on their way to town. A conspicuous pump was available to fill the large trough—a long section of a huge pine tree dug out like a canoe. A little to the eastward, opposite the Garrison Common, was a rival of Sandford's known as the Blue Bell Tavern. This notable inn carried at the top of a strong and lofty pole in front of its door a sign appropriate to its name, which swung to and fro within a frame. Both of these inns were long familiar to travellers along the Lake Shore Road, as well as to those who entered York from the north and west *viâ* Dundas Street. At the middle of the century, in fact, the Blue Bell gave the name Blue Bell Village to the locality. Of similar importance to travellers was the Black Bull Hotel, at the corner of Queen and Maria (Soho) Streets.

A short distance to the west of the Blue Bell, at the junction with Dundas Street (now Ossington Avenue), stood the Queen's Head Tavern, kept by Lewis Bate, and famous as a resort for city people on summer evenings. Like so many other taverns it was an unpretentious structure of frame, with a verandah facing both Queen and Dundas Streets, and a capacious horse-trough and small driving-shed on the Dundas Street side. After turning westward again from the Ossington Avenue section of old Dundas Street and proceeding beyond Dufferin Street, travellers of other days reached a locality known as the "Appii Forum" or "The Three Taverns", the hostelries being frame buildings much alike in appearance—Collard's Hotel, Joseph Church's Brown Bear Tavern and the Queen Street Hotel, "Bob" James, proprietor. Here, both in summer and winter, racing men were wont to try out their horses and arrange contests. About one hundred yards farther on was the Brockton Toll-bar, kept for many years

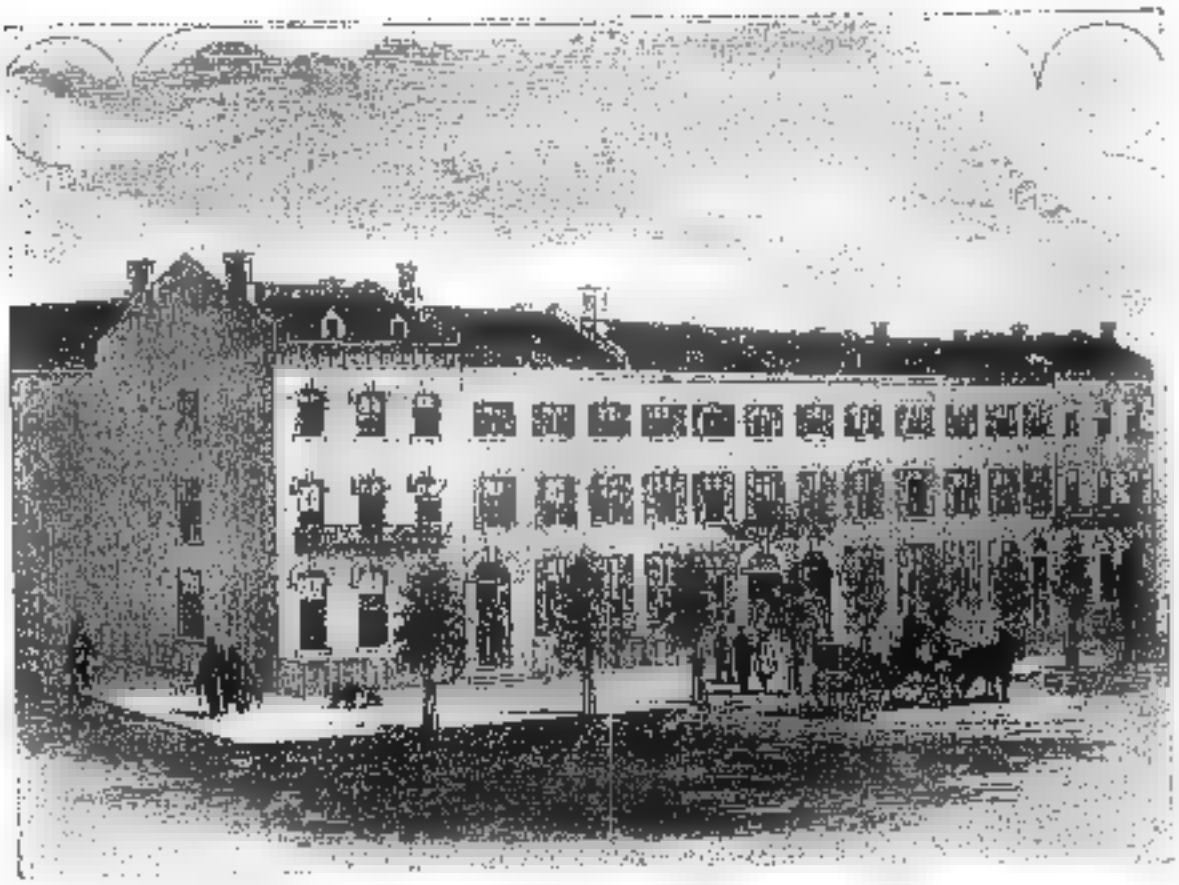
[26] *Ibid.*



John Ross Robertson Collection.

THE BLUE BELL TAVERN

The nucleus of Blue Bell Village, this inn opposite the Garrison Common was long well-known to travellers entering Toronto from the north-west and west.



Canadian Illustrated News.

THE QUEEN'S HOTEL OF 1863

This shows the first Queen's, earlier called Sword's Hotel and the Revere House. As may be seen from the illustration, a number of separate buildings were combined to form the hotel. In the vicinity at that time were "several comely mansions within their garden walls shaded with trees"—among them Holland House and Bishop Strachan's residence.

LOOKING NORTHWARD FROM THE INTERSECTION OF YORK AND RICHMOND STREETS, 1934

Hardly to be distinguished under the modern billboard decorations is "Coachman" Crispin's Tavern, 1836, a clapboard structure erected a few years earlier and used as a grocery store. An even dozen second-hand stores occupy the other ancient buildings leading to Osgoode Hall.

THE TAVERN TYRONE, 125-127 QUEEN STREET WEST

Among many other dilapidated buildings a hundred yards west of the City Hall stands the old Tavern Tyrone. The cows of its proprietor, John Trueman, were responsible for those unique stock-yard gateways by which the Bench and Bar still approach Osgoode Hall.

by James Kerr. Near the gate was a small general store in charge of Mrs. Larkin, who was also postmistress of Brockton.

In 1850 there was a well-known tavern in what is now the east end of the city, but the entire district was then a rural locality. The Butchers' Arms was located on the east side of Mill Lane (now Broadview Avenue), between the present Sparkhall and Hogarth Avenues. About 1845 Thomas Smith built the house, selling it a few years later to William Vine. The tavern was well patronised by the sporting fraternity, for there was a race-course on the south side of the Kingston Road where the Sunlight Soap Works was later erected; and there were, too, numerous devotees of cock-fighting in the vicinity, that so-called sport not then being illegal. There were other customers who, entirely undesired by the keeper, frequented the Butchers' Arms and made it notorious: these were members of the Brooks' Bush Gang, a group of hardened criminals whose headquarters were a short distance eastward. At least one of the gang was hanged, but others equally guilty escaped conviction. When the Butchers' Arms was at its height there were few buildings in the neighbourhood. One or two were located across the road, and to the north were the brickyards of Whitemore and Stotesbury, while there was a large expanse of vacant land to the southward. The tavern was discontinued in 1877, and William Vine died two years later; but the old building was standing in 1907, and the innkeeper's widow, aged ninety, was still living. The whole district, however, was then vastly changed, wayside taverns were fast disappearing, and the rough and tough days of heavy drinking were slowly but surely approaching their end.

About a mile to the southward, near the south-east corner of Queen Street and Broadview Avenue (formerly the Kingston Road and Scadding Street, respectively,) was located the Tam O' Shanter Inn. A swinging sign depicting a white horse with Tam astride lent character to the place, and in the rear a towering elm was a noted landmark. The location should with more reason be remembered, however, because in the next house lived Alexander Muir, well-known Toronto school teacher, and famous as the author of *The Maple Leaf Forever*.

In the same vicinity was the Rising Sun Inn, opened about 1844 by William Knight. Immediately behind it was a race-course, and the followers of that sport formed the greater part of the tavern's patrons. It was for some years the only inn between the Don River and Leslie's nursery, but in the early fifties other taverns were opened. In 1857 the old race-course ceased to be used, and the Rising Sun, its business greatly diminished, was closed soon afterwards.

During the same period, about seventy years ago, there stood one mile to the eastward, on the Kingston Road, the hub of the village of Leslieville—Uncle Tom's Cabin. This hotel was kept by two typical Englishmen, George Smith and William Cook, and it was a centre of the social life of the district. Brick-making and tree-growing were the principal occupations of the inhabitants round about, and as these industries were inactive in the winter months Uncle Tom's was the rendezvous for cards, dominoes and drinking. Although beer and whisky sold for two-pence a glass, it is said that there was but little drunkenness at this hotel. About 1874 "Codder" Smith and his partner sold out to a son-in-law of "Bill" Vine, proprietor of the Butchers' Arms, and he in turn disposed of the house to Henry ("Hank") Callendar, who remodelled the tavern and operated it under the name Callendar's Hotel until the license was taken away many years later.

In 1897, when John Ross Robertson was making his notable collection of Toronto *Landmarks*, there was a two-storey red brick building at 1010 Queen Street East. The structure itself, however, was neither old nor unusual, but at its western end was a well of fresh water. This well provided a link with the past, and we cannot do better than let John Ross Robertson tell the tale:

"Fifty years ago that well and clumsy home-made pump formed part of the equipment of a roadside tavern yard. The tavern itself was a long low building, always painted a dazzling white, with a cottage roof and green shutters on its four front windows, which, two on either side, flanked a door, also painted green, in the centre.

"A few yards distant from the western end of the tavern was a low red building used as a driving-shed. Between the hotel and shed was the well referred to. At the eastern end

of the hotel and somewhat to the south of it stood two substantial uprights between which hung a heavy wooden signboard, explaining to the world at large and teamsters in particular the purposes for which the building was intended. The hostelry stood about fifty feet back from the roadway then called the Kingston Road, and now known as Queen Street East. In front of it were three heavy posts, that the aforesaid teamsters might there secure their horses while they themselves partook of liquid comfort at the bar, which was at the western extremity of the hostelry in convenient proximity to the pump.

"The tavern, and much of the land surrounding it, was owned by a pioneer settler named Charles Watkins, who came out from England early in the thirties. The hotel was built in 1835 or the year previous. Watkins liked farming better than hotel-keeping, and followed the former pursuit while he rented the tavern. The first landlord was known as Sandy Watson. He kept hotel there for a dozen years, and then James Shaw rented the place.

"Tavern-keeping in that locality was then in its palmiest days. There was an almost continuous stream of traffic passing by during the winter,—great, comfortable farmers' sleighs bringing in loads of produce to the rising young city; rough, heavy wood-sleighs, piled high with sweet-scented pine and rough cordwood; besides vehicles conveying passengers and the mails, for in those days the Kingston Road was one of the mail routes. All year round, but particularly during the winter, the many taverns in this locality —Shaw's was the most easterly one at the time—did a roaring trade. Mr. Shaw was very fond of horses, and it was one of the sights of the neighbourhood to see the black hostler, an old escaped slave known as 'Doc', trot out Mr. Shaw's team to water every morning."[36]

The large number of taverns in early times, and the excessive drinking that was typical of the period, made some regulation of bar-rooms essential, though it was exceedingly elementary. As early as 1818 the Magistrates ordered that "bars are to be closed on the whole of the Lord's Day, and on no account, except in cases of extreme necessity or to give refreshments to persons lawfully travelling, to be

[36]Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 310.

opened; nor is any spirituous liquor to be sold or suffered to be drunk otherwise in the premises on the Sabbath Day; in the winter, *i.e.*, from 20th September to 20th March, bars to be closed at 9 p.m., and in summer at 10 p.m., and after these hours not to be opened except to afford accommodation to travellers". Innkeepers were warned likewise that they must not "permit any person to remain drinking or tippling" in their taverns—except travellers or "such as shall be invited by any traveller and shall accompany him only during his abode there, and other than labouring and handycraftsmen".[37]

In the year the city of Toronto was created, the Grand Jury, in commenting upon inns and taverns, included them all under the name "Tippling Houses". In 1836 it was enacted that bars should remain shut every Sunday and on Christmas and Good Friday, and that each inn must have at least three beds and stabling accommodation for two horses; while in 1841 certain games came into disfavour, for we find that no license would be given to any tavern-keeper who kept a "bowling alley, ten-pin alley, Fives Court, or other gaming resort", or who kept shop in the same building. The demand for tavern and shop licenses increased greatly as time passed, and as early as the forties there was some public feeling against bars, though an increased license fee was the chief result. In 1836 and 1837 Grand Juries were particularly outspoken about the "great increase of crime and pauperism due to the large number of taverns", which not only affected the victims of intemperance but also "the unfortunate children of such parents, who, whilst they are trained in every species of falsehood or deception, become inured to crime and wickedness, ... and cannot fail to grow up a pest and a nuisance to society". Little, however, appears to have resulted from these attacks on the liquor evil.

That many a so-called hotel was little more than a barroom is obvious to those who can remember the days prior to the Ontario Temperance Act. At least as early as 1841 it was found that many licensed inns in Toronto had no

[37]See J. Edmund Jones: *Pioneer Crimes and Punishments in Toronto and the Home District*, 1924, pp. 165-173, for a résumé of the Court records upon which the material in this and the following paragraph is based.

accommodation for travellers. A special committee of the Council reported as follows on January 4, 1841:

"Your committee have examined every licensed inn in the city and liberties. In all cases where there could exist a doubt of the existence of the accommodation required by the statute your committee have proceeded through the entire premises, and have ascertained that twenty-two licensed innkeepers are entirely destitute of stables, that eleven are destitute of a single spare room for the accommodation of travellers, that fifteen have not a spare bed over those required for their families, and that six of the above number possess none of the accommodations of an inn except a bar."[38]

In 1846 the Toronto Magistrates were curiously optimistic, for it was considered that, if bar-rooms contained a copy of the Lord's Day Act, drinking on Sundays would be curbed; and it was accordingly ordered that one be hung in every such room. Two years later a committee of the Magistrates of the Home District passed a resolution suggesting that the Legislature adopt the principle "that no houses should be licensed as inns where intoxicating liquors are sold".[39] Nothing came of the suggestion, however, and, though in later years the principle of local option enabled many districts to abolish the bar, conditions in Toronto steadily became worse. Police statistics for 1857 show that approximately one-ninth of the inhabitants of the city were haled before the magistrate for crimes or misdemeanours arising from the drinking customs of the day. In the one year 4,996 persons, of whom 1,025 were women, were drunk or disorderly or were accused of one or another of the crimes usually associated with heavy drinking; and at the same time vagrancy was becoming so common that contemporary writers refer to beggars as everywhere a nuisance, pestering people outside stores, churches and homes with a tenacity of purpose that brooked no denial.

As the city increased in size, so, for many years, did the taverns and beer-shops in number, and in 1874 there were 533 licensed places to get liquor—and, in addition, Toronto had plenty of bootleggers. Two years later the

[38]Minutes of the City Council, January 4, 1841.
[39]Jones, *ibid.*

Women's Christian Temperance Union requested the City Council to limit the taverns to one per 1,000 population. As a result of their petition licenses were restricted to 215 taverns and 100 shops, and the license fee was increased to $200—a sum which suggests the profitable nature of the business. By 1911, though the 1874 population of 68,000 had been multiplied more than six times, public sentiment had restricted the licenses to 110 tavern, 50 shop and 11 wholesale. The lucrative nature of the hotel business in the days of the open bar is best shown by the fact that $25,000 could easily be obtained for the license of a small establishment; and it was well-known, too, that the control of many licenses had passed to the owners of breweries and distilleries. In 1914 still higher prices were paid, for a newspaper informs us that "a shop license was transferred recently in this city at the price of $38,000, and a hotel license at the price of $52,000. The bar should be abolished, and the shop with it",[40]—a wish that was soon to become an established fact; but we have gone too far ahead.

A roll-call of the chief hotels of Toronto in the nineties will be of interest. Visitors to the Exhibition in 1895 were promised the best accommodations at the Queen's Hotel and the Rossin House, which lead the list at $3 to $4.50 a day. Among the others will be noticed the Black Bull and the Bay Horse, names reminiscent of an earlier period:

"Walker House, Palmer House, Albion Hotel, Clancy's Hotel, Richardson House, Black Horse Hotel, Grand Union Hotel, Hotel Metropole, Arlington, Elliott House, Kensington Hotel, Russell House, Commercial, Daly House, Power House, Robinson House, Clyde Hotel, Grosvenor House, Somerset House, O'Connor House, Schiller House, Black Bull Hotel, Carleton House, Bay Horse Hotel, Empress, Crystal Palace, Imperial Hotel, Armory Hotel, York Hotel, Nealon House, Union House, Gladstone House, Lake View Hotel, Brown's Avonmore."[41]

The gradual development of temperance sentiment, as a result of which liquor-drinking in public places was restricted and finally prohibited, put many of these inns and taverns—and many others of less merit which were never

[40]The *Globe*, February 7, 1914.
[41]*Official Programme for Canada's Great Industrial Fair, 1895.*

more than saloons—out of existence, and left the hotel business proper to a few *bona fide* establishments, in which category several of the above still remain; and of those of the primitive type not a few may yet be seen among the tumbledown shacks which, in spite of the ravages of time, still contrive to remain propped up, sometimes between incongruous neighbours of recent construction. After nearly a century, for example, the frame of the Tavern Tyrone still remains at 125-127 Queen Street West; and it is quite likely that, if one could trace their history, a good half hundred public houses of other days might be discovered still standing in the older portions of the city. But—to return to the larger hotels—the importance of "houses of public entertainment", lessened somewhat by the coming of the railway, was still further diminished by the speedy travel made possible by the motor-car, and the intimate touch between host and guest has largely departed; while at the same time the legitimate hotel business has been greatly decreased by the competition of the road-houses, tourist camps and refreshment booths which dot every highway. The signs of the times, however, suggest that there has been a notable weakening in temperance sentiment, and we may see a new era of tavern days on a grand—even if not glorious—scale.

Among Toronto's hotels of the past, none surpasses the Queen's in glory and reputation. The old building which was demolished in 1927-28 to make way for the Royal York covered a site which has had a variety of occupants. About 1843 a row of four three-storey dwelling-houses called Ontario Terrace was constructed there, and in 1846 they were joined to form the first Knox College. When in 1853 the College was removed to Elmsley Villa, St. Vincent and Grosvenor Streets, the building became Sword's Hotel. In 1859 the property passed into the hands of B. J. Riley, and the name was changed to the Revere House. Three years later Captain Thomas Dick took charge and named his establishment the Queen's Hotel. During the next few years four additions were made to the hostelry, which had, by 1869, its characteristic appearance. T. McGaw, Mark Irish and Henry Winnett were variously associated in its management for some years, and after Mr. McGaw's death his widow and Mr. Winnett were joint proprietors.

The Queen's was unique among early hotels in many particulars. The enterprising managers introduced the most modern conveniences as they became available. It was the first hotel in Canada to use a hot-air furnace—wood stoves and fireplaces usually providing heat in those days; it first had a passenger elevator and electric bells, led the way in providing running water in the rooms, and installed the first business telephone in Toronto; while the introduction by the Queen's of bedrooms with bath provided the origin of that well-known joke on the back-countryman, who, arriving at the hotel on a Thursday, remarked to his wife: "What a pity it is not Saturday night!" In 1886, when C. C. Taylor published his *Toronto Called Back*, the Queen's was, perhaps, at the height of its glory:

"This popular hotel has recently been renovated and changed in many respects from the first to the third story. A year ago its elegant and commodious dining-room was very handsomely frescoed. During the last three months many of the parlours, corridors and halls have been tastefully decorated and painted. New private staircases have been fitted up in the Queen Anne style. Each landing has a magnificent stained glass window, and as one ascends these unique windings the idea must flash upon him that he has mistaken the Queen's Hotel, and is ensconced in some baronial hall. The halls and corridors have all been relaid with costly and luxurious carpets. When all these changes are added to the previous commodious and handsomely furnished drawing-rooms and bedrooms with bathrooms,—to say nothing of the fine suites of rooms which were fitted up for the Princess Louise and the Marquis of Lorne on the occasion of their first visit to Toronto, as well as other suites that were prepared several years ago in a magnificent style for the reception of the Grand Duke Alexis, then heir-apparent to the crown of Russia—the Queen's stands unrivalled in this respect by any hotel in the Dominion, and as regards the 'cuisinerie' and the daily 'menu', nothing is left to be desired."[42]

The grounds surrounding the Queen's have been put to a variety of uses. In the sixties the field west of the hotel grew oats for Captain Dick's horses; in the mid-seventies

[42]C. C. Taylor: *Toronto Called Back*. 1886. pp. 258-9.

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JORDAN'S YORK HOTEL, 1801, AND THE ROYAL YORK, 1929

A famous pioneer inn contrasted with a magnificent hostelry, the largest in the Empire, and whose cost—$18,000,000,—is thirty-five times the total value of property in the city in 1834.

John Ross Robertson Collection. Thomas Young.

THE PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS IN 1835

Erected about 1830 and used until 1892, the third Parliament Buildings were demolished in 1902.

Illustrated London News.

THE ALL-ENGLAND CROQUET CHAMPIONSHIPS AT WIMBLEDON, 1870

When it was a major sport the Queen's Hotel had a croquet lawn.

the travelling circus was frequently to be found there; while in the early eighties Alderman Harry Piper's Zoo—Toronto's first Zoological Gardens—occupied the spot. In 1886 the grounds of the hotel were described by C. C. Taylor as "both spacious and airy, and, with croquet and chevalier lawns, nothing more pleasant could be desired by business men, pleasure-seekers or tourists".[43]

Many notable visitors honoured the Queen's with their presence. Sir John A. Macdonald and other prominent parliamentarians found it most convenient in a day when the Provincial Parliament Buildings were less than two blocks away. Many a Conservative caucus took place in the famous Red Parlour, while the banquets—political and otherwise—which were held in the Queen's are almost innumerable. T. A. Reed, well-known authority on Toronto of old, has this to say of the hotel's distinguished guests:

"Nearly every Governor-General, at one time or another, stopped at the Queen's. His Majesty King George V, when a Lieutenant with the North Atlantic Squadron, visited this city and stayed at the hotel in September, 1883, in company with his uncle and aunt, the Marquis of Lorne and the Princess Louise, who were then making their farewell visit as Her Majesty's representatives in Canada. H.R.H. Prince Leopold—Duke of Albany—the Duke and Duchess of Connaught, the Grand Duke Alexis of Russia, the Earl and Countess of Dufferin, Lord and Lady Aberdeen, President Taft, General Sherman of the U.S. Army, Jefferson Davis, President of the Southern Confederacy, Sir Henry Irving, Ellen Terry, Sara Bernhardt, Adelina Patti and Jenny Lind are but a few of the distinguished names on the old registers."[44]

When the King Edward Hotel opened on May 10, 1903, the Queen's became noticeably old-fashioned. Described in the press as "the new palace hotel", the King Edward cost some $2,000,000 to build and equip, and for twenty-seven years had the high-class hotel field largely to itself. W. C. Bailey of Chicago was the first manager, but the changes in ownership since that time have been numerous. In 1921 an extensive "skyscraper" addition altered the hotel materially

[43] *Ibid.*

[44] MacMurchy, A., and Reed, T. A.: *Our Royal Town of York.* 1929. p. 25.

and added greatly to its accommodations. During its history the roll of famous guests has been similar to that of the Queen's in other times. J. Pierpont Morgan, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Prince of Wales are representative personages who have distinguished the hotel by their presence; while of the theatrical world Sir Henry Irving, Sir John Forbes-Robertson, Lillian Russell, Anna Held and Julia Arthur may be mentioned—not to forget the supper dance and the official reception accorded by the City Fathers to the platinum-blonde beauty of Hollywood, Jean Harlow, while a guest at the hotel in 1932.

The Royal York Hotel, the Queen's successor on the site, was erected when economic conditions were at the height of post-war prosperity. The hotel, beautifully designed and tastefully appointed in every particular, was constructed and equipped at a cost of $18,000,000 (some thirty-five times the total value of property within the confines of Toronto in the first year of the city), and the elaborate service maintained not only for transient guests but for large conventions, service clubs and private entertainments, has placed modern hotel-keeping on a plane which—like many another development—would have astonished the pioneer residents of the town of York.

CHAPTER XVIII

Old-Time Elections

Democratic institutions are based upon the political rights of citizens, but conditions at the polls during the exercise of the franchise in early times were very different from the quiet proceedings usual today. People then took their politics very seriously, and election week was not infrequently a period of turmoil, fighting, and other disturbances and disorders; in fact a whole season was sometimes characterised by confusion resulting from the preparations for, and the effects of an election. A few examples will illustrate conditions which, while not always present, were not at all unusual, and may be considered in keeping with other characteristics of the times.

Among notable provincial elections was that of 1836, when representative government was in force only partially, and responsible government not at all. The Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Francis Bond Head, became, for all practical purposes, the leader of the Family Compact party, and he was, to put it mildly, most unpopular with Reformers. Strained relations between him and the Reform party in power grew still more tense, and it is not too much to say that either he or the legislature had to go. The prorogation of the Assembly on April 30th was the signal for a concerted agitation throughout the province for responsible government. Sir Francis dissolved the Legislature in May, and stumped the country himself in the hope of defeating the Reformers in the ensuing election. He and his advisers misrepresented the issue at stake to be "the maintenance of British connection", and as a result there was a political landslide which returned a large majority of Tories.

In the Second Riding of York the opposing candidates were William Lyon Mackenzie and Edward William Thomson. The latter was a rather mild Tory, and he was returned over Mackenzie by about 100 votes. Among the means used to obtain his election were, according to the Reformers, direct and indirect bribery, the manufacture

and use by voters of bogus qualifications, and various types of dishonest influence. A petition for investigation was dismissed owing to a technical error in procedure, but the usual electoral practices of the times suggest that many of the complaints were well founded.

The chief variation in descriptions of elections arises merely from the source of the information, and it is quite evident that no party had a monopoly of the abuses of open voting. On the opposite side of the political fence from Mackenzie was Sheriff William Jarvis, who describes in a letter to his brother George his experiences as a candidate at the polls:

"After six days' hard fighting against as an 'unholy alliance' as was ever formed against an individual or government, I have been left on the 'poll book' in the minority of 8, and James E. Small, Esquire, has been declared 'duly elected'. Now I intend to contest the matter to the last extremity, knowing as I do that I have a majority of eight votes—and that I have been thrown out by perjury. I do not suppose that there ever was an occasion upon which the nature of an oath seemed to be held so lightly as during the election for this City, and with its usual effect—the temporary triumph of the party resorting to that means, which must eventually recoil upon their own heads. Notwithstanding all their villainy I was within two or three of beating them when they thrust upon some perjured rascals, and those two or three in attendance being lukewarm, thinking all was over, refused to vote."[1]

Much enthusiasm and excitement characterised the early political career of William Lyon Mackenzie. When he was expelled from the House by resolution of the Legislative Assembly on December 12, 1831, a new election was ordered. What followed at the Red Lion Inn, Bloor and Yonge Streets, is described by John Ross Robertson, quoting largely from a contemporary source:

"The election was held at the Red Lion, January 2, 1832. Although the election was held on the same day that town-meetings were in progress throughout the country, over two thousand persons were present. The morning was clear

[1]William Jarvis to George Jarvis, October 13, 1834. See Alden Meredith: *Mary's Rosedale and Gossip of Little York*, 1928. pp. 94-5.

and pleasant, the weather mild and agreeable, and the sleighing excellent. By ten o'clock the farmers had assembled in great numbers around the hustings, and soon afterward the Yonge Street triumphal car carrying the ensign of the United Kingdom and several Highland pipers passed down toward the town followed by farmers in sleighs. Forty sleighs came down into York and escorted their champion to the polls. It was generally believed that Colonel Washburn would stand up against Mackenzie, but he withdrew his name and gave his support to Mr. Street, who was introduced to the electors by Col. E. W. Thomson. Mr. Mackenzie was proposed for his third candidature by Joseph Shepard of York, seconded by Jogart of Whitchurch. Mackenzie made a speech, and the names of the candidates were submitted. A forest of hands went up when Mackenzie's name was proposed. But one hand was raised when Mr. Street's name was presented. Mr. Street demanded a ballot. At 1:20 o'clock the polls opened. At 3 o'clock Mackenzie had polled one hundred and nineteen votes and his opponent one. The latter then withdrew from the unequal contest.

"Over one thousand voters stood around the polls, and for twenty-four hours after the election closed they continued to pour in. It was estimated that five thousand votes would have been cast for Mackenzie had the polls been kept open for a week. The assemblage was the largest ever witnessed up to that time in the Home District on any occasion. Upon the closing of the poll the committee appointed to present the medal and address, followed by as many as could get in, proceeded to the ballroom. A great shout went up for Mackenzie. At this there entered at the eastern end of the ballroom a slight-built man of scarcely medium height, five feet six inches, with a massive head, quite bald, high and broad in the frontal region, well rounded, a long broad chin, lips firmly compressed, deep dimpled cheeks set in a framework of whiskers, massive brow over arching, deepset, keen, restless, piercing blue eyes that seemed to read one's very thoughts, and ceaselessly and expressively active fingers that kept opening and closing nervously: this was William Lyon Mackenzie. After the tumult had subsided, Charles McIntosh, in behalf of the

committee, presented Mr. Mackenzie with a gold medal and chain and read an address to which Mr. Mackenzie made a brief reply. The heavy cable chain attached to the medal contained forty links each about one inch in length. The medal was of fine workmanship and cost $250. On one side were the rose, thistle and shamrock with the words, 'His Majesty King William, the People's Friend'. On the other side was the inscription, 'Presented to William Lyon Mackenzie, Esq., by his Constituents of the County of York, U.C., as a Token of their Approbation of his Political Career, January 2nd, 1832'.

"A procession was then formed in front of the Red Lion, which wended its way to town. It was led by a large sleigh belonging to Mr. Montgomery, drawn by four horses and filled with a score of men and the Highland pipers playing vigorously. Following it came one hundred and thirty-four sleighs, carrying from five to fifteen persons. It was estimated that two thousand men were in the line. The march was past the Government House, Parliament House, Mr. Cawthra's and Mr. Mackenzie's houses, at each of which cheers were given. A little printing press kept warm by a furnace beneath it stood on one of the sleighs. As the procession moved through the streets boys struck off New Year's addresses and threw them to the people. Over the press floated a crimson flag with the motto 'The Liberty of the Press'. Other flags carried aloft bore such legends as 'King William IV and Reform', 'Bidwell and the Glorious Minority', '1832, a Good Beginning', 'A Free Press the Terror of Sycophants'.

"Much spirit was manifested in the proceedings, but generally order and sobriety were maintained. There was no treating of any kind either at the polls or afterwards. Many soldiers and non-commissioned officers of the 78th Highland Regiment, then stationed here, took a great interest in the election. Quite a number went to the polls and joined the triumphal procession on its entry into the town, cheering while the bagpipers played and the farmers rejoiced in their victory. But they paid dear for their enthusiasm. Governor Colborne ordered the articles of war to be read at the head of the regiment for several days, and directed that the soldiers should be confined in the fort dur-

ing the great public meeting of January 19th, and also during the whole week of the February election. Upon the cessation of the public demonstrations in the streets of the town Mr. Mackenzie was carried into his home on the shoulders of his exultant admirers."[2]

A few weeks later, on March 23, 1832, a notable meeting, called to discuss the grievances of the people, was to take place in the Court House. The following account well describes what ensued:

"Dr. Dunlop of the Canada Land Company, and Mr. J. Ketchum, member for York County, were respectively proposed as chairman. As usual in most cases of political excitement, both parties claimed the victory; but Dr. Dunlop took the chair, when the Reform section withdrew and organised an open meeting in front of the Court House, making use of a farmer's waggon for a platform, Mr. Ketchum being made chairman. Mr. Mackenzie began to address the meeting, when stones and other missiles were thrown at the speaker by the opposing party. The disturbance soon assumed a serious aspect; one person in the crowd drew a knife, with which he threatened the speaker. The waggon on which the chairman and speaker were standing was drawn for some distance, amidst threats and imprecations, along King Street, and thrown into a deep and muddy ditch. The Sheriff told Mr. Ketchum that he was unable to preserve the peace, and begged him to bring the meeting to a close. Someone hit upon the expedient of advising the 'friends of the Governor' to go up to the Government House and cheer His Excellency. This being done, peace was restored, a new chairman appointed, and an address to the King resolved upon.

"Immediately afterwards the crowd which had been to cheer the Governor returned bearing an effigy of Mackenzie, which they burned, and then made an attack upon the office of the *Colonial Advocate*. They broke the windows and destroyed some of the type, and were only prevented doing further mischief by the exertions of a few individuals, among whom was an apprentice in the printing office named Falls, who fired a gun loaded with type, overawing the

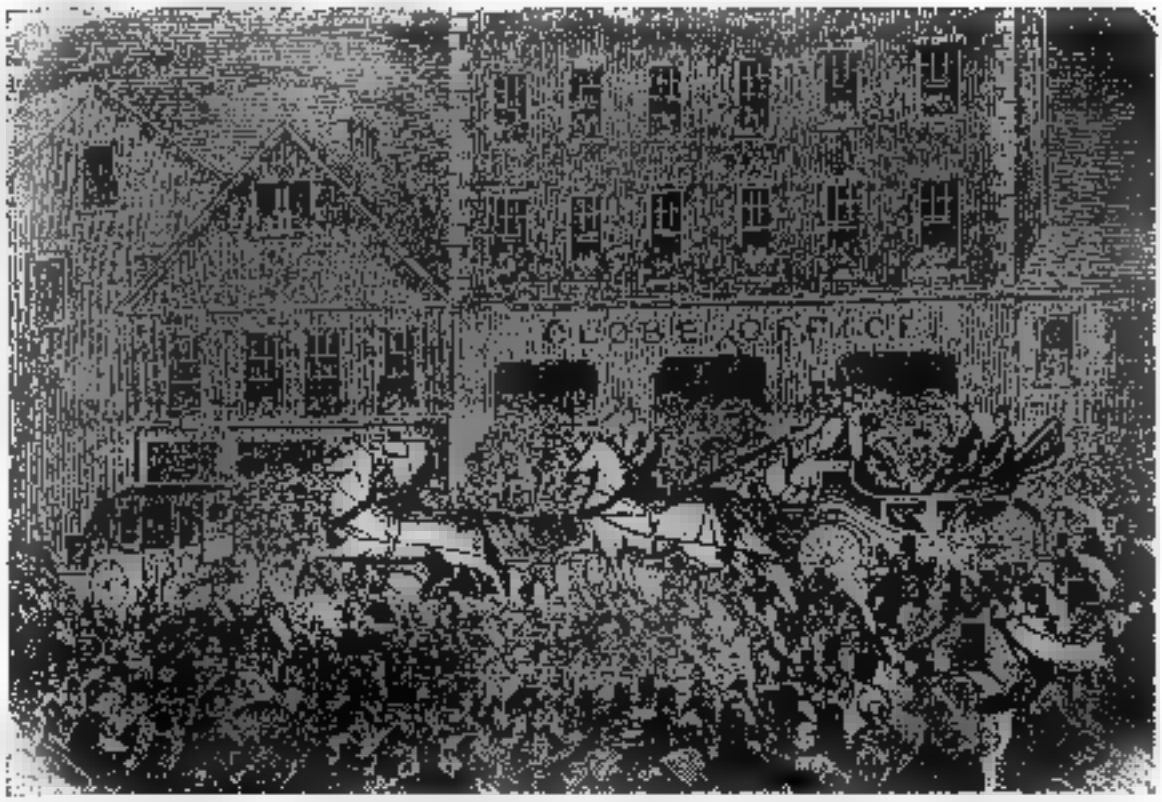
[2]John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*. 1894-1914. Vol. I, pp. 94-5.

rioters. Captain Fitzgibbon did everything in his power to restore peace, and the Lieutenant-Governor gave orders for seventy-five soldiers to be ready at a moment's notice, if required. Three or four magistrates remained at the police office all night, swearing in special constables, and a guard of citizens volunteered to protect Mr. Mackenzie's house and printing office. At midnight a mob surrounded the office, when Captain Fitzgerald ordered them to disperse, and threatened if they did not obey to call out the troops, which were kept under arms all night. This admonition had the desired effect, and the crowd, which was led by a son of one of the executive councillors, moved off without effecting any further violence. The house had to be guarded for three weeks, during which time Mr. Mackenzie remained in the country for safety, and the young man who fired on the rioters had to leave the city in consequence of his life being threatened. It is affirmed that in this disturbance the Roman Catholics were very prominent by their bitter demonstrations against Mackenzie. On this occasion, contrary to their usual habit, they were found in alliance with the Family Compact."[3]

On December 16, 1833, Mackenzie was once more re-elected without opposition. The proceedings resulting from his entrance into the House were as exciting as the events at the polls in 1832:

"A large body of the electors made known their intention to accompany him to the House of Assembly, which place they reached soon after mid-day. The galleries were soon filled; some were admitted below the bar, and others remained in the lobbies for want of room inside. The result was waited with great anxiety by the great body of electors, who were becoming indignant at being thus disfranchised. Considerable uneasiness existed among the members of the House. Mr. Perry rose to present a petition against a repetition of the proceedings by which the County of York had been deprived of half of its legal representatives. Several members spoke against receiving it. Mr. MacNab, in opposing its reception, was hissed from the gallery, and an order at once given by the Speaker to clear it; and, when this operation was partially completed, the Sergeant-at-

[3]J. Timperlake: *Illustrated Toronto, Past and Present.* 1877. pp. 81-2.



Canadian Illustrated News.

TORCHLIGHT PARADE IN HONOUR OF GEORGE BROWN, 1862

From a Painting in the Ontario Parliament Buildings. R. R. Osgoode.

"OLD UNION JACK"

Sir John A. Macdonald addressing a night gathering during his last campaign. He was exceedingly proud of the title "Old Union Jack".

Yours Truly
W. L. MacKenzie

William Lyon Mackenzie was the first Mayor of Toronto, and under his leadership the newly-created city received its initial impetus.

Arms went up to Mr. Mackenzie, who was waiting below the bar to be sworn in, and ordered him to leave. He replied that, as had been stated by Mr. Perry, he had been unanimously elected for the County of York, and that the writ had been duly returned. The Sergeant-at-Arms, Mr. MacNab (father of the member), then seized him by the collar and tried to drag him towards the door to put him out. A brawny Highlander, one of a few friends who were near Mr. Mackenzie, interposed, either with a blow at the officer of the House, or held him back. As soon as the door was opened the crowd, who had descended from the gallery to the lobby, rushed forward; but, before they could get in, the door was bolted and barricaded with benches, members and officers pressing towards the door to prevent its being forced. The galleries, which had only been partially cleared, were the scene of great confusion. The excitement was extreme, and the business of the House was brought to a stand. Several of the members, fearing that the excitement of the people might lead to serious acts of violence, went out and harangued the people. The question of sending to prison the stalwart Highlander who had interfered with the Sergeant-at-Arms was raised, but a bystander remarked that 'he feared it would be no easy matter to find the jail on such an errand'."[4]

A comparatively small number of citizens possessed the franchise in early days, but if votes were few the deficiency was more than made up by the fierceness with which elections were contested, and the tenacity of purpose which characterised everyone's attitude. Political processions were often to be found in the immediate vicinity of the polls, and it can hardly be contended that an Orange band playing *Boyne Water*, *Protestant Boys*, or *Croppies Lie Down* was in any sense conducive to the free exercise of the franchise. The municipal elections in January, 1841, resulted in a Tory sweep except in three instances, and this was the prelude of a very bitter provincial contest in the spring of the same year.

On May 3rd the election began, and, as was not unusual in the good old days of open voting, each party employed men with cudgels to overawe those who found any difficulty

[4]*Ibid.*, pp. 86-7.

in voting the right way. The violent language used on this occasion by both candidates and press has probably never been surpassed. In the First Riding of York James Hervey Price, Reformer, defeated John Gamble, "dyed-in-the-wool" Tory, and the Toronto *Examiner* had this to say of the candidates, and of Mr. Gamble's supporters in particular:

"The voters were the most rabble whisky-drinking fellows that could be collected. . . . Who were the candidates? One was the former member, a rich man—the head of all the magistrates—the licenser of the tavern. The other a plain private gentleman, known till the Rebellion only as an honest lawyer and the mild intelligent friend; yet the former is rejected and the latter chosen."[5]

Still more excitement, however, was provided in Toronto by the contest between J. H. Dunn and Isaac Buchanan, Reformers, and Henry Sherwood and J. Monro, Tories. The Reformers won the very close contest of that stirring week, and their organ, the *Examiner*, gleefully commented upon the victory in "this hitherto Compact-ridden, corporation-ridden, Orange-ridden city". The victors arranged a triumphal procession for Monday, May 10th. The events of the day are well described by J. E. Middleton:

"At 1 o'clock in the afternoon the successful candidates, escorted by so many citizens that the parade was over a mile long, set out from the Ontario House on the Market Square, proceeded by way of Market Street to Yonge, along King Street to Simcoe, up Simcoe to Lot (Queen), eastward to Yonge, then south to King and east past the City Hall and the Market. All along the route there were indications that supporters of the other party meditated some measure of violence. Too many bully-boys with knobby sticks were on the streets, and particularly on the grounds of St. James' Church. Mayor Monro was warned that police protection might be necessary, but he is reported to have

[5]Quoted in Robertson, *ibid.* The editors of the newspapers of a century ago had no scruples about saying just what they thought. The following item appeared in the editorial columns of a local paper in the first year of the city: "Mr. John Poore, son-in-law of Mr. James Secord, has just come forward from Halton. His advertisement occupies one and a half columns of the *Gore Mercury*, and all we need say about his candidacy is that he has as much chance of becoming an M.P.P. as his grandmother's grey cat had sixty years ago."

said that they might go to the Devil for protection. Since His Worship was one of the defeated candidates his testiness may be understood.

"East of the Market on King Street stood the North of Ireland Coleraine Inn, where an Orange flag was displayed. The Reform hangers-on had a menacing attitude. They drummed on the doors and on the outside of the building with their sticks, and a woman threw a stone of protest against the Orange order. The persons in the house appeared at the upper windows, and one of them fired a pistol-shot at the crowd. A man named James Dunn, of course an innocent bystander, recently arrived from overseas as an immigrant, fell dead. Several other shots followed. Four or five other persons were wounded, among them being F. Langril and a lad named Cathcart.

"The mob would have torn the house to pieces if it had not been for the appeals of Dunn and Buchanan, the Members, but while their angry followers halted between two opinions a company of British Regulars came upon the double, pressed back the mob, and brought seven or eight persons out of the house, conveying them safely to the jail. These seven or eight were said by the *Examiner* to be 'as bloodthirsty-looking men as ever disgraced the human form'.

"Neither party had a monopoly of hard words and extreme statements, for the atmosphere was electrical. It was said by Francis Hincks that during the polling in the two provinces from ten to twenty persons had been murdered and hundreds had been beaten and mauled. In Toronto during the week about fifty followers of Dunn and Buchanan had their heads laid open. The *Examiner* considerately neglected to mention how many Tories received similar treatment."[6]

This notable election inspired several political pamphlets. One, *The City of Toronto Poll Book*, consisted largely of a classified list of voters according to occupation and political adherence. The open vote made it easy to record how each one exercised his franchise, whether "for Dunn and Buchanan on the part of the Government and People",

[6]J. E. Middleton: *The Municipality of Toronto, a History*. 1923. Vol. I, p. 210.

or "for Sherwood and Monro on the part of the Family Compact and Corporation".[7] Another publication gives a Reformer's account of the riot already described, but the additional details therein contained make it worth quoting even at the risk of some repetition:

"About 12 o'clock noon the Procession started from the Ontario House, and such a procession for respectability and show never perhaps was seen in Toronto—upwards of 100 Banners, Flags, etc., with inscriptions and devices of all kinds—preceded by an excellent band of music; at one time, when it was organised, it seemed to reach nearly the length of King Street. . . . The citizens with their wives and children principally were in Carriages, Curricles, Gigs, Chaises, Waggons, etc.

"On arriving at the corner of Church Street it was assailed first by hisses and groans by a body of men supposed [to have come] from the country around with Bludgeons, who had taken their stand in Martial Array immediately under the windows of Mr. Sherwood's Office, in which were seen the Sheriff Jarvis, Saml. Sherwood, Crawford and others, it is said by some apparently urging on the men below. As the procession was passing along, some men occasionally inquired of those in waggons if they had not a coffin or coffins concealed—this seems to have been designed by the plotters of the mischief as an invention to work upon the the feelings of the Orangemen, they having been informed that it was designed as a burlesque to bury the Family Compact and bring socialism. There was no foundation whatever for the Report—it was pure invention by the Tory Party to act as a stimulus to a riot.

"At this spot a general onset soon commenced upon the persons forming the procession by throwing pieces of ice, bricks, etc., also a general cudgelling of the people by the men before alluded to. The alarm was immediately given to the front ranks that their friends in the rear were attacked, who immediately came to their assistance and a general fight ensued in which the assailants, the Bludgeons, were driven off, and many retreated into a house known as the Colerain Tavern, to which place they were followed. This house was made notorious by its being one of the open

[7] *The City of Toronto Poll Book*, 1841.

houses of the Sherwood Party and an Orange Lodge; for several days during the election parties of men sallied forth into the street and abused and knocked down several opponents, and, on the morning of the chairing, McLean and his son, a Scotch piper, on their way to join the procession, were knocked down and his pipes destroyed most wantonly and maliciously."

With further reference to the fight in front of the inn the account continues:

"During the scuffle . . . . three or four small pieces of firearms loaded with balls were discharged from the windows of the House—one killed a man on the spot, named Dunn, a Tailor; a Catholic and three others were severely wounded. A part of the military was immediately sent for, who protected the inmates of the house from the fury of the people, and subsequently took the landlord, Allen, Kelly, a carter, and several others into custody, all of whom were liberated with the exception of Kelly, the coroner's jury not [being] agreeable in a verdict."[8]

In 1856 a law was passed making the members of the Legislative Council elective. The next election, in 1858, was very fiercely contested in Toronto, and discreditable practices were resorted to by both political parties. A remarkable feature was the support given by William Lyon Mackenzie to the Conservative candidate, G. W. Allan, whose father had been a prominent member of the old Family Compact. Amidst great excitement in the city and the county the election for the Legislative Council took place in October, and resulted in Mr. Allan's victory over C. E. Romain by a majority of 1,384.

The celebrated Brown-Cameron election riot took place in Toronto in 1857. The main fight occurred near Richmond's blacksmith shop, at the north-east corner of Queen and William (now Simcoe) Streets. Across the street on the north-west corner Clinkunbroomer's brick house was in process of erection. John Ross Robertson notes that a pile of bricks to be used in the structure "were put to the very best possible use by the rioters. The friends of John Hillyard Cameron had come down from the neighbourhood of St. Patrick's Market, while the George Brown faction

[8] *A Toronto Election*, 1841.

assembled round the corner of this street, making Richmond's blacksmith shop their coign of vantage. Bob Moody and five hundred from St. John's Ward came down to help the Reformers, and the pile of bricks that stood about twenty feet square was levelled almost to the ground before the rioters got through exercising themselves with these missiles. The hot part of the riot occurred on Queen Street a little west of Sheppard's Marble Works, although on Queen Street from St. Patrick's Market to Simcoe many houses had not a complete pane of glass."[9]

The bitterly-contested general election which occasioned this riot was notable for the extent to which impersonation was practised—even members of the British Royal Family voted! It is of interest to recall in this connection that among the vaunted 1,280,000 signatures to the "People's Charter" in the great English Chartist agitation of 1839 was "Victoria Rex"; but we have a parallel in Toronto, for in the 1857 election "Prince Consort" cast no fewer than four votes against George Brown!

The ballot was introduced in municipal elections on January 1, 1867, and in 1874 a Dominion Act put an end to open voting. The closing of taverns, bar-rooms and liquor shops during elections greatly restricted the supply of liquor, and there was an almost immediate improvement in the conditions accompanying the exercise of the franchise. The excitement, too, was limited to a day instead of a week or more. As time passed, politics ceased to play the important part in the life of the people that was once the case, and modern Canadian elections disturb the equilibrium of the nation only to a comparatively small extent, though in the United States—and in New York and Chicago in particular—the old-time gangster election accompaniments are not unusual.

[9]Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 46.

CHAPTER XIX

Schools of Other Days

For many years after the first settlement of Upper Canada the government, which for all practical purposes meant the Lieutenant-Governor alone, made no provision whatever for education. In 1797 the Legislature presented an address to the King, praying "that he would direct his government in this Province to appropriate a certain portion of the waste lands of the Crown as a fund for the establishment and support of a Grammar School in each of the eight districts into which it was proposed to divide the province"; and also that a college or university be established for the whole province.[1] In the following year 500,000 acres of land was set aside for these purposes, and the proceeds of its sale were to be devoted to the erection of schools and the payment of teachers' salaries. The cost of each Grammar School was estimated at $3,000, and its annual maintenance charges at £180.

There was at first a great deal of opposition to the establishment of these secondary schools, for it was considered by many people that provision for elementary education should be made first, and that Grammar Schools would otherwise provide learning merely for the children of the rich, who could afford to patronise private elementary schools. Consequently bills introduced into the Legislature in 1805 and 1806 were defeated, though that of 1807 was accepted. Classics and mathematics were to be the chief subjects taught, and it is evident that such studies were of no value to the sons of poor citizens who had never been taught to read and write. In 1807, at the time of the passage of the Grammar School Act, the first school of that type was established in York. Meanwhile, however, private elementary schools had for some years been conducted in the town.

[1]This address, and many other documents referred to in this chapter, may be found in J. G. Hodgins: *Documentary History of Education in Upper Canada, 1791-1876*. 28 volumes. 1894-1910.

The first school in York appears to have been a small one established on George Street by William Cooper in 1798. Private tuition in the home, or the occasional visit of an itinerant schoolmaster, previously served the needs of the town in a rather unsatisfactory manner, while the sons and daughters of a few officials were sent to Lower Canada or the United States, where educational facilities were more advanced. Cooper advertised in the *Gazette* of November 3, 1798, that "he intends opening a school at his house in George Street on the 19th instant for the instruction of Youth in Reading, Writing, Arithmetic and English Grammar. Those who chuse to favour him with their Pupils may rely on the greatest attention being paid to their virtue and morals".[2] In the summer of 1799 Cooper passed an examination before the Rev. John Stuart, a step necessary because the government had decided that "itinerant characters" should not in future be allowed to impose upon the inhabitants of the country.[3]

Six years later, on January 3, 1803, a school of somewhat greater pretensions was commenced by Dr. William Warren Baldwin. He had emigrated with his father from Ireland in 1799, settling first near Baldwin's Creek, in the Township of Clarke. In 1803 he married Phoebe Willcocks, daughter of William Willcocks of York, and they resided in a cottage at the corner of Palace and Frederick Streets. The school was first held at Willcocks' house on Duke Street, a much more pretentious building than Baldwin's small cottage. Dr. Baldwin's announcement of his school first appears in the *Gazette* of December 18, 1802, and contains a number of interesting particulars:

"Doctor Baldwin, understanding that some of the gentlemen of this town have expressed much anxiety for the establishment of a Classical school, begs to inform them and the public that he intends on Monday the 3rd day of January next to open a school in which he will instruct 12 boys in Writing, Reading, and Classics and Arithmetic. Terms for each boy eight guineas *per annum*, to be paid quarterly, one guinea entrance, and one cord of wood to be supplied by each boy on opening the school.

[2]*Upper Canada Gazette*, November 3, 1798.
[3]*Ibid.*, July 6, 1799.

"N.B. Dr. Baldwin will meet his pupils at Mr. Willcocks' house in Duke Street."[4]

Another early school had its inception owing to the exertions of certain parents who desired their children to be educated and who effected the arrangements themselves. In 1805 a number of the gentlemen of York associated themselves in a project to employ William Carson to teach some 25 children spelling, reading, writing and arithmetic. From May 1st to October 1st the hours of teaching were to be from 8 to 12 and 2 to 5; while during the rest of the year the decreased daylight suggested the elimination of the first and last hours of the schedule. No holidays were provided for, and it may be assumed that Sunday was the only day of rest for teacher and students. The school was held in a house owned by William Jarvis on the north side of Duke Street. £3 15s. a month was the remuneration of the schoolmaster, together with "good and sufficient board and lodging, liquors excepted".

Charles McDonnell, Duke Street, kept school in York in 1811 and for some time previous. He announces in the *York Gazette* that he "returns his grateful and sincere thanks to the Public for their countenance and patronage. He has just built a large Room for the comfortable reception of their Children; and hopes through his steady attention to the Morals and Education of the Pupils placed under his care he will still gain their future approbation and encouragement". From a postscript to the advertisement we learn also the interesting fact that an evening school, commencing "precisely on the first of September", was conducted by Mr. McDonnell.[5]

As previously stated, the first school supported by the government in York was not a "common" or primary school but one of the secondary type long called Grammar Schools. In the early years of the nineteenth century, probably not later than 1805, the Rev. Dr. Okill Stuart erected a small frame house as his residence at the south-east corner of King and George Streets. He also constructed a small low stone building, not much larger than a root-house, and attached to his dwelling at the south-east corner. In later years the stone walls were covered by a coating of clap-

[4]*Ibid.*, December 18, 1802. [5]*York Gazette*, November 13, 1811.

boards. This primitive building was for some time the Home District Grammar School, and Dr. Stuart was the first teacher when it opened on June 1, 1807. In 1813 Dr. Strachan was in charge, the school having been removed in that year to a barn at the corner of King and Yonge Streets. Another building was soon necessary, and in 1816 the Blue School, to the north of the present St. James' Cathedral, was occupied; the need of a coat of paint was met when Dr. Strachan collected funds for that purpose from prominent citizens. In 1829 the building was removed to the south-east corner of New (Jarvis) and March (Lombard) Streets, where it was used by Upper Canada College until 1831. After being closed for several years the Grammar School was re-opened in the old building in 1834.

With reference to the families represented in the classes at this school Dr. Henry Scadding notes that "the lists of the school at York always presented a strong array of the old, well-known and even distinguished Upper Canadian names. This will be seen by a perusal of the following document, which will give an idea of the variety of matters to which attention was given in the school. The numerous family names which will at once be recognised will require no comment. The intervals between the calling up of each separate class for examination appear to have been very plentifully filled up with recitations and debates".[6]

The document quoted by Dr. Scadding suggests that examinations at that time were largely oral. Considerable stress was laid upon orations and debates, and it is probable that these displays were popular with the audience, and particularly the proud parents of the participants. The description is headed "Order of Examination of the Home District Grammar School", and is as follows:

Wednesday, 11th August, 1819. First Day. The Latin and Greek Classes. Euclid and Trigonometry. Thursday, 12th August. Second Day. To commence at 10 o'clock. Prologue, by Robert Baldwin.—Reading Class.—George Strachan, "The Excellence of the Bible". Thomas Ridout, "The Man of Ross". James McDonell, "Liberty and Slavery". St. George Baldwin, "The Sword". William McMurray, "Soliloquy on Sleep". Arithmetic Class—

[6]Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old*. 1873, pp. 157-8.

James Smith, "The Sporting Gentleman". William Boulton, jun., "The Poet's New Year's Gift". Richard Gates, "Ode to Apollo". Orville Cassell, "The Rose". Book-keeping.—William Myers, "My Mother". Francis Heward, "My Father". George Dawson, "Lapland".—First Grammar Class.—Second Grammar Class.—"Debate on the Slave Trade". For the Abolition: Francis Ridout, John Fitzgerald, William Allan, George Boulton, Henry Heward, William Baldwin, John Ridout, John Doyle, James Strachan. Against the Abolition: Abraham Nelles, James Bâby, James Doyle, Charles Heward, Allan McDonell, James Myers, Charles Ridout, William Boulton, Walker Smith.—First Geography Class.—Second Geography Class. James Dawson, "The Boy that told Lies". James Bigelow, "The Vagrant". Thomas Glassco, "The Parish Workhouse". Edward Glennon, "The Apothecary".—Natural History.—Debate by the Young Boys: "Sir William Strickland", Charles Heward. "Lord Morpeth", John Owens. "Lord Hervey", John Ridout. "Mr. Plomer", Raymond Bâby. "Sir William Yonge", John Fitzgerald. "Sir William Windham", John Boulton. "Mr. Henry Pelham", Henry Heward. "Mr. Bernard", George Strachan. "Mr. Noel", William Baldwin. "Mr. Shippen", James Bâby. "Sir Robert Walpole", S. Givins and J. Doyle. "Mr. Horace Walpole", James Myers. "Mr. Pulteney", Charles Bâby.—Civil History.—William Boulton, "The Patriot". Francis Ridout, "The Grave of Sir John Moore". Saltern Givins, "Great Britain". John Boulton, "Eulogy on Mr. Pitt". Warren Claus, "The Indian Warrior". Charles Heward, "The Soldier's Dream". William Boulton, "The Heroes of Waterloo.—Catechism.—"Debate on the College of Calcutta". Speakers: "Mr. Canning", Robert Baldwin. "Sir Francis Baring", John Doyle. "Mr. Wainwright", Mark Burnham. "Mr. Thornton", John Knott. "Sir D. Scott", William Boulton. "Lord Eldon", Warren Claus. "Sir S. Lawrence", Allan Macaulay. "Lord Hawkesbury", Abraham Nelles. "Lord Bathurst", James McGill Strachan. "Sir Thomas Metcalf", Walker Smith. "Lord Teignmouth", Horace Ridout.—Religious Questions and Lectures.—James McGill Strachan, Anniversary of the York and Montreal

Colleges anticipated for 1st January, 1822. Epilogue, by Horace Ridout.[7]

Referring to modes of discipline Dr. Scadding describes a variety of remedies for minor indiscretions:

"Now and then a lad would be seen standing at one of the posts, with his jacket turned inside out: or he might be seen there in a kneeling posture for a certain number of minutes; or standing with the arm extended holding a book. An alley or apple brought out inopportunely into view during the hours of work might entail the exhibition, article by article, slowly and reluctantly, of all the contents of a pocket. Once, we remember, the furtive but too audible twang of a jewsharp was followed by its owner's being obliged to mount on the top of a desk and perform there an air on the offending instrument for the benefit of the whole school.

"Occasionally the censors (senior boys appointed to help in keeping order) were sent to cut rods on Mr. McGill's property adjoining the playground on the north; but the dire implements were not often called into requisition: it would only be when some case of unusual obstinacy presented itself, or when some wanton cruelty, or some act or word exhibiting an unmistakable taint of incipient immorality, was proven."[8]

Grammar School life did not contain the varied activities which almost overburden the students of today. The notable event of the school year was probably the "feast" which was allowed just before the midsummer closing. For this party everyone contributed pastry and other delectable dainties, as well as more substantial foods. It might seem that the scope of the fun was somewhat restricted from the fact that the place of meeting was the schoolroom, but it is said that it was frequently quite a riotous affair.

Soon after the passage of the School Act of 1807 petitions began to be sent to the Legislature asking that the money voted be applied to Common (primary) schools instead of those provided for in the Act. The Legislative Assembly made repeated efforts to have the Act repealed as worthless to the middle and lower classes, but the Legis-

[7]*Ibid.* [8]*Ibid.*, pp. 163-4.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

THE FIRST SCHOOL IN LESLIEVILLE

Leslieville, on the Kingston Road, was an important suburb of Toronto.

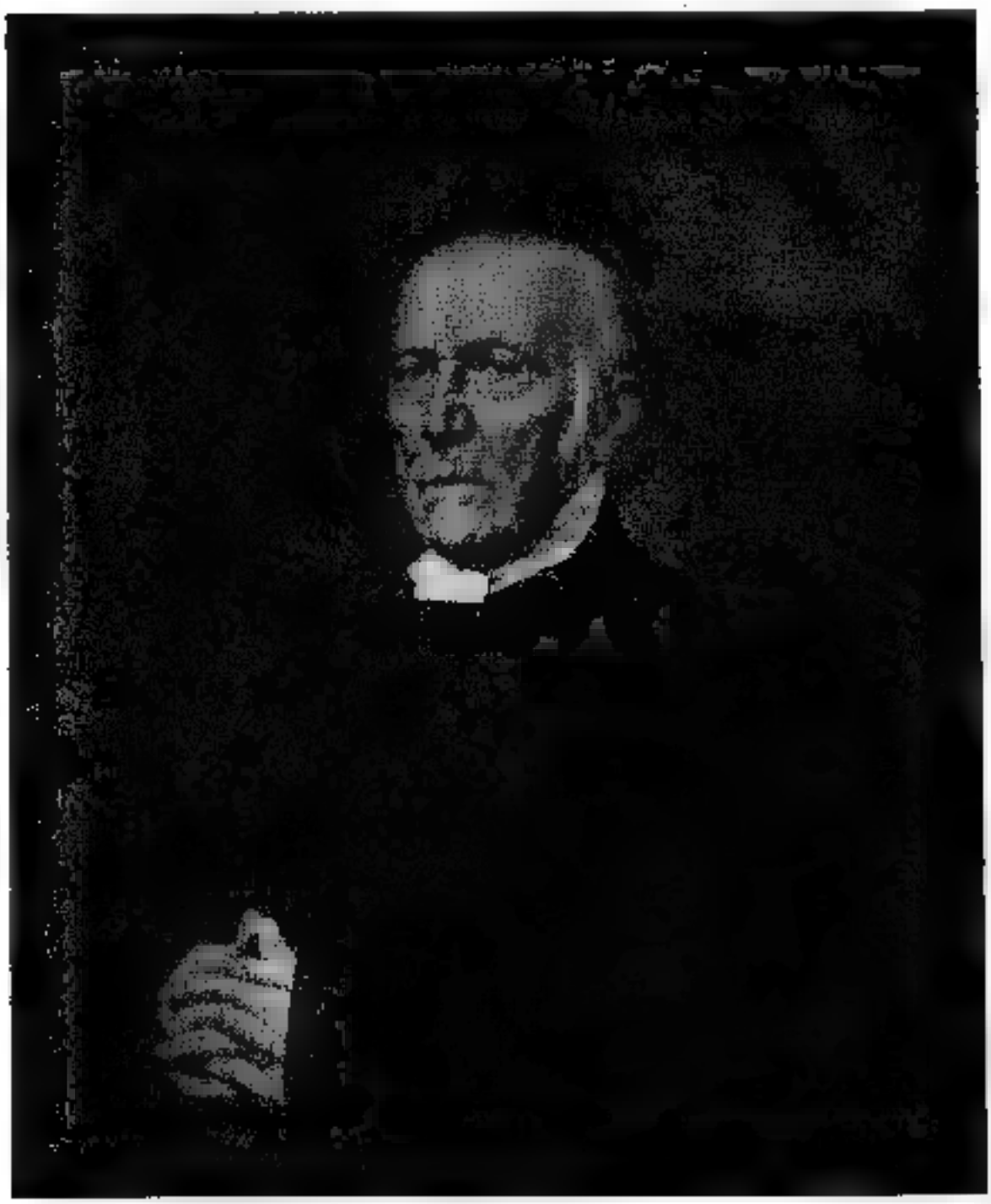
John Ross Robertson Collection.

THE BLUE SCHOOL, 1816

Dr. Strachan gave a course of lectures on Natural Philosophy to raise money to paint the Home District Grammar School, Toronto's first secondary school—though it commenced in 1807 in a small shed. The Blue School was situated north of St. James' Cathedral.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

OLD UPPER CANADA COLLEGE, KING STREET WEST



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BISHOP STRACHAN

For half a century a prominent and public-spirited citizen of Toronto.

lative Council blocked all moves of this nature. The result was that private schools and academies became more and more numerous throughout the province, and provided the elementary education which the Government had denied. The deadlock between the two legislative bodies was finally broken, but it is probably to be credited more to an enlightened address by Lieut.-Governor Gore than to any voluntary change in the views of members of the Legislative Council. The Governor's suggestion that it would be desirable to have "some provision for the establishment of schools in each township which shall afford the first principles of learning to the children of the inhabitants" was effective in securing the passage of the Common School Act of 1816.

This Act was a start, but the £6,000 a year that it made available for elementary education throughout the province was pitifully inadequate. The election of three trustees in each municipality, an attendance of at least twenty pupils to rank as a fully organised school, and a maximum allowance of $100 towards the salary of each teacher were among the provisions of the Act. No American text books were to be used, but the failure to provide any others led to the ignoring of the regulation. The Act remained in force until the Union of Upper and Lower Canada in 1840 made new legislation essential.

The general condition of schools in Upper Canada under the Act of 1816 was unsatisfactory. In many instances incapacitated soldiers or other broken-down men supposedly fit for nothing else provided the personnel of the profession, and their remuneration was whatever they could squeeze from the parents of their pupils—from $5 to $10 per pupil *per annum* was usual. There were instances where the Bible was the only text book, but more generally books of American manufacture were prominent as the only ones available. General conditions of elementary education before 1832 are outlined by Dr. Thomas Rolph:

"It is really melancholy to traverse the Province and go into any of the Common Schools: you find a herd of children instructed by some anti-British adventurer instilling into the young and tender mind sentiments hostile to the parent State; false accounts of the late war—geography setting forth New York, Philadelphia and Boston as the largest

and finest cities in the world; historical reading-books describing the American population as the most free and enlightened under Heaven; insisting on the superiority of their laws and institutions to those of all the world; American spelling-books, dictionary and grammar, teaching them an anti-British dialect and idiom."[9]

A noted Common school in the years just previous to the inauguration of the city of Toronto was the Central or National School on the north-west corner of Adelaide and Jarvis Streets. There were separate sections for the instruction of boys and girls, and, as the following announcement in *Walton's Directory* states, those who could not afford to pay fees might be admitted without charge:

"York Central or National School at the corner of Newgate and New Streets. His Excellency Lieut.-Gov. Sir John Colborne, patron. His Excellency, being desirous that the course of instruction at this school should include all the branches usually comprehended in a good English education, has directed that it be conducted in the following manner. Boys' school, First Department, Joseph Spragge, master. English, reading, writing and arithmetic on the principles of Ball & Lancaster. Second Department, J. T. Wilson, headmaster. English, reading, writing, arithmetic, English grammar, book-keeping, elements of geography. Girl's school, Rebecca Sylvester, mistress. English, reading, writing, arithmetic and drawing. Scholars are to pay $1 per quarter. No family to pay for more than two children at a time, whatever be the number attending. Parents are requested to send children regularly in as neat and decent an order as their circumstances will permit. Free tickets of instruction to children of parents who cannot pay may be had of Archdeacon John Strachan, or Lieut.-Col. Joseph Wells. Received instruction in year ending April 30, 1833, boys, 402, girls, 235. At present in actual attendance, boys, 200, girls, 138."[10]

John Ross Robertson gives a description of the school and its teachers, as well as reminiscences and memories of the schoolboy pranks of our great-grandfathers:

[9]Thomas Rolph: *A Brief Account . . . . of the West Indies and the United States; . . . . together with a Statistical Account of Upper Canada.* 1836. p. 262.

[10]*George Walton's York Commercial Directory for 1834.* 1833. p. 125.

"Mr. Appleton was one of the first teachers at this school, and at a later date Mr. Spragge. In the Central the girls were upstairs, and the boys downstairs. The entrance for the girls was by the side stairs, running up the north side of the building from Jarvis Street, or New Street. The entrance for the boys was through a big gate on Adelaide Street. The lower floor of the Central had large folding doors, so that the two rooms could be thrown into one. Mr. John Fenton, a literary genius of the day, was at one time Mr. Appleton's assistant teacher here. Between the boys attending the Central School and the boys of the Grammar School, difficulties, of course, arose, and on many occasions feats of arms, accompanied by considerable risk to life and limb, were performed on both sides with sticks and stones. Youngsters ambitious of a character of extra daring had thus an opportunity of distinguishing themselves in the eyes of their less courageous companions. The same would-be heroes had many stories to tell of the perils to which they were exposed on their way to and from school. Those of them who came from the western part of the town had, according to their own showing, mortal enemies in the men of Ketchum's Tannery, with whom it was necessary occasionally to have an encounter; while those who lived in the east of the town, narrated, in response, the attacks experienced or delivered by themselves in passing Shaw's or Hugill's Brewery. . . .

"Across the road from the playground at York (?) Street, on the south side, eastward of the church plot, there was a row of dilapidated wooden buildings, inhabited for the most part by a thriftless and noisy set of people. This group of houses was known in the school as 'Irishtown', and 'to raise Irishtown' meant to direct a snowball or other light missive over the playground fence in that direction. Such an act was not infrequently followed by an invasion of the field from the insulted quarter. Some wide chinks, established in one place here between the boards, which ran lengthwise, enabled anyone so inclined to get over the fence readily. Once two men who had quarrelled in one of the buildings of Irishtown adjourned from over the road to the playground, accompanied by a few approving friends; and, after stripping to the skin, had a regular fight with fists.

After some rounds a number of men and women interfered, and induced the combatants to return to the house whence they had issued forth for the settlement of their dispute."[11]

Contemporary with the National School was a private seminary called the York Commercial and Classical Academy, conducted by Thomas Caldicott, Superintendent, and George Jeffery, Samuel Caldicott and Alexander Forsythe. Some conception of their methods is to be obtained from their announcement that, "in order that the supporters of this Institution may have the best opportunity of witnessing their children's improvement, the books of the Pupils will be invariably sent home for the inspection of those parents who reside in town, on the last day of every month; and for the inspection of parents resident in the country, as often as may prove convenient; there will, moreover, be a public examination annually at Midsummer."[12]

Among other duties the teacher serves to relieve parents from the arduous duty of looking after their children and keeping them out of mischief, and this was as true a century ago as now. We find that in the early thirties there was "the York Infant School, adjoining the Presbyterian Church, Hospital Street, formed 28th September, 1831, Miss S. D. Bliss, Mistress." The mistress was quite broad-minded for her day, for she announces that "Children of any religious persuasion under 7 years of age admitted at a charge of 7s. 6d. per quarter. The school at present consists of 80 or 90 children".[13]

In spite of the fact that taxes to support schools were frequently paid by people who had also to pay fees for their children's attendance, the principle of free schools had many opponents. At the same time the lack of facilities for elementary education in many districts made it the practice of over half the Grammar Schools to take in pupils who had not learned even to write. Some progress in educational policy might have been made earlier had it not been for the confusion resulting from the Rebellion of 1837, for a provincial system was commenced in 1832. A new

[11]John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*, 1894-1914, Vol. I, pp. 378-80. York Street is an error for Jarvis Street.
[12]*Walton's Directory*, p. 161.
[13]*Ibid.*, p. 125.

era was inaugurated in 1843 by legislation enabling the establishment of government-aided public schools in self-governing municipalities. This was followed in 1844 by the appointment of Egerton Ryerson to the position of Superintendent of Education, and the great developments of succeeding years were made possible. Though Dr. Ryerson's contribution to our educational system is nowhere doubted today, the political prejudices of his own times resulted in the following comment in the press concerning his abilities:

"That Mr. Ryerson is incompetent to discharge the duties of Superintendent of Education is no longer a debatable question; the fact is insisted upon by Reformers, admitted by Tories, assented to by Conservatives, and proclaimed by Moderates."[14]

In Toronto, meanwhile, a select committee of the City Council had, under the Act of 1843, been placed in charge of the school system, and these men proceeded to advertise for teachers and to rearrange school districts to enable equalisation of pupils. It was suggested at the start that one or more schools be for girls, and that education should have no sectarian bias. A committee of six, four of whom were clergymen, was asked to take charge of the arrangement of the curriculum. In 1844 George Barber was appointed Superintendent of Education for the city, and under his direction twelve common (elementary) schools with 1,000 students enrolled were in efficient operation.

By amendments to the School Act in 1847 provision was made for the establishment of a Board of School Trustees nominated by the City Council. The first Toronto Board met on November 20, 1847, and was composed of the following gentlemen: W. H. Boulton (chairman), the Hon. J. Elmsley, W. Cawthra, J. McMurrich, F. W. Barron, J. G. Bowes and John Cameron. Under recent legislation the schools were to be free, but as the City Council refused to supply funds they were closed on June 30, 1848, and so remained until July 1, 1849. Some aldermen, in fact, proposed in the interests of economy that they should be open only six months a year; for by 1848 the cost to operate the city's fifteen schools had increased to £2,009, and a

[14]The Toronto *Examiner*, February 24, 1847.

higher tax rate was inevitable. The School Act of 1850 provided for the election of school trustees in each ward, and the first board so elected had full power to develop educational facilities, the City Council being obliged to provide funds. On March 15, 1851, the principle of free admission to all city schools was adopted in spite of much opposition by ratepayers, many of whom could see no good reason why anyone should support schools except those whose children attended. Of the fifteen schools in Toronto at the middle of the century eleven were conducted in small rented houses, only four of which were of brick; and of the sixteen teachers thirteen were men and three women, their average annual salary being £122 10s. and £45, respectively. There were 1,260 pupils attending in summer and 1,432 in winter. The cost of heating the schools at that period was very small when compared with the outlay at present, for in 1852 the city purchased 561½ cords of wood for that purpose, the cost, including cutting, being only £60 18s. 8½d.—not much over 40 cents a cord. The number of pupils per teacher was very high, the twenty-one teachers of 1854 teaching an average of 69 pupils each; ten years earlier, when the school system commenced, there were, in fact, 1,194 pupils and only 12 teachers.

A survey of the other educational institutions existing at that time shows that there were three colleges with a total enrolment of 350 students, the Grammar School with 30 pupils, and ten private schools and seminaries with 190 in attendance. The corner-stone of King's College, the first institution of higher education in Toronto, was, after many years of planning, finally laid on St. George's Day, 1842. An elaborate procession of soldiers, judges, clergy and scholars, each group in its characteristic costume, inaugurated higher learning in Toronto, and Dr. John Strachan was appropriately pre-eminent during the proceedings of the day.[15] King's College was erected in Queen's Park, on the site of the present Parliament Buildings, and the institution was long the target of Reformers who urged its reorganisation on a non-sectarian basis, and of lesser critics of one type or another, each with his quota of real or imagined grievances. The first convocation for

[15]This notable event is described at greater length on pages 455-6.

the conferring of degrees was held on February 8, 1848, Dr. John McCaul, who was to be the first President of the University of Toronto, presiding. Six men received the degree of Bachelor of Arts, and seven that of Bachelor of Common Law, a very small graduating class in comparison with those of modern times.

It is a fundamental principle of the Roman Catholic Church that education must be closely correlated with religion, but religious prejudices long prevented or limited separate schools. The first Roman Catholic teacher in York was John Harvey, who had a school on Jarvis Street in 1830. Soon afterwards there were others. In 1841 Denis Heffernan conducted a private school on Richmond Street, east of Church Street, and it is recorded of him that he was "an accomplished classicist and mathematician, educated in Ireland. He birched frequently and with no little vigour, but his boys, who were both Protestant and Catholic, did him infinite credit".[16] Two years later he was teaching in the Catholic District School at the corner of Berkeley and Duke Streets. Forty boys ranging from 7 to 16 years of age were taught in a plain schoolroom with long narrow desks and benches without backs, and Mrs. Heffernan sometimes instructed a few girls in a small room upstairs. From 50c. to $1 a month per pupil was the fee which Mr. Heffernan attempted to collect. This establishment, the first separate school in Toronto, was made possible by legislation in 1843 providing for such schools, either Protestant or Roman Catholic. The demand for additional separate schools in Toronto led to an amendment in 1851 enabling one to be established in each ward if required. At that time the one separate school had three teachers.

A short description of the principal educational buildings in 1858 will be of interest, applying as it does to a time when Toronto was just entering the period of great expansion and had still many of the characteristics of the large town. The *Descriptive Catalogue of the Provincial Exhibition of 1858* refers to the commencement in the previous year of work upon "the new University Buildings on the west side of the ravine at the head of the College Avenue", referring, of course, to University College, Tor-

[16]Middleton, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 593.

onto's most notable architectural ornament. Pending the completion of this building the University classes were being accommodated "in a small building at the head of the College Avenue" (now University Avenue). Old Trinity College, "near the Exhibition Grounds" of that day, was described as "a handsome building of the third period of pointed English architecture which prevailed in the 14th and 15th centuries". Knox's College, "conducted in Elmsley Villa on Grosvenor Street, a building which was occupied by the Governor-General from 1849 to 1851", and St. Michael's College, "a fine building recently erected on Clover Hill, between the City and Yorkville", complete the survey of institutions of higher learning.

Upper Canada College, "situated between King and Adelaide Streets, west of Simcoe", was erected in 1829, the first important educational building in Toronto—if one may omit the Grammar School. The present Normal School on Gould Street, erected in 1851-2, is described as "among the finest buildings in Toronto"; nearly 150 students were in attendance to qualify as teachers throughout the province. Finally, "the Common School buildings of Toronto are in every way creditable to the city. The six principal schools are situated on George, Louisa, John, Phoebe and Victoria Streets, and one in the Park, having been erected at a total cost, including the price of sites, of £16,000".[17]

Private schools, which exist today to provide an educational and cultural life for those who can afford to pay for it, and who, for one reason or another, believe that such an environment is superior to that of the public school, were a necessity during the infancy of our government school system. Typical of early private schools for boys was that of Mr. Hart on Church Street. The material which John Ross Robertson collected concerning this old academy, its master and his pupils, is highly illuminative of school days of old:

"On the west side of Church Street, nearly midway between Queen and Richmond Streets, stands a small two-storey double frame house, Nos. 126-8, the lower floor of which is now (1894) occupied by a newsdealer and another shop. The whole of the building was once

[17] *Descriptive Catalogue of the Provincial Exhibition, 1858*, 1858, p. 49.

occupied as a school and residence by Mr. Hart, a small grey-haired Irishman, who habitually wore eye-glasses and a suit of iron-grey tweed. The school was started about 1843, and continued until 1848. The school room was on the ground floor of the northern half of the building. The remainder of the house was occupied by Mr. Hart as a residence. Thirty or forty pupils, all boys, attended the school, among whom were William and B. Hart, the sons of the master, E. W. Gardner, John Dixon, P. Bethune, J. Dalrymple, W. Mulholland, Raymond Bâby, Dr. John King, William Liddell, Walter and Henry Kidd, Tip and Gordon Helliwell, Sam and Tom Allen, the latter now a resident of Ottawa, William Pearson, Secretary of the Gas Company, and James Tilt, Q.C.

"The school room was arranged in a peculiar fashion. The master sat behind a high desk on one side, with his back to the wall. Around the other three sides were ranged one continuous row of benches with desks in front of them. On these benches the boys sat, every one with his back to the master and his eyes to the wall. By this method of arranging his pupils he could watch every boy's movements unknown to him, and frequently when two boys were racing pens across the desk he would quickly descend from his perch and, stepping on tip-toe across the room, would suddenly seize each by the shoulder, greatly to their consternation. English branches and Latin constituted the course of study at the school.

"Mr. Hart was very attentive to his duties, very humorous, and although very passionate at times was rather a favourite among the boys. He seemed to live in constant dread of his wife, a tall, lean, angular and wiry-looking woman. A switch of nine tails was his weapon of punishment. It was his habit to mention how many blows—'pandies' they were called in the schoolroom vernacular—the convicted boy was to receive. The customary number was eight, four on each hand. John Dixon used to give great amusement to the boys and great vexation to the master by his argumentative resistance to punishment by the cat. After dodging and squirming to avoid the blows, he would dispute the count until the master became so confused and enraged that he would give him two or

three extra cuts with the stick end of the cat, but John invariably beat him on the count. With all his supposed cleverness as a master the smart boys would outwit him. One gave him every day for three months the same problems worked out by the Rule of Three. School hours were from nine to twelve and one to three except on Saturdays, when the boys were given a half holiday.

"The plank sidewalk in front of the building was used for marbles, peg-tops, and other school-boy amusements. The older boys, nearly every one of whom owned a rooster, indulged in the more advanced sport of cock-fighting in the adjoining field of Mr. Harvis. The lane at the south of the house was the battlefield, and here nearly every day a pugilistic encounter took place. On several occasions J. Dalrymple, after a truant's trip of a week, was brought to the schoolroom by his mother, tied hand and foot and in a cart. These were red-letter days for the master, who would superintend his disembarkation with great glee, rolling up his coat-sleeves, flourishing his instrument of torture, and calling out in exultant tones, 'Bring him in, bring him in by the nape of the neck till I give him a taste of the flail'."[18]

In the early twenties a "select school for young ladies" was directed by Mrs. Goodman, and later by Mrs. Cockburn. It was advertised as under the patronage of Lady Sarah Maitland. The type of education provided, and the fees and other conditions enforced upon those who attended, are outlined in the *Gazette* of May 23, 1822:

"For education in the English language grammatically, History, Geography, the use of the Globes, with plain and fancy needlework, £2. Writing and ciphering, 10s., the French language, £1, drawing and painting on velvet, £1 10s. For board and lodging, £8 10s.

"Music, dancing, flower- and card-work are also taught in the school and charged moderately.

"Mrs. Cockburn will receive a junior class of little children from four to seven years of age for five dollars per quarter each.

"Entrance, One Guinea. Every lady to provide a table- and teaspoon, knife and fork, sheets and towels, and to pay for her own washing."[19]

[18]Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 247.
[19]*Upper Canada Gazette*, May 23, 1822.

Canadian Illustrated News.

BOYS' MILITARY DRILL IN 1863

Military drill for school boys was decidedly a novelty at that time.

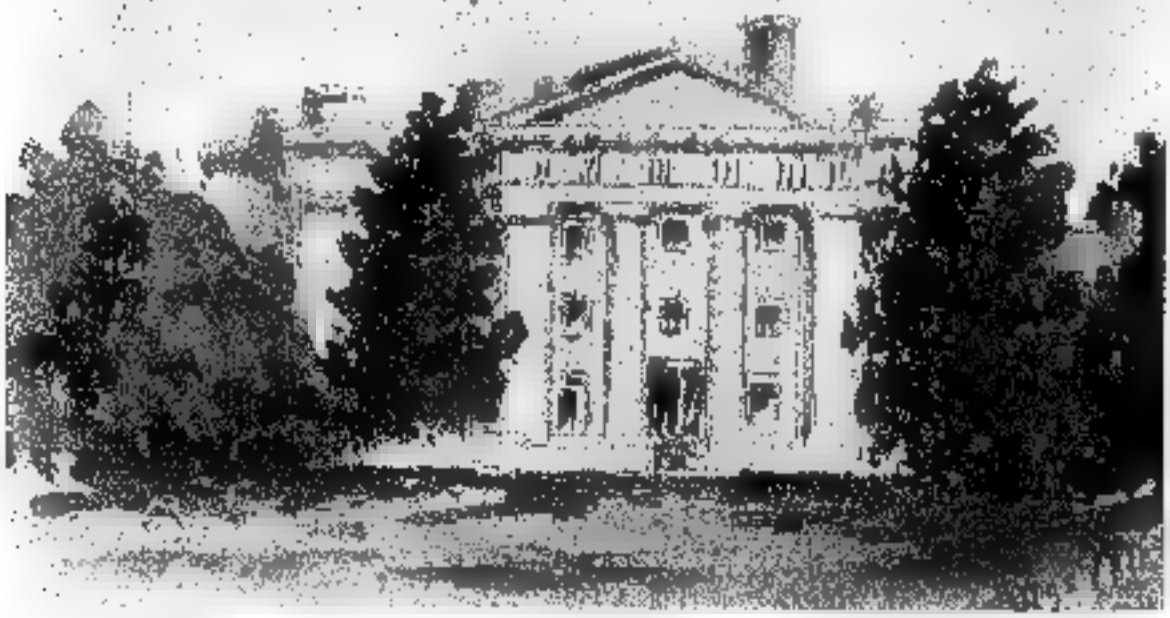
HART'S SCHOOL, 126-8 CHURCH STREET

The old school is shown as it appeared many years afterwards.

Canadian Illustrated News. William Armstrong.

UNVEILING THE RIDGEWAY MONUMENT, JULY 1, 1870

Nine members of the Queen's Own Rifles lost their lives in action against the Fenians at the Battle of Lime Ridge in 1866.



John Ross Robertson Collection.

KING'S COLLEGE

Toronto's first institution of higher learning stood on the site of the present Parliament Buildings.

Among ladies' private schools of note was Pinehurst, a select academy conducted just east of The Grange. The house was built about 1840, and in 1850 Monsieur and Madame Des Landes opened a ladies' school there. The fashionable clientele attracted during the three years in which they conducted the classes was continued during the long tenure of Mrs. Forster, a charming and accomplished school-mistress who presided over the establishment until 1866. The daughters of many prominent Canadian families received their education in this school. Mrs. Forster died in 1876, while Pinehurst was demolished in the late eighties to make way for the extension of McCaul Street to College Street.

Miss MacNally's private school was located on the north side of Wellington Street, in a large brick house east of Emily Street. The establishment opened in 1845-6, and the headmistress was assisted by her three sisters. About twelve years later she ended her connection with the school when she became the wife of Mr. John Boyd, at one time principal of a famous school on Bay Street—the Classical and Commercial Academy of the thirties. Miss MacNally was particularly proficient in modern languages, and her school attracted the patronage of many prominent families.

Another well-known ladies' academy was located at 325 King Street West during the years 1854-60. Miss Macartney, the lady principal, was the daughter of an English officer, and her school was highly regarded not only in Toronto but in other parts of the province. Later, as Mrs. Nixon, she conducted a school closely connected with the Church of England.

Upper Canada College has long been pre-eminent among private schools in Toronto. Originally endowed by a gift of 66,000 acres of Crown Lands, this famous school was able to inaugurate its work on a scale which could not be approached by others less fortunate. Upper Canada was originally called Minor College, presumably to distinguish it from the University of King's College which was part of the projected educational system, but which was some years later in its commencement. The original advertisement concerning the construction of Minor College appeared in the *U. E. Loyalist* in 1829:

"Minor College. Sealed tenders for erecting a School House and four dwelling-houses will be received on the first Monday of June next. Plans, elevations and specifications may be seen after the 12th instant on application to the Hon. Geo. Markland, from whom further information will be received. Editors throughout the Province are requested to insert this notice until the first Monday in June, and forward their accounts for the same to the office of the LOYALIST, York. York, 1st May, 1829."[20]

At the end of that year the school was ready to receive students, and the announcement of its opening appeared in the *Upper Canada Gazette* of December 17th. It will be observed that most of the first teachers were Cambridge graduates and clergymen. Upper Canada College still continues the policy of having about half of its masters from England, though the former custom of preferring clergymen as teachers in private schools of the Church of England is now in general restricted to the Headmaster, and even he is frequently a layman. The advertisement of the opening of the school is as follows:

"Upper Canada College, established at York. Visitor, the Lieutenant-Governor for the time being. This College will open after the approaching Christmas Vacation, on Monday the 8th of January, 1830, under the conduct of the Masters appointed at Oxford by the Vice Chancellor and other electors, in July last. Principal, the Rev. J. H. Harris, D.D., late Fellow of Clare Hall, Cambridge. Classical Department: Vice Principal, The Rev. T. Phillips, D.D., of Queen's College, Cambridge. First Classical Master: The Rev. Charles Mathews, M.A., of Pembroke Hall, Cambridge. Second Classical Master: The Rev. W. Boulton, B.A., of Queen's College, Oxford. Mathematical Department: The Rev. Charles Dade, M.A., Fellow of Caius College, Cambridge, and late Mathematical Master of Elizabeth College. French, Mr. J. P. De la Haye. English, Writing and Arithmetic, Mr. G. A. Barber and Mr. J. Padfield. Drawing Master, Mr. Drury. . . . (Signed) G. H. Markland, Secretary to the Board of Education. York, Upper Canada, Dec. 2, 1829."[21]

[20]The *U. E. Loyalist*, May 2, 1829.
[21]*Upper Canada Gazette*, December 17, 1829.

We cannot enter here into the history of the College, but a paragraph from an important publication of the late seventies, edited by the father of the present Principal of the school, recalls the old King Street building which stood near the site of the present Royal Alexandra Theatre, and the controversy which for a time threatened its existence:

"Regaining King Street, and turning to the west, we come upon Upper Canada College and the fine grounds that surround that historic institution. The building itself has no architectural attractions. The charm of the place is its foreground, with its bright, green sward, and the foliage of the trees that overhang the sidewalk. The College, which was founded by Sir John Colborne in 1829, has the good fortune to be well endowed, and is under the direction of a committee of the University Senate. Attached is a boarding-house; and the institution has a well-equipped staff. Many of the leading public men of the country have acquired their early education at the College: it consequently has some traditions. Some educational reformers now regard it, however, as out of line with the Secondary School System of the Province; and its right to exist has recently become a matter of fierce debate."[22]

It is fortunate that the opponents of Upper Canada College were not successful in terminating its career, for it is and has always been something greater than a school, and its graduates, in larger numbers, probably, than those of any other Canadian school, occupy positions of prominence throughout the world.

As the years passed, the public school system increased in scope with the growth of the city. By 1879 there were nineteen public schools, of which Dufferin, Ryerson and Wellesley were described as "large and handsome"; and five separate schools provided instruction for the children of Roman Catholics. Not until 1860 did the city make any provision for secondary education. In that year was commenced the policy of arranging for the entrance each year into the Grammar School of a few of the brightest pupils of

[22]G. M. Grant (Ed.): *Picturesque Canada*. 1879. Vol. I, p. 430. The most extensive account of Upper Canada College is George Dickson: *A History of Upper Canada College, 1829-1892*. 1893. In addition several shorter descriptions and collections of reminiscences have appeared in print.

the common schools. In 1865, when the Toronto Grammar School was located on the east side of Dalhousie Street, just east of Gould, it was first officially recognised as the high school of the city.[23] In 1870 old King's College, Queen's Park, provided temporary accommodations, while greatly increased civic grants made possible in 1871 the opening of a new building—the forerunner of Jarvis Collegiate—at the corner of Jarvis and Carlton Streets. The building cost slightly over $34,000 and accommodated 220 pupils, 75 of whom were in the "female department"—then a novelty. The students paid fees amounting to $5 a quarter, and the salaries of the staff varied from $1,600, paid to the Principal, the Rev. Dr. Wickson, to $250 received by one of his six assistants. Night schools started with a rush in October, 1855, but the 260 young men who entered the courses soon dwindled to 56, and as a result such supplementary instruction fell into disuse for twenty-five years. In 1875 Miss Ada Marean was appointed first Kindergarten Directress, an innovation due to a visit to Toronto, at the invitation of the Department of Education, of two American exponents of that work. The work, however, did not commence until September, 1883, when 80 pupils were enrolled in the Victoria Street School.[24]

[23]Much information concerning the establishment of the Toronto public school system, and its development under Superintendent Barber after his appointment in 1844, is contained in the printed *Report of the Past History and Present Condition of the Common or Public Schools of the City of Toronto*, 1859. See also [G. P. Ure]: *The Handbook of Toronto*. 1858. pp. 102-135, for a good summary of educational facilities at that date, together with an outline of the history of Toronto schools and colleges. Several chapters in J. E. Middleton: *The Municipality of Toronto, a History* (1923) are devoted to the subject, and similar valuable material may be found in E. J. Hathaway: *Jesse Ketchum and his Times* (1929), pp. 94-122 and 274-82. The most notable contribution to our knowledge of the social and academic life of our fathers and grandfathers in attendance at the University of Toronto is W. J. Loudon's *Studies of Student Life*, (6 volumes. 1923-30); while the standard historical work upon the development of the provincial university is W. S. Wallace: *A History of the University of Toronto, 1827-1927*. 1927.

[24]A short but valuable summary of the history of the Board of School Trustees of Toronto is contained in the preface of the 1898 edition of *By-laws and Regulations of the Toronto Public School Board*. There is also a table of real and personal property of the Board, including the date of construction and other information concerning each of the 47 schools in existence at that time.

It is impossible here even to outline the great developments which have characterised the field of education in recent years. The scope and purposes of educational curricula as adapted to the needs of the individual have advanced at a rapid pace since the initial steps were taken to provide a small measure of technical and vocational training and guidance. The crippled child, the under-privileged and the subnormal, who received little but neglect or blows in earlier times, are now given the specialised attention which is their due; and it is probable that the exceptionally bright student will soon be similarly treated. Coincident with these advances there has been evident an ever-increasing *esprit de corps* among teachers, who now hold an honourable position in the state commensurate with the trust reposed in them as educators of the youth of the nation.

CHAPTER XX

THE MECHANICS' INSTITUTE

THE York Mechanics' Institute, or Society for Mutual Improvement in the Arts and Sciences, was established during the winter of 1830-31 in the Masonic Hall on Colborne Street near Church, and the first lectures and meetings were held in that building. In imitation of similar associations established in London and Edinburgh in the early eighteen-twenties, the organisers of the York Institute announced that "the object of this society shall be the mutual improvement of mechanics, and others who become members of the Society, in arts and sciences by the formation of a library of reference and circulation, by the delivery of lectures on scientific and mechanical subjects, the establishment of classes for the instruction of members in the various branches of study, and for conversation on subjects embraced by this constitution, from which all discussion on political or religious matters is to be carefully excluded".[1] At the time of the Institute's organisation the town of York had a population of about 3,000. Joseph Bates, who had had experience in such associations in England, was one of the leaders in the movement, and James Lesslie, Dr. Baldwin, Dr. Rolph, Dr. Dunlop, Sheriff Jarvis, Jesse Ketchum, John Ewart and David Paterson were the first office-bearers. 7s. 6d. was the annual fee, and the library, open to the members each evening "at Mr. Timothy Parsons', 215 King Street",[2] provided a place of diversion and education at a time when the tavern and beer-shop were the chief alternatives. The following extract from the third annual report of the Institute outlines the activities of the year. When we consider that the great majority of the members had not had the advantage of higher education it would seem that, apart from the conversation class, the proceedings must have been well over the heads of many of those who were intended to benefit:

[1]This sentence formed part of the original constitution of the Institute.
[2]*George Walton's York Commercial Directory for 1834.* 1833. p. 133.

"It is with feelings of gratitude and satisfaction that our committee have been enabled by the gratuitous exertions of their scientific friends to keep up the regular supply of lectures on the different subjects adapted to the objects of the institute. During the last year the following subjects have been taken up and ably discussed: the principle of matter—attraction, cohesion and repulsion; astronomy—the nature and properties of the sun and the phenomena of the planets Mercury and Venus; natural history—the cause and effect of climates, and other subjects of natural philosophy, such as electricity and pneumatics, with experiments and illustrations. The conversation class has likewise contributed greatly to those who have availed themselves of it, in bringing much interesting matter under their consideration."[8]

In 1835 the Institute received a grant of £200 from the government, and the money was expended largely upon scientific apparatus to illustrate "the principles of natural Philosophy, Geography, Astronomy and Mathematics", and which did not prove of much use. During the excitement of the Rebellion of 1837 there was a lapse in interest in the Society, but in 1838 the City Council provided a suite of rooms in the south-east corner of the Market buildings, and greater enthusiasm was aroused. The annual report of 1841 noted that the membership was 94, and that courses of weekly lectures were given "by the Rev. Mr. Lilley, on the Mind; by the Rev. Mr. Leach, President, on Education; by Dr. Lang, on Chemistry; and one by the Rev. Mr. Roaf, on Geology; for the untiring zeal of these gentlemen, under the depressing circumstances which the Institute has had to struggle with, the Committee tender their grateful acknowledgments". As is so often the case, some of the efforts of the directors of the Institute failed because of the disinterested attitude of the very persons who would be most helped by them. The report states that "an attempt was made to establish a class to meet five nights in the week, intended to combine the advantages of a reading-room and an academy, which unfortunately failed from the unexpected opposition of the persons chiefly intended to be

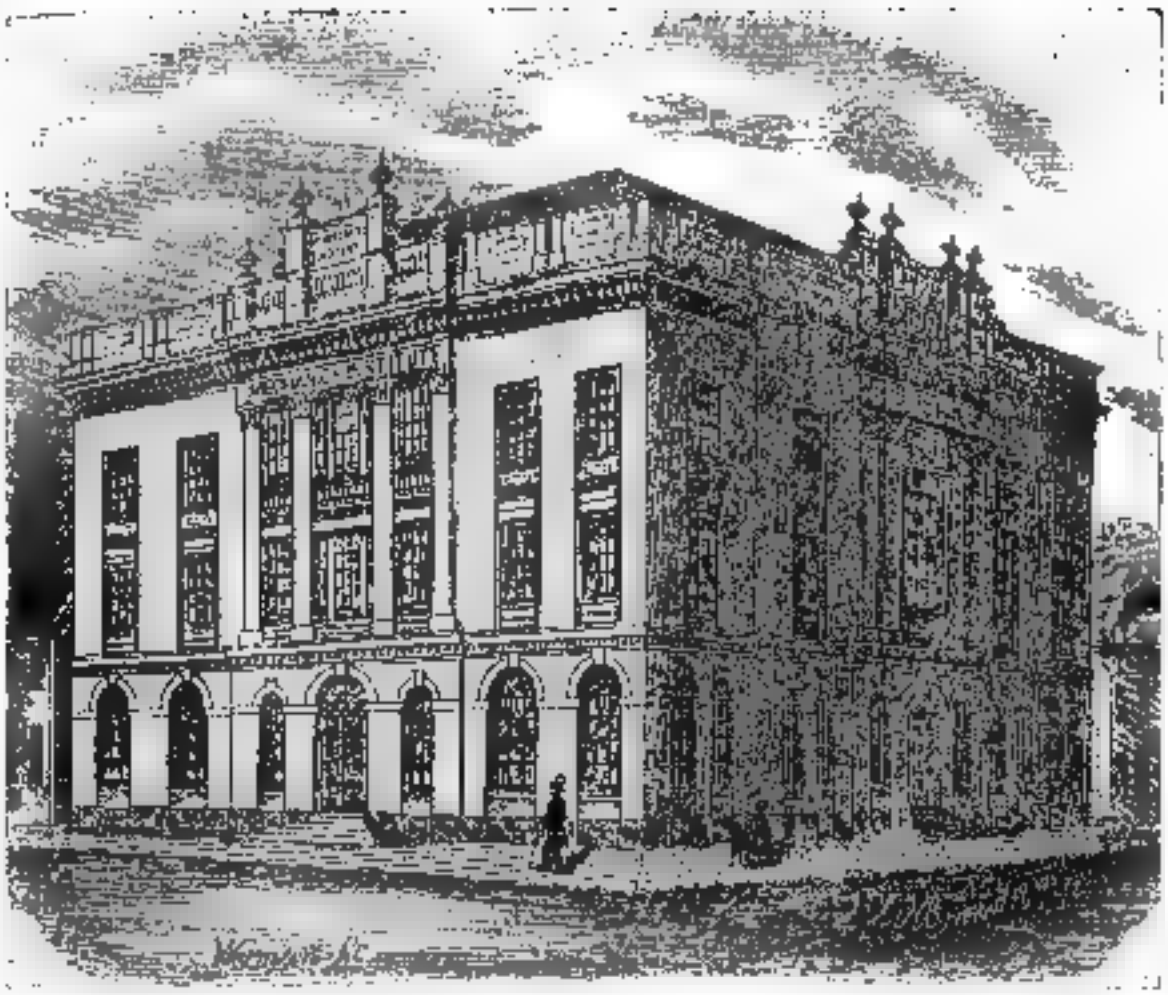
[8]The *Patriot and Farmers' Monitor*, February 17, 1834.

benefitted by it".[4] Anyone, however, who has attended night school even two nights a week will readily excuse those who found it a hardship to come five nights. The same report noted also that many members did not return books loaned to them—human nature changing not at all in this respect down through the centuries.

In 1844 the Institute's quarters were changed to rooms on King Street, the Court Room being made available to them for lecture purposes. In the next year a firehall was commenced on Court Street, and the Institute obtained the use of the second storey by raising $1,861 to pay for the cost of that part. In 1848 the first of a series of exhibitions of fine arts, machines, ladies' work, etc., was held for a period of ten weeks. Receipts exceeded expenditures by about $200, so the exhibition was financially successful. In succeeding years similar displays were held, that of 1850 containing a model steam locomotive which attracted great interest, for there were at that time no steam railways in the province. The model was made by A. Parkes, woodturner, Adelaide Street, and a small spirit lamp propelled it on a raised track which ran around the room.

In 1851 was made the first suggestion of the necessity of increased space for the activities of the Institute. In that year the exhibition netted only $48, but it was one of the best displays yet held. In 1853 the north-east corner of Church and Adelaide Streets was purchased at auction for $6,529, and $4,800 was raised by public subscription towards defraying the cost of a building thereon. On April 17, 1854, the corner-stone was laid under Masonic auspices. A procession of Masons in full regalia, accompanied by the officers of the Institute and led by the band of the Royal Canadian Rifles, marched in procession from St. Lawrence Hall to the site. T. G. Ridout, D.G.M. of Canada, laid the stone with a silver trowel presented to him by Thomas J. Robertson, President of the Institute, and so was commenced "a hall for the public use of the mechanics of this city", as Mr. Ridout remarked. On the opposite side of the street, near St. James' school-house, a small cannon fired a salute

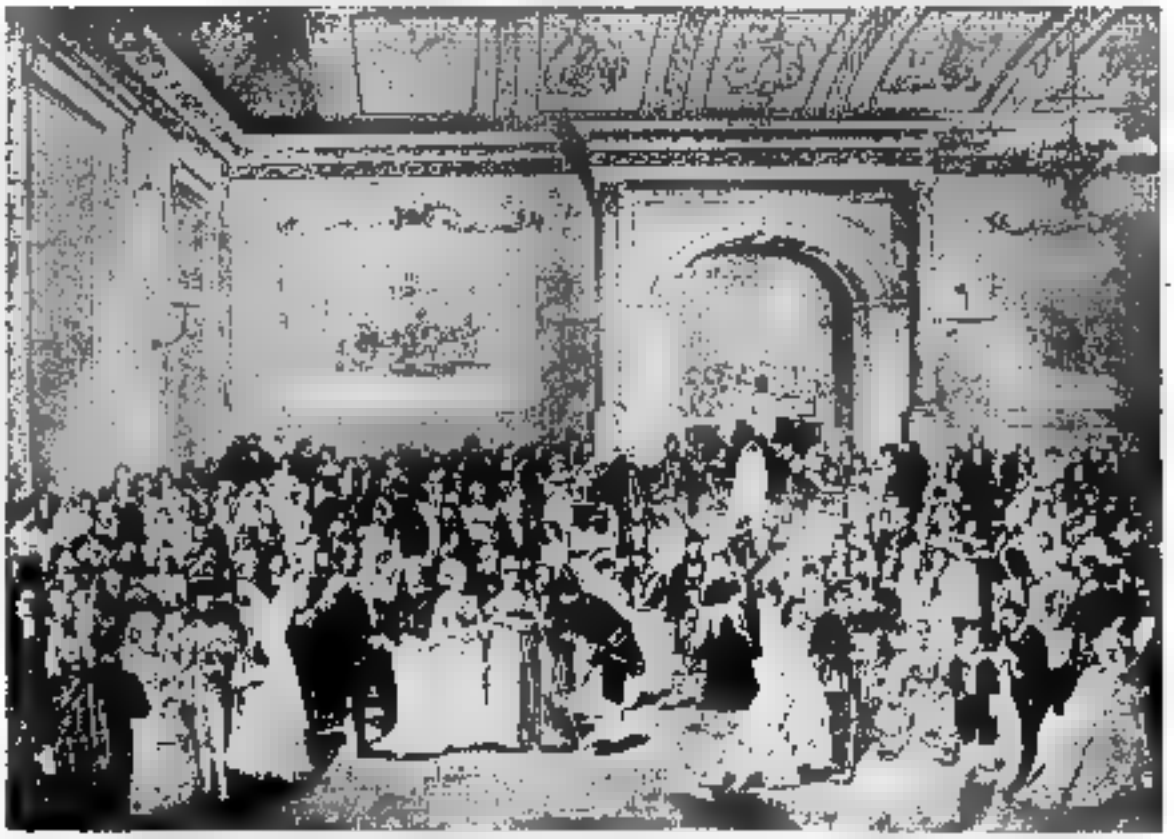
[4]See John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*. 1894-1914. Vol. II, pp. 756-7.



John Ross Robertson Collection.

THE MECHANICS' INSTITUTE, ADELAIDE AND CHURCH STREETS

The building afterwards became the Public Library.



Reproduced by Courtesy of Miss Ida Roussin, who appears at the lower right.

FANCY DRESS BALL IN THE MUSIC HALL OF THE MECHANICS' INSTITUTE, APRIL 19, 1870

John Ross Robertson Collection.

A DIPLOMA OF THE TORONTO MECHANICS' INSTITUTE

For half a century the Institute afforded library and recreational facilities now provided by the Public Library and numerous clubs and societies.

of three rounds, and the proceedings ended with three cheers for the Queen.

It was found impossible to complete the project without outside help, and the Provincial Government granted over $21,000 within the next few years to finish the building, at the same time using some of it for offices. In 1861 it was completed at a total cost of $48,380.78. Meanwhile St. Lawrence Hall had been used for some of the lectures. Lists for 1857-58, as well as earlier and later courses, suggest that it must have been exceedingly difficult to arouse interest, among persons comparatively uneducated, in lectures which today would hardly be given outside of the university classroom. Scientists, professors and clergymen predominated among the speakers, and a random selection from the lists includes such topics as "Optics", "Heat and Light in their Chemical Relations", "Fixed Stars and Nebulae", "The Origin of Literature", "The Poetry of Insanity" and "The Anatomy and Comparative Anatomy of the Eye". The term "mechanics", however, must be taken to include business men, tradesmen and manufacturers as well as unskilled labourers and factory operatives; and many tradesmen were at that period men of some education who had come from the Old Land. In fact the Institute undoubtedly attracted to its lectures many non-members, of the same cultured classes which in our time patronise educational courses held under such auspices as the University of Toronto, the Art Gallery, and the Royal Canadian Institute. In 1857-8 non-members paid a "York shilling" (12½c.) admission, or $1 for the course, while members and ladies were charged only 50c. for the season. In 1858 the Institute had 800 members, and there were 4,000 volumes in the library—a number four times that of 1850. The expenditures in that year were £851 12s. 2d., a few pounds less than the receipts.

In 1862 a series of literary and musical entertainments was instituted and proved a great success; consequently similar programs were given in later years. During the same year the evening classes were reorganised, and continued until 1880, when the School Board established similar classes in three of the schools.

The early exhibitions of the Institute were evidently not

held every year, for in 1868 the display is called "the eighth annual exhibition". Artists, and persons possessing works of art, were invited to loan them to the Society, and the exhibit included ladies' needlework, engraving and photography. Over 700 pictures, including many "old Masters", were on display on this occasion, though the admission charge of 10c. did not produce enough to meet expenses, a deficit of $100 resulting.

From time to time additional attractions were introduced in the Institute. Billiard tables and chess were available in the recreation rooms, and there was a ladies' reading-room in addition to that originally provided for the members. A list of the presidents of the association between 1831 and 1883 includes many of the most prominent citizens of Toronto, some of whom devoted a great deal of time to the interests of their less fortunate fellows. W. Edwards, for example, was a prominent worker for thirty years, and many others might be mentioned whose activities in the Mechanics' Institute extended from eight to seventeen years. In 1883 the Institute was merged into the Toronto Public Library as a result of the acceptance of the Free Library by-law by the citizens.

The history of libraries in Toronto is obscure and fragmentary. A private circulating library was established in York in December, 1810. Among buildings entered by the American soldiery during the occupation of 1813 was the town library, and it suffered in consequence, though some books were later sent back by the American commander. In 1822 a meeting of the directors and subscribers was held in De Forest's Hotel for the purpose of disposing of such books as remained in the possession of the treasurer of the Library, William Allan, and it was suggested in the *Gazette* that other books still held by individuals should be returned to that official.[5] Another library was in existence in the early thirties, for an advertisement of the York Circulating Library appears in *Walton's 1834 Directory*.[6]

The Toronto Athenaeum was formed in the forties for the purpose of supporting a Public Library and Museum.

[5]*Upper Canada Gazette*, October 1, 1822.
[6]*Walton's Directory*, facing p. 124.

But this library and that of the Mechanics' Institute had on their shelves in 1849 a scant 1,000 volumes. The origin of the present library system dates from the acceptance of the Free Library by-law on January 1, 1883, and the Public Library instituted at that time was due particularly to the energy of Aldermen Hallam and Taylor. An outline of the early years of the institution is given by John Ross Robertson:

"On taking possession of the building made over for the use of the Public Library by the late Mechanics' Institute, it was found necessary to alter the interior so as to afford space for the present reading-room, and to erect an additional building at the rear for the reception of the volumes. To carry out this work application was made to the Council of Toronto for $50,000 in debentures, the proceeds from which were placed to the credit of the Board. The nominal number of volumes possessed by the Mechanics' Institute when it became merged into the Public Library was 8,000, but of these all but 2,000 were worthless or nearly so. In June, 1883, the officers of the new institute were appointed, and in September of the same year Chairman John Hallam and Chief Librarian James Bain, jr., visited New York and London for the purpose of purchasing books.

"On March 6th, 1884, the library was formally opened by the Lieutenant-Governor. On this occasion addresses were delivered by Sir Daniel Wilson, President of University College, the Hon. G. W. Ross, Minister of Education, Professor Goldwin Smith and the Rev. Dr. Withrow. The members of the first board of managers were John Hallam, the Mayor, Dr. George Wright, James Mason, John A. Mills, John Taylor, W. H. Knowlton, George D'Arcy Boulton and William Scully. James Bain, jr., Chief Librarian; John Davy, assistant Librarian and Secretary. The reading-room of the new Library was opened March 10th, 1884, but no books were issued until April 2nd, when the demand was so great that it was necessary to enlarge the staff and duplicate and triplicate many books. Branches were established at St. Andrew's Market and St. Paul's Hall. Subsequently two other branches were established, making one in the west, one in the northwest, one in the north, and one

in the eastern portion of the city. The Library now (1894) contains about 55,000 volumes. The reference library has grown so extensive that there is an imperative need for more space for its patrons, and an enlargement for their convenience is now under consideration."[7]

In the forty years that have elapsed since this was written the development of library facilities has more than kept pace with the growth of the city. From time to time new branches have been opened, and the existing system under Dr. George Locke provides educational and recreational advantages for many thousands of people whose acquaintance with the best literature would otherwise be greatly circumscribed. There are at present eighteen public libraries in Toronto. The average annual expenditure upon new books over the last five years was $70,606, and in 1933 there were 4,433,761 books loaned. In recent times the number of small commercial lending libraries in Toronto has greatly increased, many of them being a part of the equipment of the "general store" of the day—the corner druggist; but usually they supply little but the current sensational novel, and could hardly be considered a satisfactory substitute for the service provided by the city's large staff of trained librarians.

[7]Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 390. John Hallam's public-spirited services and generous gifts towards the foundation of our public library system place him in the foremost rank of the city's benefactors.

CHAPTER XXI

"A City of Churches"

As was to be expected, the Established Church of England gained a foothold in Upper Canada somewhat earlier than other denominations, though not to the extent that might have resulted from determined efforts by that body. Even as late as 1839 there were only 77 Anglican clergymen in the province, though the larger share of the blame for such a condition should be laid upon the Imperial Parliament, which controlled grants in support of the extension of the Upper Canadian Church. But, in spite of the fewness of Church of England clergy, arrogant governors and lesser officials long discriminated against all "dissenters". An attitude of social and religious exclusiveness was early characteristic of the (for most practical purposes) "established" church, but probably no one carried his feelings of superiority quite so far as an eccentric clergyman in the Bay of Quinté district, the Rev. John Langhorn. While travelling his circuit on foot during intense heat he was offered a horse by a considerate Presbyterian. Kindness was rewarded by this unique retort: "Sir, you are a promoter of schism in the flock of Christ. I cannot, therefore, have any intercourse with you, much less accept any favour from you. Please keep on your side of the road and go your way."[1] It was, however, a day of strong religious and political opinions, and Anglicans had certainly no monopoly of intolerance.

While the erection of a church[2] in York was not seriously considered until 1802, the Anglican service had for sev-

[1] Professor A. H. Young of Trinity College discovered this unique item during his research into Langhorn's life. The Church of England was, of course, never legally "established" in Upper Canada.

[2] In considering early religious life in Toronto it is intended particularly to portray the beginnings of the various denominations. The reminiscences of men like Dr. Henry Scadding concerning quaint events of no particular importance, perhaps, —but none the less illustrative of the times,—are added here and there.

eral years been held in the Government Buildings. At first the schoolmaster, William Cooper, read the service; and later the Rev. Thomas Raddish resided in York for eight months. The first permanent incumbent was the Rev. George Okill Stuart, who came to York in 1800 as missionary and remained in charge until 1812, when the Rev. John (later Bishop) Strachan arrived in York to become Archdeacon, and rector of St. James'. On July 9, 1803, a meeting of the subscribers to the proposed St. James' Church was held, and it was decided that the building should be of stone, and pine and oak planks;[3] this decision was changed, however, for the church was constructed entirely of wood. The building, which was not in use until 1807, had no steeple and was much like a house. Space was left for a burial-ground around it, and a few years later it was surrounded by a split rail fence.

The original St. James' Church was greatly altered in 1818, when a spire was added; and in 1831 the old structure was demolished and replaced by a stone church. This building was largely destroyed by fire in 1839, and the reconstructed church was among the many buildings burned in the great fire of 1849. The present[4] St. James' Cathedral was erected in 1850-52, the congregation meanwhile worshipping at Holy Trinity and other churches. With reference to the musical portion of the service at old St. James' C. C. Taylor wrote:

"Ecclesiastical music was entirely destitute of organs or melodeons. At the Church of St. James a Mr. Hetherington officiated as clerk, and his mode of procedure was to announce the psalm or hymn, give out the tune on the bassoon, and then accompany the vocalists present with original and often grotesque improvisations on that instrument. At one time a choir was formed at this church with a base viol, clarionet and bassoon as the accompanying instruments. The music was almost entirely confined to the churches that then existed, the choirs being accompanied by flutes, violins, violoncellos, and occasionally a trombone."[5]

[3] *Upper Canada Gazette*, July 16, 1803. A preliminary meeting was held in January of that year.

[4] For a traveller's account of the laying of the corner-stone see Chapter I, pp. 32-3.

[5] C. C. Taylor: *Toronto Called Back*. 1886. pp. 271-2.

Trinity Church, King Street, which was erected in 1843, was the second Anglican church in Toronto, though a year earlier the first St. Paul's was opened on Bloor Street, then outside the city limits, near the village of Yorkville. At that time "Church Street extended only as far as Carlton Street. Jarvis Street from the corner of Queen was only a sandy lane, as was also Sherbourne Street, then known north of Queen Street as Allan's Lane. West of St. Paul's on the south side of Bloor there was scarcely a house between the church and Yonge Street, and on the northern side there were only some three or four houses between the end of Jarvis Street and the Red Lion Hotel, on the north-east corner of Yonge and Bloor Streets, close to which was the toll-gate."[a] St. Paul's did not originally have a steeple. Concerning the acquisition Dr. Scadding says:

"While crossing the First Concession Line (Bloor Street), now in our northward journey, the moment comes back to us when on glancing along the vista to the eastward formed by the road in that direction we first noticed a church-spire on the right-hand or southern side. We had passed that way a day or two before, and we were sure no such object was to be seen there then; and yet, unmistakably now, there rose up before the eye a rather graceful tower and spire, of considerable altitude, complete from base to apex, and coloured white.

"The fact was: Mr. J. G. Howard, a well-known architect, had ingeniously constructed a tower of wood in a horizontal, or nearly horizontal position on the ground close by, somewhat as a shipbuilder puts together 'the mast of some vast admiral'; and then, after attending to the external finish of, at least, the higher portion of it, even to a coating of lime wash, had, in the space of a few hours by means of convenient machinery, raised it on end, and secured it permanently in a vertical position.

"We gather some further particulars of the achievement from a contemporary account. The Yorkville spire was raised on the 4th of August, 1841. It was 85 feet high, composed of four entire trees or pieces of timber each of that length, bound together pyramidically, tapering from ten

[a] John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*. 1894-1914. Vol. IV, p. 15.

feet base to one foot at top, and made to receive a turned ball and weather-cock. The base was sunk in the ground until the apex was raised ten feet from the ground; and about thirty feet of the upper part of the spire was completed, coloured and painted before the raising. The operation of raising commenced about two o'clock p.m., and about eight in the evening the spire and vane were seen erect, and appeared to those unacquainted with what was going on to have risen amongst the trees as if by magic. The work was performed by Mr. John Richey, the framing by Mr. Wetherell, and the raising was superintended by Mr. Joseph Hill.

"The plan adopted was this: three gin-poles, as they are called, were erected in the form of a triangle; each of them was well braced, and tackles were rove at their tops: the tackles were hooked to strong straps about fifty feet up the spire, with nine men to each tackle, and four men to steady the end with following poles. It was raised in about four hours from the commencement of the straining of the tackles, and had a very beautiful appearance while rising. The whole operation, we have been told, was conducted as nearly as possible in silence, the architect himself regulating by signs the action of the groups at the gin-poles, being himself governed by the plumb-line suspended in a high frame before him. . . . .

"The original St. Paul's before it acquired in this singular manner the dignified appurtenance of a steeple, was a long, low, barn-like, wooden building. Mr. Howard otherwise improved it, enlarging it by the addition of an aisle on the west side. When some twenty years later, *i.e.*, in 1861, the new stone church was erected, the old wooden structure was removed bodily to the west side of Yonge Street, together with the tower, curtailed, however, of its spire.

"We have been informed that the four fine stems, each eighty-five feet long, which formed the interior frame of the tower and spire of 1841, were a present from Mr. Allan, of Moss Park; and that the Rev. Charles Mathews, occasionally officiating in St. Paul's, gave one hundred pounds

in cash towards the expense of the ornamental addition now made to the edifice."[7]

With an evangelical appeal directed particularly among the "common" people, Methodism was already a strong denomination in the United States when its first influence was felt in Canada. This fact alone was enough to create intense suspicion, and Egerton Ryerson, speaking in 1837, noted that in the early days of the province "Methodism was a subject of scorn and ridicule. Its principles were deemed absurd; its ministers were viewed as ignorant, idle, hypocritical adventurers and political spies".[8]

That there was some excuse for this attitude is obvious when we remember that all the first Methodist missionaries and pastors were sent out by American conferences, and in most instances were Americans. After the formation of the Canada Conference in 1824 and, five years later, the separation of the American and Canadian churches, the opposition to the Methodist body was gradually dispelled.

Among the earliest Methodist circuit-riders to visit Little York was the Rev. Nathan Bangs, who was there in the last days of December, 1802, having been appointed to cover a circuit "from the village of Kingston to the town of York". While in the district he travelled up Yonge Street and held meetings at various places, noting that the people had "their own code of decorum" and were "fond of disputation". This was particularly exemplified in one locality about ten miles from the town, where that abomination of Methodists—a fiddler—was not repressed without a struggle. Dr. Bangs' account of the episode serves to recall an attitude of mind which persisted as long as Canadian Methodism:

"There was a great awakening among the people, but an

[7]Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old*. 1873. pp. 405-7. The mention of J. G. Howard, who donated High Park to the city, recalls that he was for many years one of the most important surveyors, architects and builders in Toronto, St. George's Church and the Lunatic Asylum being among his contributions to architectural design. He was drawing master at Upper Canada College from 1833 to 1856. The first white bricks to be used in Toronto were made in 1842 from clay obtained near Sheriff Jarvis' home, "Rosedale", and Howard used 20,000 of them in that year to build a store at 103 King Street, which also had German silver sashes and plate glass.

[8]Cited in J. E. Middleton: *The Municipality of Toronto*, Vol. II, p. 698.

inveterate fiddler seemed set on by the great adversary to contest the victory with me inch by inch. He had earned considerable money as the musician of the winter-night dancing parties of the settlers; but he was now willing to fiddle for nothing, if they would meet to dance and frolic rather than to pray. He contrived every possible method to keep the young people from our meetings. For some time he carried matters with a high hand, and the war was at last fully opened between us. One Sabbath morning, however, I fairly caught him. I was preaching on Galatians v. 19-21, and when I came to the word 'revelings' I applied it to his tactics and said, 'I do not know that the devil's musician is here today; I do not see him anywhere'. But he was sitting in a corner out of my sight, and he now put out his head and cried out, 'Here I am, ha! ha! ha!'—making the place ring with his laughter. 'Ay,' said I, 'you are there, are you?', and turning toward him I addressed him in language of rebuke and warning. I finally told him that if he did not cease to allure the young people into sinful amusements I would pray God either to convert him or take him out of the way, and I had no doubt that God would answer my prayer. The power of God evidently fell upon the assembly; a divine influence seemed to overpower them. The guilty man began to tremble all over like a leaf, and turned deathly pale. He finally got up and rushed out of the house. He went home, burned his fiddle, and we were thenceforth rid of his interference with our meetings and his opposition in the community."[9]

Yonge Street was first made a circuit in 1805, but the Rev. Daniel Pickett, who was in charge, does not appear to have organised a class in York. In fact the first Methodist meetings seem to have been held in 1817-18 "in the House of Assembly and sometimes in the home of Dr. Stoyles, in the Rev. Thomas Stoyles' house, and in the residence of the Dettars". Another authority gives a different origin of Methodism in York, linking it with the arrival in 1818 of James Lever, under whose influence a religious group assembled in a manner characteristic of the commencement of religious bodies all over Canada:

[9]Quoted in John Carroll: *Case and His Contemporaries*. 1867-77. Vol. I, pp. 95-6.

"James Lever and his family emigrated from England and came to York this year. He had heard Mr. Wesley preach, was a pious man, and a member of the Methodist Society. He inquired if any Methodists were in the town, and was directed to a tailor. He went to him, and they agreed to have a prayer meeting once a week. At first but few came, but the number gradually increased. Mr. Ryan thought there was encouragement enough to build a frame meeting-house; and with his usual energy determined on and accomplished the object."[10]

The church so erected in the summer of 1818 was in charge of the Rev. David Culp, first resident minister. The building was situated on the south side of King Street, just west of the present Jordan Street, a site now occupied by the head office of the Canadian Bank of Commerce. John Ross Robertson describes the chapel, typical of many others in Canada at the time, as follows:

"It was a little low commonplace-looking frame structure, originally forty feet square, but afterwards enlarged to forty by sixty feet. Its builder was Robert Petch. The little chapel had a solitary double doorway opening towards King Street. On each side of the entrance was a window, which, as compared with the size of the building, were of considerable dimensions. Three windows of similar size lighted the interior from each side. The interior was fitted up with a high square box-like pulpit at the end. Rude wooden benches were ranged along each side, leaving a narrow passage down the middle from the door to the pulpit. The entire cost of the building was about $250, and it is said that the congregation were three years in raising this amount. . . . In the first Methodist Church the custom prevailed of separating the men from the women, the former sitting on the right hand entering the building, the latter on the left."[11]

A prominent Toronto Methodist recalled that "the social

[10]The first quotation is from T. E. Champion: *The Methodist Churches of Toronto*, as reprinted in connection with the history of the King Street Methodist Church in the Toronto Centenary Number of the *New Outlook*, March 14, 1934, p. 166; while the second origin is from George F. Playter: *History of Methodism in Canada*. 1862, p. 167. "Stoyles" is more correctly "Stoyell".

[11]Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 140. For many further details see the authorities referred to in Note 10.

status of the adherents and members of the Methodist Church" was not as high in the fifties and sixties as it has been in more recent times: "In fact to become a member of that Church was to some extent to lose caste. . . . There were very few professional men connected with the body, and none who were wealthy. . . . The Methodist Church was much more strict then, attendance at theatres, dancing and card-playing being specifically prohibited in the rules of the Church. . . . The rule against 'the putting on of gold or costly apparel', although generally ignored, was observed by some by whom the wearing of flowers on their hats or bonnets or having flounces on their dresses was considered worldly". He remembered—and there was the same sincerity with varied manifestations in other denominations—that "Love Feasts, held quarterly, were generally crowded. . . . . Attendance at class-meetings was a condition of membership. There were, however, exceptions made in the case of persons of well-known Christian character, who constitutionally were unable to relate their religious experience before others."[12]

Richmond Street Church, long called "the Cathedral of Methodism", and the mother of a large number of congregations, was erected in 1822. The building itself was not, however, distinctive, being merely "a plain, common-looking brick structure with not a single external ornamentation to relieve the painful severity of its plainness. But the old-fashioned portico with its four pillars gave it a rather unique appearance, and in earlier times must have made it imposing before more impressive architecture and more palatial church structures came to crowd it out".[13] Many changes and additions were made from time to time, until eventually the building extended to Temperance Street. By the eighteen-eighties the structure showed signs of

[12]W. H. Pearson: *Recollections and Records of Toronto of Old*. 1914. pp. 248-50. The proceedings at early Methodist services were frequently very similar to the activities which one may witness in many a Negro church in the southern United States today. An excellent description of a Methodist service in Toronto in 1838—the exhortation of the minister, the moans of sinners, and the general emotional excitement—may be found in a recent novel based upon a diary, Patrick Slater's *The Yellow Briar*. 1933. pp. 90-8. Similarly, the usual events at a Roman Catholic wake are truthfully depicted, pp. 106-16.

[13]Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. IV, p. 343.

dilapidation and insufficient maintenance, though it was still in use. In 1888 the site was sold and the old building torn down, its congregation removing to a church on McCaul Street.

The ranks of Methodism were early split by controversies which resulted in the establishment of various sects, among them Episcopal, Primitive, and British Wesleyans; but the Wesleyan branch was by far the largest and most important. In the eighteen-sixties and -seventies several of these reunited with the Wesleyan body, and men like the Rev. Morley Punshon, who was in Toronto in 1868, did much to make Methodism the powerful body which entered the United Church of Canada in 1925.

The first Roman Catholic priest to visit York was the Rev. Edmund Burke in 1796, but it was many years before the denomination was organised. The transference of the capital from Niagara to York in 1796-7 removed several Roman Catholic families to the town, notably the Macdonells, and at the same time land was allotted to Father Burke for religious purposes. Again in 1806 four prominent Roman Catholics were issued a patent for the lot at the corner of George and Duke Streets, for over half a century the site of De La Salle Collegiate Institute. This land was intended to be the site of a church, but was sold in 1821 and the proceeds used to purchase a lot at the corner of Queen and Power Streets, where the first church, St. Paul's, was erected in 1823-6. Prior to the completion of the church its adherents were accustomed to meet in one another's homes. The first priest was Father Crowley, but he removed to Peterborough in 1828. The original structure was a small frame building, soon to be replaced by a substantial edifice of brick which remained in use until the eighteen-nineties.

St. Paul's was for some years the cathedral church of Roman Catholicism, but in 1842 Bishop Michael Power purchased the site of the present St. Michael's Cathedral, the land then being covered with forest. On May 8, 1845, he laid the corner-stone of the edifice, and on September 29, 1848, the cathedral was consecrated by the Bishop of Montreal. Some 4,000 people, many of whom were Protestants who had contributed towards the cost of the church,

attended the ceremony of laying the corner-stone, and it is recorded that "in a leaden box which it contains are, besides a great many other articles, fragments of a stone pier from the nave of the Cathedral of York and of the English oak roof of the same, which was built in 1340, and also a fragment of one of the earliest Roman temples in England, built before the conversion of the Britons".[14] The spire of St. Michael's was not added until 1862.

Itinerant missionaries of the Dutch Reformed Church of the United States provided the earliest contact of Presbyterianism with York and vicinity. In the first years of the nineteenth century the Rev. Robert McDowell visited the town, and in 1810 the Rev. John Beattie of the same religious body preached at York during an eighteen weeks' tour of the north shore of Lake Ontario. As early as 1818 an organised group of Presbyterians was holding meetings under the direction of the Rev. W. Jenkins, Scottish missionary from the United States. In 1821 several of them were attending service each Sunday in a small house on Hospital (Richmond) Street, the Rev. James Harris having organised a congregation in the previous autumn. Mr. Jesse Ketchum not only donated the land, but also paid £125 for the construction of a small wooden chapel. The church lands extended to Queen Street, that portion, we are told, being used "mainly for the cultivation of potatoes. It was leased for 21 years at a rental of £45 per annum, the rents to go to the minister".[15] The new church was opened on February 18, 1822, and was the only Presbyterian Church in York until St. Andrew's was erected on the southwest corner of Adelaide and Church Streets in 1830.

As in the case of the Methodists, the Presbyterian body was early divided into sects arising from differences of opinion in matters of ritual or organisation. The first congregation, on Richmond Street, for example, was unconnected with the Scottish church; but St. Andrew's on Adelaide Street, the opening service in which was held on Sunday, June 19, 1831, was affiliated with the National Church of Scotland. Prominent among the

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 311.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 215. For a detailed account of the origin of the first Knox Church, as recorded by James Harris in 1870, see the Toronto Centenary Number of the *New Outlook*, March 14, 1934, p. 167.

organisers of this congregation was Dr. William Dunlop, a picturesque pioneer whom one meets frequently in the pages of the early history of this province. St. Andrew's Church was a building "of unadorned simplicity, crude in all its appointments, with the old-fashioned, elevated, semi-circular wine-glass pulpit and sounding-board, and stiff, straight, high-backed uncomfortable pews ranged in rectilineal form, heated by large stoves in which wood was burned".[16] The 79th Regiment of Scotch Highlanders attended the opening service, and many members of this and the 71st Regiment were prominent in St. Andrew's congregation as long as they were garrisoned at York.

In 1843 occurred the "disruption" of the Established Church of Scotland, and those who seceded from that body formed the Free Church of Scotland. The main point of difference was that the latter group believed in the complete separation of church and state. The controversy spread to Canada, and 83 members withdrew from St. Andrew's Church, uniting with the earlier congregation on Richmond Street. The united body took the name Knox Church in December, 1844. On May 31, 1847, the church building was destroyed by fire; and, after worshipping for a time in St. Andrew's Church and in the Temperance Hall, the congregation occupied the new Knox Church in the early autumn of 1848. The edifice is described as "a plain, brick structure, with the old-fashioned, high, square-backed pews both on the gallery and main floor, arranged in stiff, formal manner straight across the church. The only ornamental portion of the room was the pulpit and its oak and walnut canopy—a most ornate and artistic piece of workmanship; the canopy with its pinnacles and graceful gothic lines being especially noteworthy".[17]

Characteristic of other times when people held strong convictions was the attitude of a considerable minority in Cooke's Presbyterian Church in 1880 who registered violent protest against the purchase of a reed organ. While the leader and his "music circle" were rehearsing for Sunday service, members of this group removed the offending organ from the church. The tuning-fork was good enough for the old-time Scottish, and we find in earlier days other out-

[16]Robertson, *ibid.*, p. 225. [17]*Ibid.*, p. 215.

breaks of a similar nature against "the Deil's kest o' whustles". In fact there is a Presbyterian church on the Kingston Road within the boundaries of Toronto where the tuning-fork is still retained among other traditional religious usages. In this connection it is of interest to know that St. Andrew's was the first Presbyterian church in Canada to permit instrumental music at its services. In 1852 the band of the 71st Highland Light Infantry played at the morning service, and in the following year a melodeon was purchased and a choir formed.

While there were members of the Baptist Church in York at least as early as 1820, the commencement of regular services appears to have been in 1829, when a few people were accustomed to meet in the Masonic Hall, the upper room of a Colborne Street building. The first Baptist Church was erected in 1832 on March (later Stanley, and now Lombard) Street. It was a small, square, one-storey chapel with a seating capacity of about 160. The first minister was the Rev. A. Stewart, 1829-1836, and for the four years following several laymen conducted the services in the absence of a regular incumbent. Among the first lay workers was T. F. Caldicott, later a clergyman, but at that time a member of the 29th Regiment—a school teacher who was often called "the soldier preacher". His life work —in later years he was the Rev. Dr. Caldicott—merited the eulogy that it was "the solid rock foundation upon which is built the present prosperity of the Baptist Church in Toronto".[18]

When the Baptist congregation was first organised in 1829 twenty-three persons contributed towards running expenses. From old records we learn that the minister's salary was $171; that "Elder Butler received 10 shillings for one day's sermons" on March 8, 1841; and that in July of the same year "Elder Moon was paid 10 shillings for a sermon on Election".[19] In 1844 the chapel was sold and the congregation removed to Bond Street. Jarvis Street church traces its origin to the March Street chapel, and among later congregations may be mentioned that of Walmer Road, whose church, erected in the early nineties, was long considered one of the handsomest in Canada.

[18]*Ibid.*, p. 424. [19]*Ibid.*

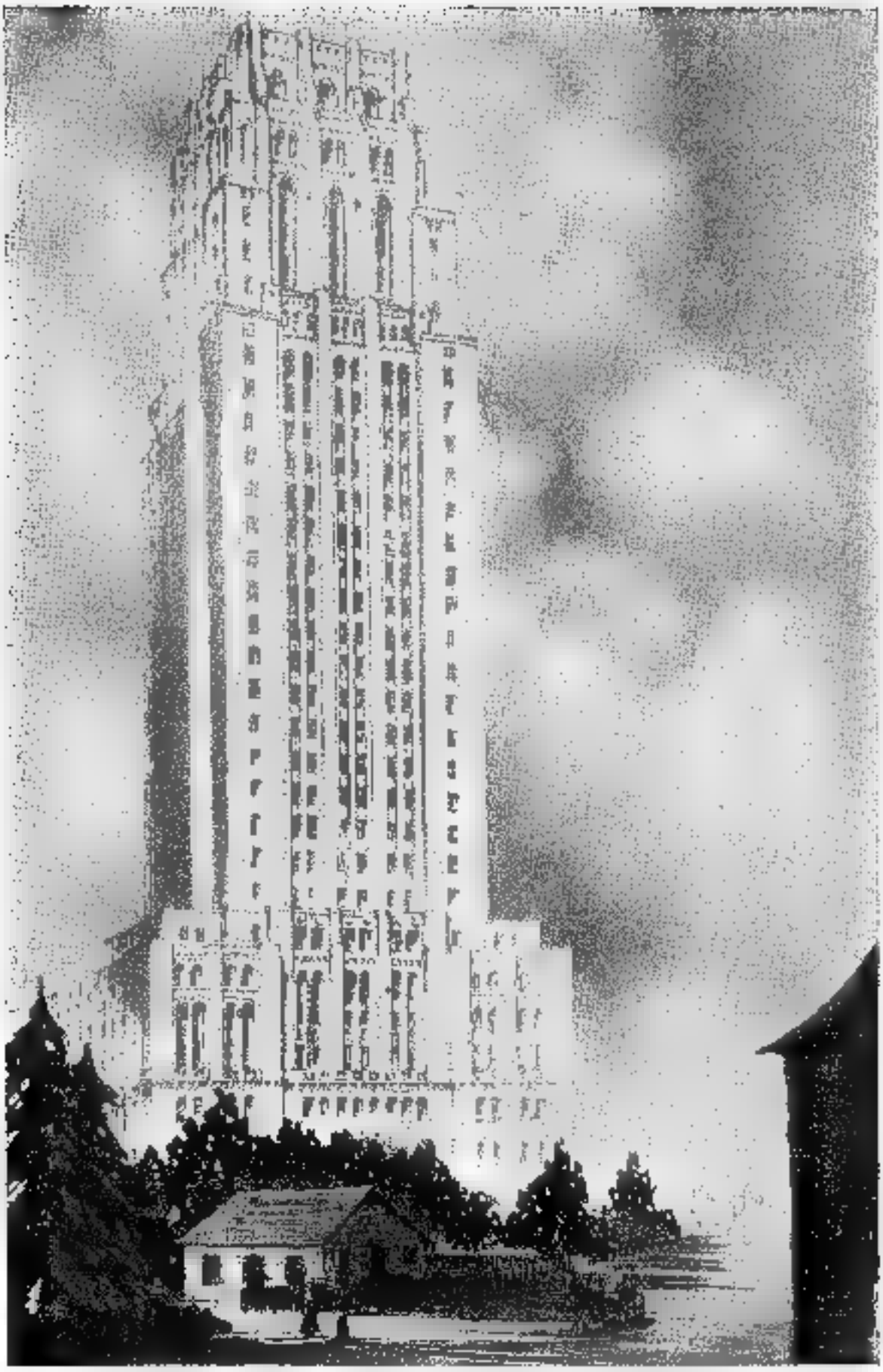
Artist Unknown.

YORK IN 1803

The population at that time was 456, and the taxes collected amounted to a mere £62.

John Ross Robertson Collection. Hon. G. W. Allan, after an earlier sketch.

TORONTO'S FIRST CHURCH: ST. JAMES', 1807



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KING AND JORDAN STREETS, 1834-1934

Erected in 1818, the Methodist meeting-house was the Theatre Royal in the first year of the city. In the city's Centennial Year the magnificent 33-storey Canadian Bank of Commerce Head Office occupies the site.

Congregationalists were never a strong religious body in Toronto. Their organisation dates from the first year of the city, 1834, when seventeen members become associated under the leadership of the Rev. Mr. Merrefield, a member of the Independent Church in England. The first services were held in the Masonic Hall on Colborne Street, where the early Baptists also held their meetings. In 1837 the use of the Methodist chapel on George Street was secured, and the congregation became known as Zion Church. In 1839 a new church was erected on the north-east corner of Bay and Newgate (Adelaide) Streets, the structure being "a neat and commodious edifice, 40 x 80 feet, capable of seating 700 persons, with a basement for the Sunday school. It was brick-faced, with plaster made of white marble dust, and cost, exclusive of the land, about $10,000".[20] This was the mother church of Congregationalism in the province.

Among the citizens of early Toronto who took an active part in religious life may be mentioned Jesse Ketchum, "the Children's Friend". At first a pew-holder in St. James' Anglican, he frequently attended the Methodist chapel after 1818, and taught in the Sunday School. His home was always open to travelling ministers, and family prayer was conducted there twice a day. His gift to the Presbyterian Church has already been mentioned. He was a strong temperance advocate, and even when eighty years of age was accustomed to give short addresses to the boys and girls in Toronto Sunday Schools. His generosity in subscribing liberally to public enterprises of a religious, educational and philanthropic nature has ensured him a distinguished place in the memories of the past.[21]

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 474. For further details see the official report dated 1872, quoted in the *New Outlook*, March 14, 1934, p. 166.

[21] Mr. Ketchum aided financially in the construction of ten churches of several denominations in Toronto. Temperance Street was opened by him through his property and named by him; and he erected Temperance Hall on its south side and presented it to the Temperance Reformation Society—it now (alas!) houses the Empire burlesque theatre. When in later years he removed to Buffalo his philanthropy was equally characteristic of his life there. A good biography of Jesse Ketchum by the late E. J. Hathaway, *Jesse Ketchum and His Times*, was published in 1929.

The commencement of the Salvation Army in 1882 is an event that can be recalled by many people still living. Long persecuted by the rough and vicious in the community, as well, it is feared, by many who were professed Christians, the "soldiers" and "officers" steadfastly persevered in good works. Preaching a simple Christianity on a military basis, the Salvationists were the pioneers in social service, and their activities among the unfortunate, while recalling something of the spirit of early Methodism, have seldom been equalled by other religious denominations.

The first meeting of the Salvation Army in Toronto was held in McMillan's Hall, corner of Yonge and Gerrard Streets, on June 11, 1882. At this time the organisation was unconnected with that founded by William Booth in England, though officers had previously been dispatched to the United States to inaugurate the Army there. On September 1st activities were rapidly accelerated when Staff Captain Charles Wass arrived in Toronto from England. Soon afterwards the marching and open-air preaching so characteristic of the Salvation Army were inaugurated, and as a result "an outcry of 'new religion' was raised, and for a time the little band of workers had unmistakably stormy weather; they were mercilessly 'guyed' and mobbed by the public on every appearance, and were looked upon with no small disfavour by the majority of religionists. In spite of this the progress here, as elsewhere, was rapid and substantial".[22]

During 1883 the "mother barracks" on Richmond Street was opened—the first in Canada. Concerning the building, its inauguration, and some of the typical activities of Salvationists, a contemporary writer says:

"The Salvation Temple just completed is quite an imposing structure with its castellated bastions, combining in appearance the castle, the barracks and the temple. The frontage is 106 feet, with a depth of 100. It is built of red brick with stone facings. The Temple is constructed in amphitheatrical form and has one gallery at the back. The ground floor rises from the centre, and a passage runs entirely round next the wall. The auditorium will hold

[22]Robertson, *ibid.*, p. 508.

about 2,500 people, and there is not a bad seat in the house; the ventilation is perfect, as are also the acoustic properties.

"The officers conducting the services sit on the north side, with the soldiers and audience all about them. The soldiers for the most part occupy the pit, or dress circle. This latter arrangement is in accordance with the system followed by General Booth in England. The ceiling of the Temple is of varnished wood, while the walls are finished stucco work in plaster. Texts and mottoes will be used as additional ornaments. The entire height of the building, which comprises four stories, is 80 feet to the top of the tower, and 50 feet to the centre and slates. The windows are all stained glass and Scripture mottoes. A pair of iron gates close in the front entrance, over which appears in stone letters the single word 'Hallelujah'. The entire cost will be about $40,000. . . .

"The Temple was formally opened on the arrival of Marshall Ballington Booth, who came this way from Australia (on his return journey to England) to dedicate the building. The 'Council of War' continued from the 1st to the 8th of May, and was the occasion of enthusiastic demonstrations. The daily processions, accompanied by bands of music, were witnessed by immense crowds of people, and at night the vast auditorium of the Temple was crowded to excess. On Sunday, the 2nd, the formal dedication took place; and each succeeding day and evening through the week there was a change of programme, including a Hallelujah Wedding and Infant Dedication. On the night of the latter ceremony a number of officers and soldiers who had been imprisoned for noisy demonstrations appeared in prison costume and related their experience."[23]

Among the interesting smaller congregations which were early established in Toronto was one usually called the African Church, but more correctly the First Calvinistic Baptist Church. As early as July, 1827, meetings under David Pallison were being held in the rooms of No. 9 Masonic Lodge, Colborne Street. In 1834 the congregation organised, and in 1841 the first church edifice was erected on the north-east corner of Queen and Victoria Streets. While consisting mainly of Negroes, the congregation in-

[23]Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 264-6.

cluded a number of white worshippers. A writer of a century ago makes the following reference to this church:

"The coloured inhabitants of Toronto have an African church which is well attended—it is very gratifying to bear testimony to the good conduct of the negroes residing in this city. They have most of them escaped from slavery, they are well protected and kindly used, and appear to evince a sense of gratitude at their treatment, and show that they duly appreciate the inestimable blessing of freedom."[24]

The first Jewish synagogue in Toronto was on the south side of Richmond Street, a short distance east of Victoria. The interior was not greatly different from that of Christian churches, consisting of main floor and galleries. About 125 persons made up the congregation of this synagogue in 1886, and it was known by the name of Holy Blossom. In 1897 the present Holy Blossom Synagogue was erected on Bond Street at a cost of over $40,000, financial aid being contributed by a number of Christians. Writing concerning its construction, John Ross Robertson noted in 1903 that, as "the Jewish population in Toronto includes barely 150 members, the cost would have been an almost unconquerable obstacle without assistance from outside".[25] There were, perhaps, but 150 members of Holy Blossom Synagogue, but Jews numbered 1,425 in Toronto in 1891 and 3,078 in 1901. At that time the only other Jewish synagogues were three small buildings which served chiefly small groups of Austrian, Polish or Russian Jews; but during the last thirty years large numbers of immigrants have greatly increased Toronto's Jewish population.

In 1844 a religious census of the city was taken, and among the interesting facts to be derived therefrom is that Jews numbered only 18, and that those who wished themselves recorded as of no church were but 210. Many denominations no longer in existence figure largely in the following table:

[24]Thomas Rolph: *A Brief Account . . . . of the West Indies and the United States; . . . . together with a Statistical Account of Upper Canada.* 1836, p. 178. Further interesting details concerning the early history of this church may be found in the *Globe*, March 16, 1934.

[25]Robertson, *ibid.*, p. 560.

Church of England	7,921
Church of Scotland	1,860
Roman Catholics	3,678
United Secession Church	398
Independent Presbyterians	426
Congregationalists	629
British Wesleyan Methodists	1,102
Wesleyan Methodist Church in Canada	840
Episcopal Methodists	11
Primitive Methodists	283
Other Methodists	185
Lutherans	8
Jews	18
Disciples of Christ	77
Universalists	35
Apostolic Church	123
Covenanters	35
Baptists	454
Quakers	22
Millerites	55
Unitarians	4
Free Church	5
All Churches	22
Dutch Church	7
Bethelites	2
No Church	210
Total	18,410

Much of interest might be written concerning many of the small sects enumerated above. The Millerites, for example, believed that the world would be consumed by fire in February, 1843, and so certain were they that the end was near that some residents of the rural districts burned up their rail fences or gave away their farms. One Sarah Terwilligar, near Oshawa, "made for herself wings of silk, and on the night of the 14th of February jumped off the porch of her home, expecting to fly heavenward. Falling to the ground some fifteen feet, she was shaken up severely and rendered wholly unfit to attend the fires that were expected to follow the next day".[26]

[26]Thomas Conant: *Upper Canada Sketches*, 1898, p. 92.

Memories of processions of Quakers in early Toronto are recalled by Dr. Scadding:

"Still referring to processions associated in our memory with Court House Square, the recollection of another comes up, which once or twice a year used formerly to pass down King Street on a Sunday. The townspeople were familiar enough with the march of the troops of the Garrison to and from Church to the sound of military music on Sundays. But on the occasions now referred to, the public eye was drawn to a spectacle professedly of an opposite character—to the procession of the 'Children of Peace', so-called.

"These were a local off-shoot of the Society of Friends, the followers of Mr. David Willson, who had his headquarters at Sharon, in Whitchurch, where he had built a 'Temple', a large wooden structure painted white and resembling a high-piled house of cards. Periodically he deemed it proper to make a demonstration in town. His disciples and friends, dressed in their best, mounted their waggons and solemnly passed down Yonge Street, and then on through some frequented thoroughfare of York to a place previously announced, where the prophet would preach. His topic was usually 'Public Affairs: their Total Depravity'. When waxing warm in his discourse, he would sometimes, without interrupting the flow of his words, suddenly throw off his coat and suspend it on a nail or pin in the wall, waving about with freedom, during the residue of his oration, a pair of sturdy arms, arrayed, not indeed in the dainty lawn of a bishop, but in stout, well-bleached American Factory. His address was divided into sections, between which 'hymns of his own composing' were sung by a company of females dressed in white, sitting on one side, accompanied by a band of musical instruments on the other. Considerable crowds assembled on these occasions: and once a panic arose as preaching was going on in the public room of Lawrence's Hotel: the joists of the floor were heard to crack; a rush was made to the door, and several leaped out of the windows.

"The following notice of the 'Children of Peace' occurs in Patrick Swift's *Almanac for 1834*, penned, probably,

with an eye to votes in the neighbourhood of Sharon, or Hope, as the place is here called. 'This society', the *Almanac* reports, 'numbers about 280 members in Hope, east of Newmarket. They have also stated places of preaching at the Old Court House, York, on Yonge Street, and at Markham. Their principal speaker is David Willson, assisted by Murdock McLeod, Samuel Hughes, and others. Their music, vocal and instrumental, is excellent, and their preachers seek no pay from the Governor out of the taxes'."[27]

Toronto has long been called "the city of churches", as well as (somewhat sarcastically, no doubt,) "Toronto the Good". In its Centennial Year the city has no fewer than 390 churches and missions, and the comment which C. C. Taylor made in that connection in 1886 is probably almost as true today:

"In no city in the world are churches more numerous, or the congregations larger in proportion to the population, and it is safe to say that in this respect the church accommodation is larger than in any other city. Taking the average capacity to be one thousand, and the number of churches in Toronto and suburbs at one hundred and twenty, the entire population, if present at one time, could nearly be accommodated; and this cannot be said of any other city."[28]

Apart altogether from religious life the churches of early Canada made a notable contribution to education. The connection between education and religion was early emphasised by every denomination, and the importance at-

[27]Scadding, *op. cit.*, pp. 105-7.

[28]Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 261. A book appeared in 1898 suggesting in no uncertain terms that the Queen City had no right to the appellation "Toronto the Good". Those who wish to know the location of dens of immorality in the "gay nineties", to hear of the evil that characterised portions of the waterfront and the island, and to learn something of the seamy side of life generally, may find a rambling account in C. S. Clark: *Of Toronto the Good: A Social Study. The Queen City of Canada As It Is.* The work appears to have been inspired by the Social Purity Conference in Baltimore and the World Convention of the W.C.T.U. in Toronto, both held in 1897. Whether the writer was a social service investigator or obtained his evidence by personal experience, there is undoubtedly a good deal of truth in his revelations; but some of his general statements—particularly the one "women are largely fools" (which he emphasises)—might be harder to prove!

tached to the union of the two is evident from the fact that facilities for higher education were primarily provided entirely by the various religious denominations. Victoria College, established in Cobourg in 1841 by the Methodists, was the earliest in the province, and King's College, Toronto, under Anglican auspices, a close second. It may be said that in general there has been a weakening in the tie in modern times, a condition to be explained partly by the great development of state education, and partly by the undoubted diminution in intensity of religious feeling among almost all bodies, a distinct tendency towards shallowness of thought being coincident with the education of the masses, the mechanisation of our existence, and the lower moral tone resulting from the modern worship of material things.

CHAPTER XXII

THE "GLORIOUS TWELFTH"

TWELFTH of July celebrations have so long been prominent in Ontario, and in Toronto in particular, that some account of their origin, characteristics, and reception by inhabitants of opposing sympathies will be illustrative not only of Toronto's local history but also of "old times" in this province. Many people still look upon the Orange Walk as the event of the year, while the varied activities connected with the Lodges occupy a large part in the social life of a considerable portion of our population. For nearly a century the Orange Lodge has been so strong in Toronto that the greater part of almost every City Council have been those appearing on the Orange "slate"; in fact, with the exception of but a few each year, the aldermen have commonly been members of the Order. There have been occasions and events in the city's history which suggest the contrary, but the policies of Conservative and Protestant Orangeism have usually been considered, at least by those outside Toronto, to be the public opinion of the city as a whole; though in the early days of the Order it was opposed by Family Compact Tories as well as by Reformers.

It is believed that British regiments on garrison duty brought Orangeism to Canada, but it was not until 1830 that the Orange Association was organised in Brockville under the name of the Grand Lodge of British America. The first celebration in York of which we have any record occurred in 1822. The *Upper Canada Gazette* of July 18th notes that the members of the York Lodge assembled in their room and "at two o'clock marched in procession to church, accompanied by the band of the West York Militia, where the Hon. and Rev. Dr. Strachan gave an elegant and appropriate discourse on the occasion. After divine service they repaired to Mr. Phair's Tavern, where upwards of one hundred members sat down to an elegant dinner prepared for their reception. They remained until a late hour, the greatest harmony prevailing". The toast list suggests the

military nature of the proceedings of that day: while the accompanying songs included *Boyne Water, Rule Britannia, St. Patrick's Day, British Grenadiers*, and *The York Quickstep*, the last-named appropriately sung to the toast of the Upper Canadian Militia.[1] The celebration of 1823 was almost identical with that of the previous year, but the account suggests the additional information that the Lodge Room of the Association was in Phair's Tavern.

When in 1830 Ogle R. Gowan organised the Grand Lodge of British America the first steps were taken to establish a branch in York, and in 1831 the Nassau Lodge, No. 4, was formed. By 1833 York County had about 1,000 Orangemen, but the annual processions appear to have been objectionable to many people; consequently we find that in 1834 the York Association decided to replace the parade by a dinner. The *Patriot* of July the 15th commends the Orangemen for their good intentions in making "this gratifying concession to public opinion". Only about thirty members attended the dinner in the Ontario House, but the lack of numbers was no impediment to their enthusiasm, for seventeen toasts were proposed, including many of that partisan nature which was foreign to the original Orange celebrations but had come to be characteristic of the lodge. The *Patriot* notes that "in the morning some dozen or fifteen silly bodies attempted to pick up a procession, in defiance of the lodge, but as nobody noticed them they began to suspect how foolish they looked, and dropped off one by one till all vanished, nobody knew how or where".[2]

The general attitude of the Family Compact towards Orangeism was that of aristocratic contempt, which was frequently expressed in language that could not be mistaken. In 1835, for example, the *Patriot* noted that "some of the lower orders" walked in procession, with resulting riots in various parts of the city. Consquently "the Police Court has been engaged the whole of the past week in trying cases of assault, riot, etc., growing out of the disturbances".

In June, 1839, Lieutenant-Governor Sir George Arthur addressed a letter to the mayor and aldermen of Toronto

[1]*Upper Canada Gazette*, July 18, 1822.
[2]The *Patriot*, July 15, 1834.

instructing them to use their influence to prevent an Orange procession on July 12th. Mayor Powell replied upholding the celebration of the day, and tendering his resignation from the office of justice of the peace and captain of the militia if there was to be any interference. The chief result of the Lieutenant-Governor's action appears to have been an unusually large procession.

There was for many years a feeling of hatred between the members of the Orange Order and the Reform Party. This was intensified in 1843 when the Baldwin-Lafontaine Ministry introduced a measure suppressing all secret societies other than the Freemasons. The bill, which passed the Assembly easily, was reserved by the Governor and finally disallowed by the British Government, though at that time the Orange Order was suspected in Britain and no army officer was permitted to belong to it.

Meanwhile an Orange demonstration was organised in Toronto to show the supporters of the bill how their proposed legislation was appreciated. The *Examiner*, organ of the Reformers, carried the following account of the disturbance:

"Last night between eleven and twelve o'clock a large body of Orangemen was permitted by the city authorities to disturb the public peace with hideous yells and cries of 'Down with popery', as they followed a cart in which was erected a gallows; from it hung two effigies on which they had inscribed 'Baldwin and Hincks, the traitors', and 'No surrender'. The 'heroes' will, however, be compelled to surrender, and Mr. Baldwin and Mr. Hincks would indeed be traitors to their long-expressed principles did they allow the present session to pass over without bringing forward the Act for the suppression of secret societies, as without that measure it is impossible to obtain security for life and property.

"P.S. The effigies were burned amid the most indecent ribaldry immediately in front of the Hon. W. W. Baldwin's residence. It is well known that the venerable Doctor's health has been for some time in a very precarious state, which renders the outrage doubly atrocious. Our citizens may well rejoice at the opportunity which will soon be afforded them of displacing the present violent partisan

city magistrates by the nomination of men possessing character, property and intelligence".[3]

In 1843 the Party Processions Act was passed in Kingston, prohibiting such demonstrations as Orange parades. The Act was in general unpopular, and, as is usually the result of attempts at suppression, it succeeded only in increasing the numbers of Orangemen, and adding vigour to the organisation. While many political processions were not prevented, there was frequently interference with Orange parades, though juries usually refused to convict persons arrested under these circumstances. Among those who urged the repeal of the law in 1851 was William Lyon Mackenzie, though he had no reason to be particularly fond of the Orange Order. By a vote of 38 to 16 the Act was removed from the statute books, and a law which had been generally disobeyed came to an end. The celebration of 1850 will serve as an example of the lack of respect for the existing law. The *Patriot* of July 13th describes as follows the events of the day:

"According to custom, the approach of this anniversary was hailed by the discharge of firearms of all kinds and sizes, which continued during nearly the whole of Thursday night, a mode of celebrating holidays in Canada which we would be glad to see discontinued. Yesterday morning proved to be fine, and at an early hour our streets were quite enlivened by the number of farmers with their wives, daughters and sisters, bedecked with orange and blue ribbons, who had come in to join the celebration of the day. Seven lodges met soon after midday and formed in procession to the number of from four to five hundred with their banners and badges. A more respectable body of men we have seldom seen.

"After walking through the principal streets they directed their course up Yonge Street and by College Avenue to the grounds of Caer Howell, where they were addressed by the Deputy Grand Master, R. Dempsey, Esq., on the duties and privileges of Orangemen. The address, we are told, was a very excellent one. The lodges then left the grounds, to meet at their several lodge-rooms in the evening, where they dined together and doubtless concluded the

[3]The *Examiner*, November 8, 1843.

day very much to their own satisfaction. We rejoice to add that everything passed off well, and that at a late hour last night nothing had occurred at all calculated to disturb the general harmony—a fact which is highly creditable to our good city."[4]

In 1852, the year following the repeal of the law against political processions, a parade in which several thousand participated was held in Toronto. Steamboats brought many people from Hamilton, St. Catharines and other towns to join their brethren in Toronto. The procession which formed in front of the Parliament Buildings, near the corner of Front and Simcoe, was nearly two miles long, and was accompanied "by several bands of music, a still greater number of Orange flags, Orange dresses and other insignia. The tunes common to the occasion were played by the bands, and crackers were fired off". The parade ended at the Cricket Grounds, or Caer Howell, located a short distance south of College Street and just west of University Avenue, where a cold luncheon was served to about 2,000 people. After hearing a number of speeches the rural Orangemen made their way homeward, while those of the city dined at their respective lodge-rooms in the various hotels. The *British Colonist* notes that the police were prepared for disturbances, but none took place. This was no doubt due, to a considerable extent at least, to the advice issued from the pulpit of St. Michael's Cathedral urging all Roman Catholics not to interfere in any way with the activities of the Orangemen.

A description of the units in the parade of 1852 will serve as an example of what has been more or less characteristic of the processions from that day to the present:

The Chief Marshall, mounted on a steed, with a scarlet gown, cap and plume.

A brass band.

A band of drums and fifes.

The Union Jack.

Tyler, with drawn sword.

The Grand Master of York County, East and West.

The District of Toronto.

The Grand Tyler, with drawn sword.

[4]The *Patriot*, July 13, 1850.

The Grand Flag.

The Grand Officers.

Rural and visiting lodges, led by the men of Slabtown and St. Catharines.

The City Lodges, led by No. 4.

At the sides of the procession were eight marshalls mounted on grey chargers and dressed in scarlet; these men carried batons and kept the crowd from the parade. Among the bands which were placed at intervals in the procession were those of Toronto, Cooksville, Ancaster, Streetsville, Hamilton and St. Catharines; while 116 standards, flags and banners were carried, in addition to a large number displayed from shop windows along the route of march. Remarkable to relate, the press notes that "neither an angry look nor an angry word, or a drunken and disorderly person, was seen or heard to dishonour the day or to mar its enjoyment".[5]

In 1853 Mayor Bowes arranged for the presence of troops on the 12th of July because "fearful reports were in circulation about the railroad labourers coming into the city to prevent the Orange procession". As early as 4 a.m. the reports of firearms were heard in various parts of Toronto, but they were merely evidence of "warming-up" on the part of the Orangemen. Otherwise the day passed off as usual, except that one newspaper referred to the celebrants as "individuals who by occupation were little more than labourers working for their daily bread", while an alderman described them as "a set of loafers".

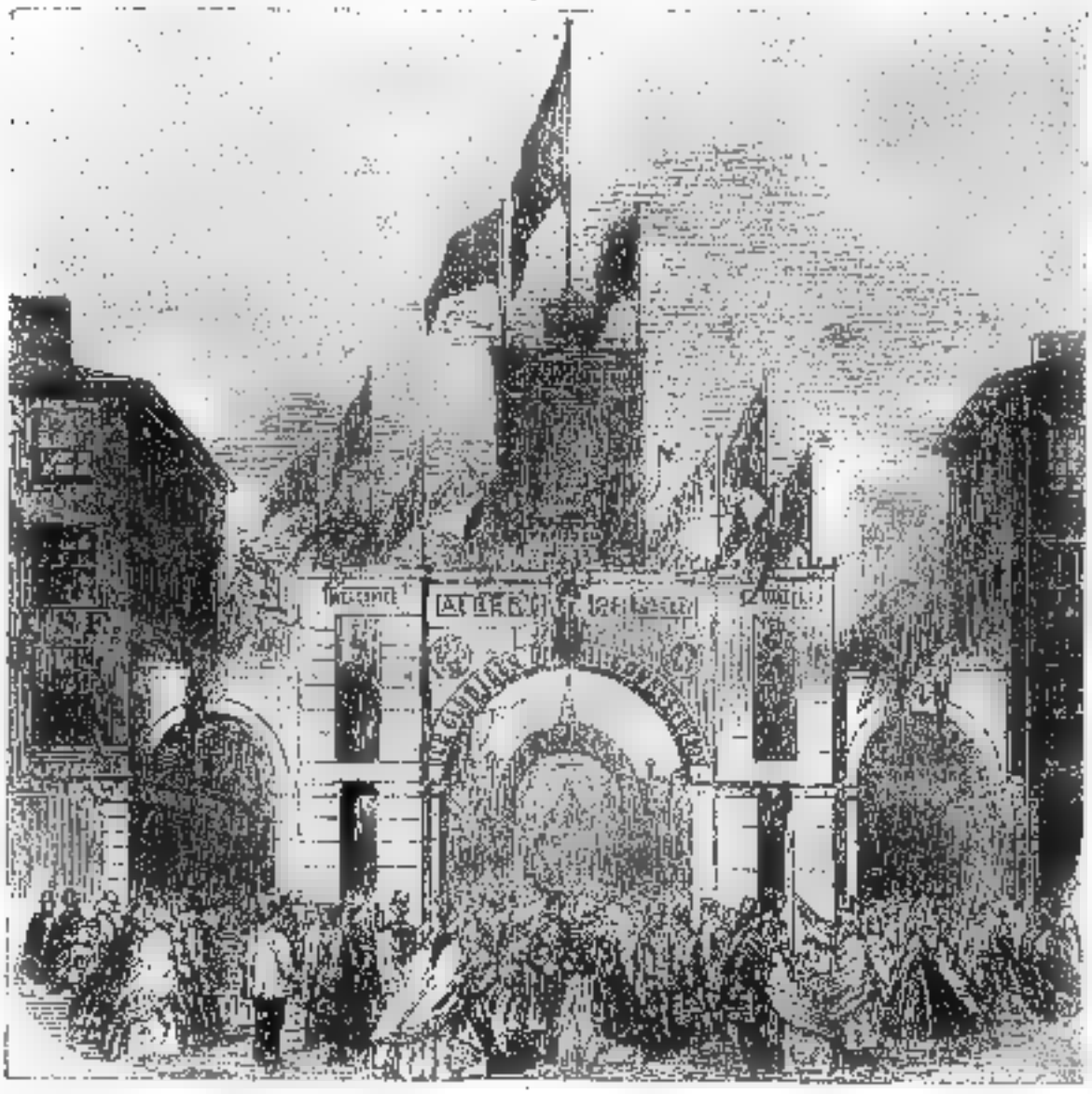
Little of note occurred during the next few years. In 1857 there was "the largest and most splendidly arranged procession we have witnessed in Toronto during thirty-six years". After attending church and parading the streets the lodges dined in St. Lawrence Hall, at that time the centre of Toronto's social life. The *Examiner* noted that "there is one feature in the processions of the 17th of March and the 12th of July which shows the increasing good sense of both Catholic and Protestant in Toronto—each party plays its own tunes, displays its own badges, marches where

[5]Many interesting details concerning the history of the Orange Order may be found in John Ross Robertson's *Landmarks of Toronto*, Vol. VI, pp. 137-204. Quotations in this chapter not otherwise credited are from this record.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

THE ENNISKILLEN ARMS

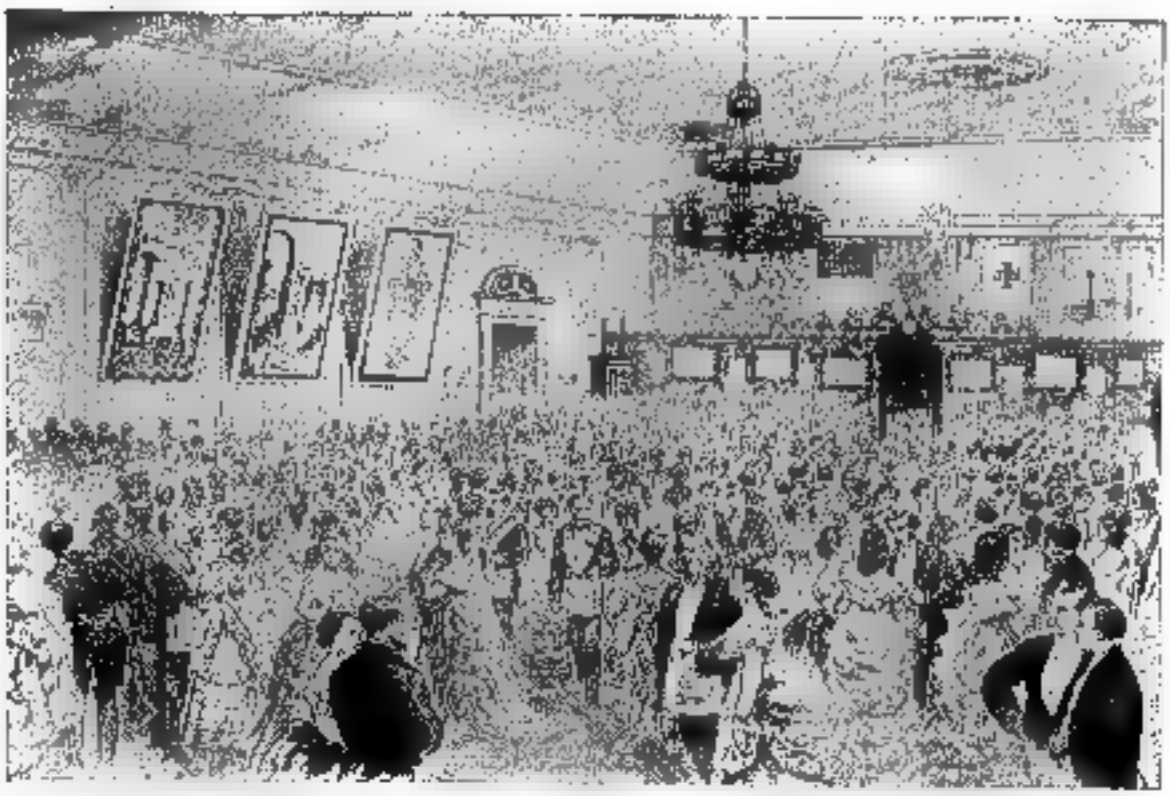
This tavern, located on the north side of Queen Street between University and Simcoe, was long popular among Orangemen, W. C. Mack, its proprietor, being a prominent member of the Order.



Illustrated London News.

THE ORANGEMEN'S ARCH, KING AND CHURCH STREETS, 1860.

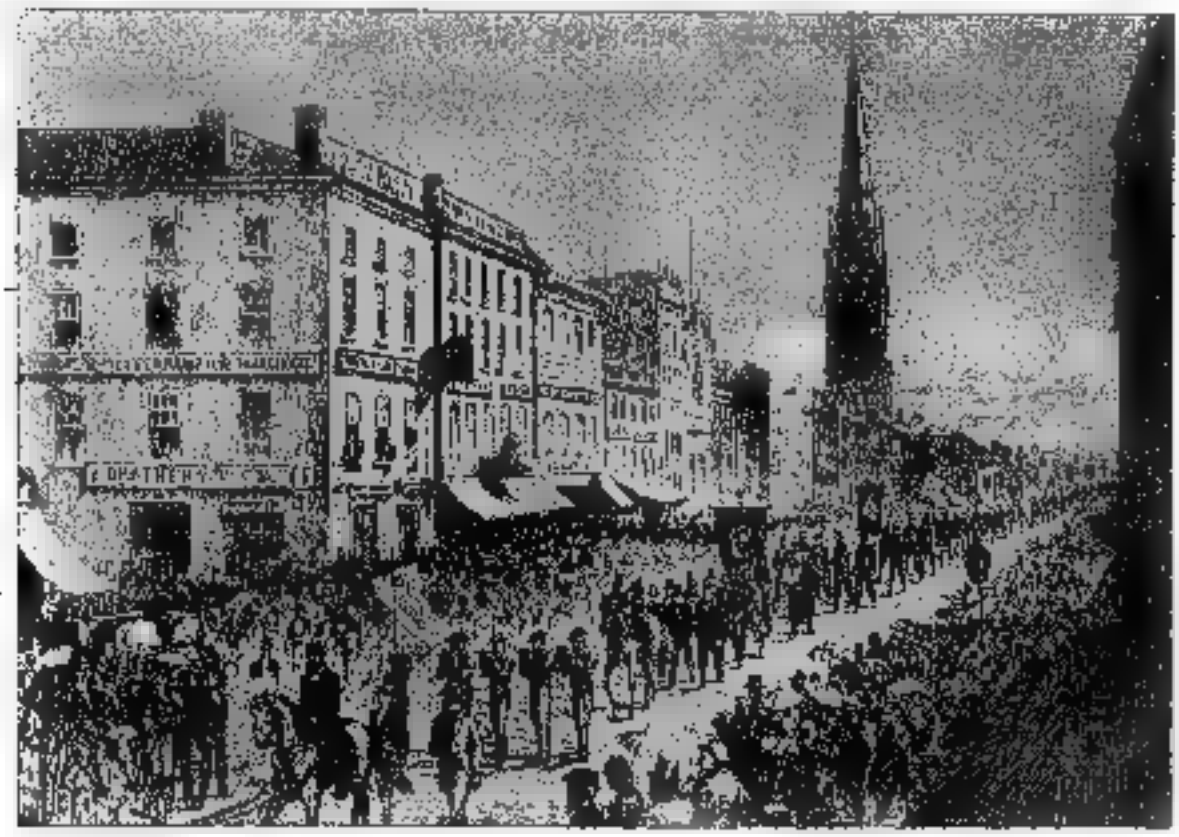
The arch was located on King Street at Church, but the Prince's party avoided it by continuing down Church to Wellington Street!



Canadian Illustrated News. F. M. Bell Smith.

MASONIC CONVERSAZIONE, FEBRUARY 20, 1873

For this event Professor Davis' Band supplied the music, and the party broke up at 3 a.m. The Masonic Hall was the scene of the entertainment, which resembled what was later called a promenade.



Canadian Illustrated News.

THE ORANGE WALK, 1874

Early Orange Parades not infrequently resulted in riots. The procession is here shown on King Street East, with the beautiful spire of St. James' Cathedral in the background.

it thinks fit, says what it likes, none molesting it, and injuring no one".[6]

In 1858 there occurred one of those "bloody battles" which until modern times often resulted from gatherings of a partisan nature—in many rural localities, in fact, from assemblies of any kind. The *Leader* describes the riot:

"As the procession was wending its way along Queen Street, near William Street, a row occurred which at one time threatened to end more seriously than it did. Through some means a quarrel was stirred up between two parties, one of whom was an Orangeman and the other a Roman Catholic. . . . Shots were freely fired, but, though the contents of the pistols took effect in some instances, they did not result fatally. One man named James Brown, gardener to the Mayor, was shot in the back. Another man named King, of the opposite party, was also wounded by a ball which passed through his cheek, carrying away some of his teeth and making a very ugly wound. Though in a very faint state for some time after being picked up, little fears of a fatal result are to be apprehended.

"During the heat of the row a large body of police were called out, with guns loaded ready for action. They were carried off in cabs post-haste to St. Patrick's Market. On arrival there they succeeded, with the help of the Mayor, in dispersing the crowd, and quietness was soon restored. The policemen, however, remained about the place for a considerable time, not deeming it desirable to leave, as knots of men might here and there be seen conversing—not in the most cool manner possible, nor in the most select choice of expression.

"There was another row about Victoria Street, but this was of a more trifling nature, though it is to be regretted that pistols were here also made use of. One man had his hand slightly scarred by the graze of a bullet; and another had the flesh of his left thigh somewhat ruffled by the abrasion of a ball. As is generally the case when pistols are used in such disturbances, a cry was immediately set on foot that two men were killed—shot dead—mortally wounded—or something of that description of a more or less shocking nature. The city was somewhat agog as the

[6]The *Examiner*, July 18, 1857.

rumour spread, and people hastened to the scene of the disaster; but their fears were allayed when they learned that nothing more serious than what we have related alone had occurred.

"Several Lodges dined together in the evening and engaged themselves in song and glee till a late hour at night,—some to an early hour in the morning."

Reminiscent of other times is the same newspaper's report that "the juveniles, as usual, amused themselves by setting off squibbs and firecrackers, sometimes to the no little inconvenience of ladies who paraded the streets with a rather extended display of crinoline".[7]

The visit of the Prince of Wales (later Edward VII) to Canada in 1860 provided an unintentional impetus to Orangeism. The Prince's private secretary, the Duke of Newcastle, was a Roman Catholic, and through his influence the official party frowned upon and avoided all celebrations where Orange or other partisan demonstrations were prominent. Some caustic references were made to this at several subsequent 12th of July celebrations, and the Hon. J. H. Cameron was sent to England to present to the Queen the remonstrances of Canadian Orangemen. The annual "walks" of 1862 and 1863 were more enthusiastically supported than ever before, the parade of the latter year being described as "by far the largest Orange turnout that has ever been witnessed in Canada". Queen's Park was the rendezvous, and by eleven in the morning thousands were on hand to enjoy the "temperance beverages" which enterprising saloon-keepers dispensed from tents hastily erected for the purpose. Brother Robert Wigmore, seven-foot giant from Pickering, officiated as Grand Tyler, and 52 visiting lodges joined Toronto Orangemen in a procession led by Bonnhart's brass band of St. Catharines. Almost every lodge brought some sort of music to enhance the pleasure of the day, and the parade proceeded by Yonge and Queen Streets to the Don Bridge, and thence by King, York and Queen Streets to the Crystal Palace, where addresses and refreshments catered, respectively, to the mind and the body.

Visits to other towns became more common in the sixties,

[7]The *Weekly Leader*, July 14, 1858.

Hamilton, Barrie and St. Catharines being the locale of the Orange parade in 1864, 1867 and 1869. In later years various places of assembly were used for the Twelfth of July celebrations held in Toronto. In 1870 a vacant lot at the south-west corner of Adelaide and Toronto Streets served the purpose; while in 1871 the old "Fair Green" east of Gooderham's Mill was the location, in 1872 Clarence Square and Wellington Street, in 1873 the corner of Beech and Parliament Streets, in 1874 the ground "used by circus companies at Grenville Street and Yonge Street Avenue", and in 1876 "Beaty's Field", at the corner of Parliament and Gerrard Streets. The year 1877 was notable because of the riots in Montreal on the twelfth of July, resulting in the shooting of Thomas Lett Hackett. At subsequent Toronto celebrations at the Exhibition Grounds or at Queen's Park numerous references were made to conditions in Montreal, and protests were recorded.

The parades of later years did not differ greatly from those which preceded them, for the celebrations do not admit of much variation except in their accompaniments. The 1889 "Walk" was record-breaking in extent, a fact due largely to the discussion aroused among Protestants by the Jesuits' Estates controversy. Among the speakers was Ogle R. Gowan, M.P.P., founder of the Canadian Orange Association, the Gowan family being from the start among the most prominent members of the organisation. It was rumoured on this occasion that Orangemen had planned to attack St. Michael's Cathedral, but although a few Roman Catholics were on guard all night, no disturbance occurred. After the celebration the various lodges dined in their respective rooms, or in one or another of the numerous hotels and taverns which then dotted Toronto, many of which were operated by Orangemen. In 1895 the Manitoba school question was agitating the Orange lodges, and occupied much of the time devoted to addresses and resolutions.

In the days of the horse railway it could hardly be expected that the public transportation services could be kept on schedule in streets through which the parade passed, nor does it appear that any attempt was made to do so. But when electric cars were inaugurated in 1892 the attitude of the Toronto Railway Company underwent a change, and

there were occasional attempts to operate cars from time to time as the parade progressed. In 1894, for example, a motorman continued to run his car from Walton to Elm Street on Yonge, in spite of the fact that the procession was in progress and that spectators objected to any interference with their view. Finally an onlooker climbed on to the car and persuaded the motorman in no gentle manner that it would be to his advantage to stop.

It was in 1907, however, that the major battle over the comparative rights of processions and trolley cars took place. R. J. Fleming, Manager of the Railway Company, insisted upon the right of the general public to uninterrupted transport facilities, particularly at the noon hour at Yonge and Queen Streets. Negotiations between the Company and the lodges appeared to have been successfully concluded, for the usual and comfortable rendezvous—Queen's Park—was abandoned, and the corners of Jarvis and Gerrard and Jarvis and Wilton were substituted. The old route of march down Yonge and west on Queen was changed to Jarvis Street, and westward by Adelaide, Bay, King and Dufferin to the Exhibition Grounds. It was arranged that cars were to run through gaps in the procession, while representatives of the Company and of the lodges were to be stationed at the chief intersections to see that the agreement was carried out. But a circular was issued by the Company notifying motormen that no parade should be allowed to interfere with the time schedule of the cars.

This unexpected development aroused the hostility of Orangemen, as well as that of a considerable body of other citizens, and the arrest of a few disturbers at the intersection of Queen and Jarvis Streets succeeded only in precipitating further trouble elsewhere. The efforts of officials of the Company, of police, prominent Orangemen, and all others, were of little avail in providing a car service along the route of march, and the parade proceeded to its destination without any appreciable interruption. A police automobile opened the way for some west-bound cars, until at Strachan Avenue a bystander jabbed a jack-knife into one of the tires. At the King Street subway bricks and stones were scattered across the tracks by the crowd, and only after a stiff fight did the police clear the street. Finally

it became impossible to make way for any street cars, and manager Fleming ordered all power shut off, so that for an hour and a half the city was without any service. The confusion resulting from this condition need not be described; but the denunciation which the press and public poured upon the Company, the Orangemen, the police, and everyone in any way concerned, had at least a result, for in all subsequent processions of any kind the control of both traffic and parade was vested in the police exclusively, with satisfaction to all concerned.

In general it may be said that religious antagonism between certain adherents of the Roman Catholic and Protestant bodies characterised most occasions upon which they came in contact. In the eighteen-eighties—and later—a Roman Catholic moonlight excursion almost invariably drew to the harbour a group of their enemies, the Orangemen, and the return of the ship was frequently greeted with showers of stones; and, it is hardly necessary to add, the Roman Catholics did not fail to return the compliment when the occasion offered. So much damage was done to excursion ships by these raids that it became difficult to charter a boat, and outings of another nature had sometimes to be substituted.

Many people love uniforms, insignia, titles and public prominence, and all the world enjoys a procession. The Orangemen's Walk certainly caters to the public fancy in these respects, and, whatever may be one's opinion concerning parties, lodges, and other sectional organisations, certainly no one is injured by their outward manifestations if they interfere with the rights of citizens no more seriously than does the "Glorious Twelfth".

CHAPTER XXIII

Memories of Old St. Lawrence Hall

St. Lawrence Hall, for over twenty years the centre of Toronto's social life, was erected in 1850-51 to provide a place of assembly. The great fire of 1849 had destroyed most of the public buildings on King Street, and some such hall was a prime necessity in a growing city. The central portion of the building was the property of the corporation, while the wings were privately owned. The hall itself had a capacity of less than 1,000 persons, but many more were frequently crowded into it. A contemporary description notes that "the principal object of the talented designer of this edifice, W. Thomas, Esq., was to ensure its complete usefulness as well as ornamentality; for, while the hall is used for public purposes, in its rear runs the St. Lawrence Market, a range of arcade 200 feet in length by 39 feet in breadth, with neat stores on each side, at the end of which is another frontage, south, consisting of general stores".

The front of the hall proper "is wholly of cut stone, of the Roman Corinthian order, from the example of Jupiter Stator, the centre being tetrastyle portico of three-quarter columns, with sculptured tympanum of the pediment, surmounted with a rich attic. The carved work throughout the enrichments is of a rich and varied character. . . . The finishing of the interior is in good style, with dado and rich cornice; the ceiling is boldly covered with rich panelled centre and emblematical enrichments".[1] The building was crowned by a cupola forming a circular open temple of the Corinthian order, and therein was a large alarm bell of 2,130 pounds. The total cost of the structure was slightly over $28,000.

[1]See [G. P. Ure]: *The Handbook of Toronto*, 1858, pp. 238-40, for an interesting description of St. Lawrence Hall. Among other items of information we learn that "the ceiling of this hall has recently been decorated with some of the most grotesque-looking figures perhaps ever witnessed,—yet when the large and magnificent chandelier is lighted up, and when the room is filled by such an assembly as that which graced Jenny Lind's concerts, it has a brilliant and most imposing effect".

There was no public ceremony to inaugurate this notable hall. In fact it was first used some months prior to its completion, when, on August 8, 1850, some 200 prominent citizens of Buffalo visited Toronto by invitation of the City Council. After an elaborate procession and public reception the visitors were entertained at dinner in the North American Hotel, after which a Grand Ball was held in the partially completed St. Lawrence Hall, beautifully decorated for the occasion. At midnight the party proceeded by way of a canvas passage to the old City Hall and, after a banquet there, the dance was resumed with enthusiasm. St. Lawrence Hall had, therefore, a notable inauguration.[2]

The first use of the hall after its completion was on April 1, 1851. On the first three evenings were held public lectures on the subject of slavery, George Thompson, M.P., of England, speaking on April 1st, and Frederick Douglas, the noted negro abolitionist, on April 2nd and 3rd. Henceforth the attractions at St. Lawrence Hall were as varied as they were numerous: soirées, balls, promenades and levees; concerts, operas, musicales and festivals; lectures, panoramas, cycloramas and tableaux; meetings of Firemen, Orangemen, Oddfellows, Mechanics, and the National Societies; dinners, breakfasts and suppers; bazaars, exhibitions and presentations; election meetings, protest assemblages and charitable gatherings; and performances of itinerant magicians, minstrels, midgets and monstrosities. Here was surely enough variety to appeal to the learned savant, the socially prominent, the tired business man,—in fact to the great mass of citizens who compose a city.

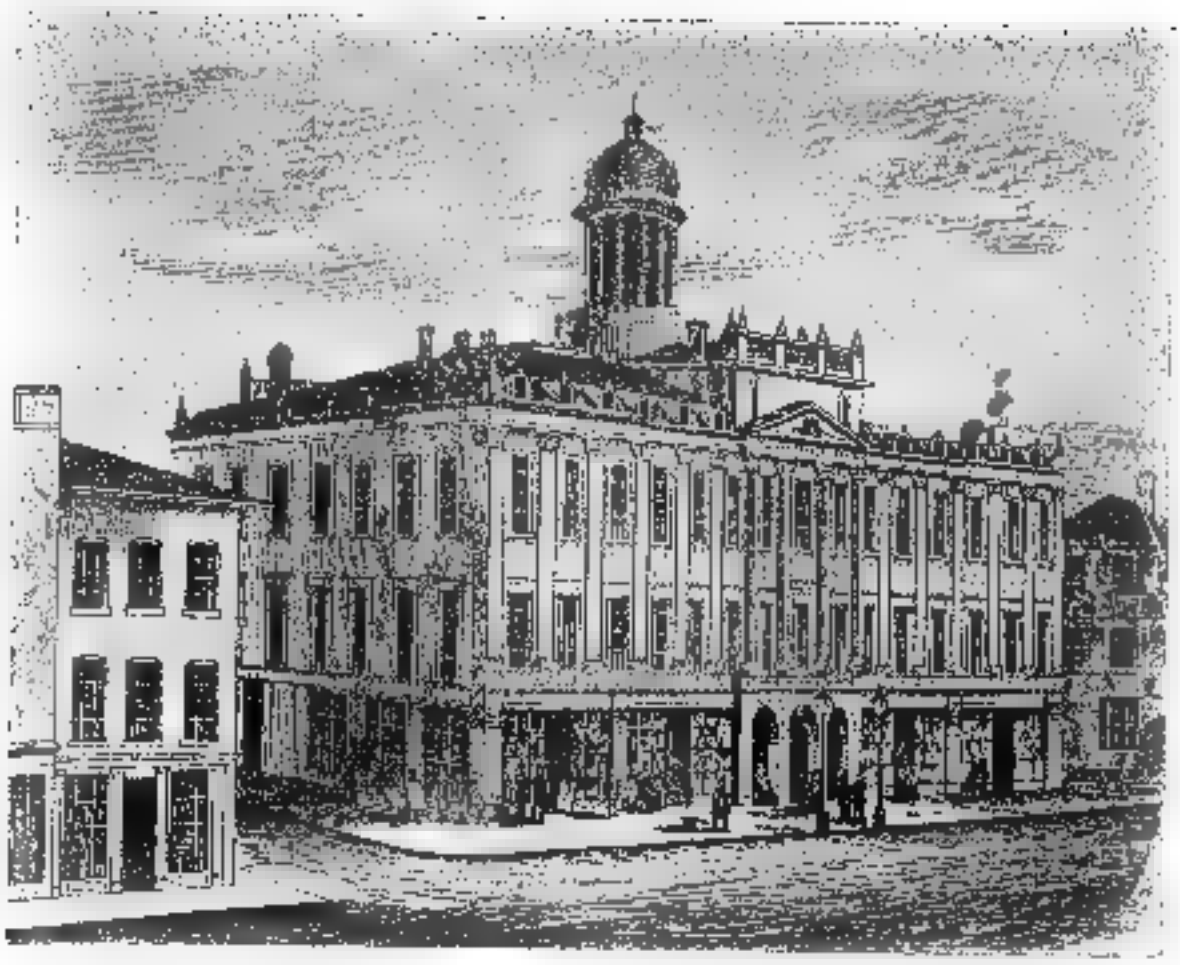
Many of the events are indicative of other times and other conditions. The National Societies of St. George, St. Andrew and St. Patrick were at the height of their popularity in a day when much of the country was still in the midst of conditions of pioneer life, and when so many held treasured memories of the Old Land. The Mechanics' Institute was then in a flourishing condition, and furnished educational and recreational facilities now provided by schools, libraries and sporting clubs. The firemen's organ-

[2]The historical information in this chapter is based almost entirely upon innumerable contemporary descriptions appearing in the press, the individual notation of which would not only be difficult but of little value.

isations recall a time when fire-fighting was a public duty—not merely a department of civic government; while many of the popular entertainments were of a type which belongs to the past. But the differences are, after all, superficial, and the social life which flourished eighty years ago was basically the same as it is today.

The lectures given from time to time at St. Lawrence Hall were in many instances arranged in courses under the auspices of the Toronto Mechanics' Institute; a few were similarly conducted by the Ontario Literary Society. Many of the speakers were professors at the University. The subjects of the discourses included "The Education of Children", "Electro-Biology", "Insects, their Structure and Functions", "Sabbath Observance", "The Ancient Hebrews as Promoters of the Arts and Sciences", "Spiritualism", "Homeopathy", and "Phrenology". A lecture upon "The Church of Rome, Fallible or Infallible" recalls a dispute which long raged bitterly in the field of controversial theology. In July, 1855, a noted statesman, Thomas D'Arcy McGee, gave two lectures—"Ireland as I found it in 1855", and "Emigration as a Source of National Wealth". A considerable number of lecturers spoke upon "Slavery", a topic which was in the forefront owing to controversy which eventually led to the American Civil War. Great enthusiasm was aroused, for example, by Elihu Burritt, "the learned blacksmith who could be silent in nineteen different languages", whose remarks upon "A Plan of Brotherly Copartnership of the North and South for the Peaceable Extinction of Slavery" were greeted with warm applause. Another seasonable subject was "Woman and her Work", Mrs. Lucy Stone lecturing twice in March, 1855, upon "Women's Rights".

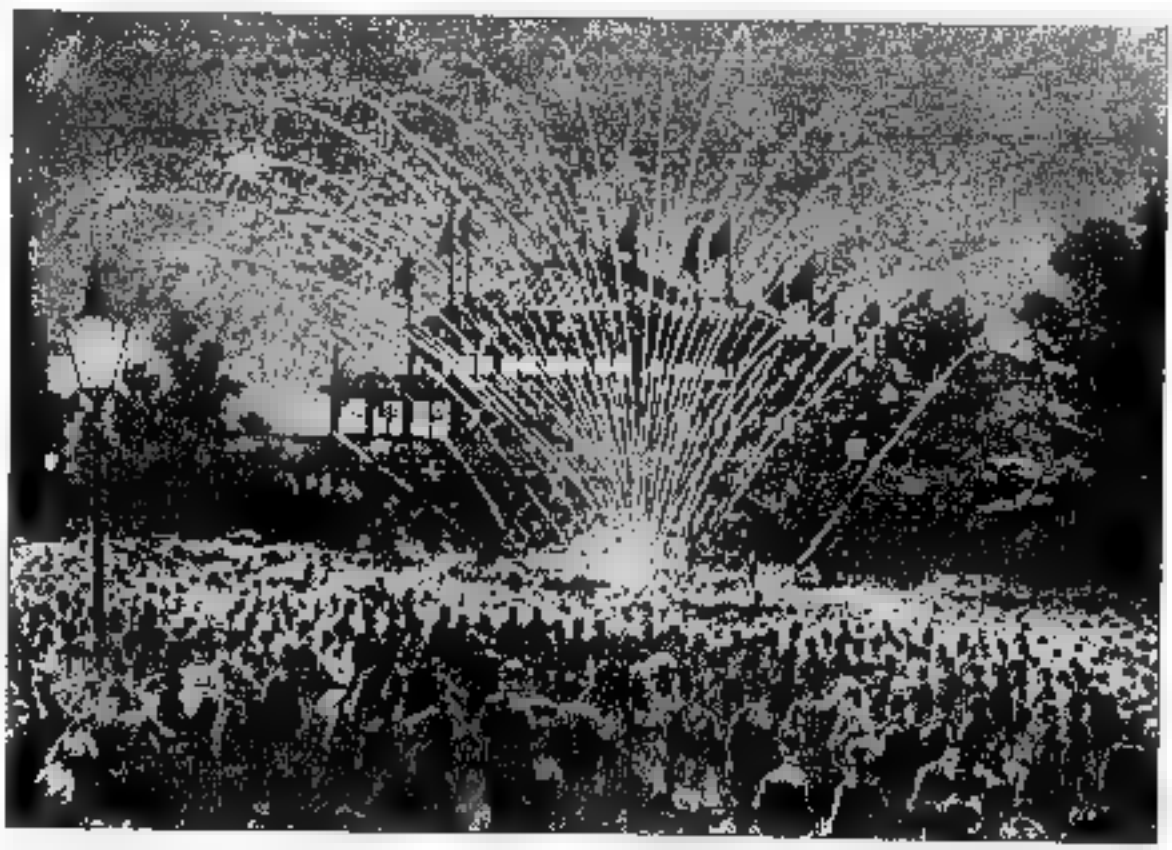
A popular adaptation of the lecture was the panorama or cyclorama, a large number of which were given in St. Lawrence Hall. Many of them were what would now be called travelogues, and were descriptive of Ireland, the Holy Land, the Great Lakes, the Thames, and kindred subjects; while others portrayed literary masterpieces such as *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and *The Pilgrim's Progress*, the latter holding the interest of excellent audiences for three weeks in the autumn of 1857. Reminiscent of the days of



Canadian Illustrated News.

ST. LAWRENCE HALL IN 1863

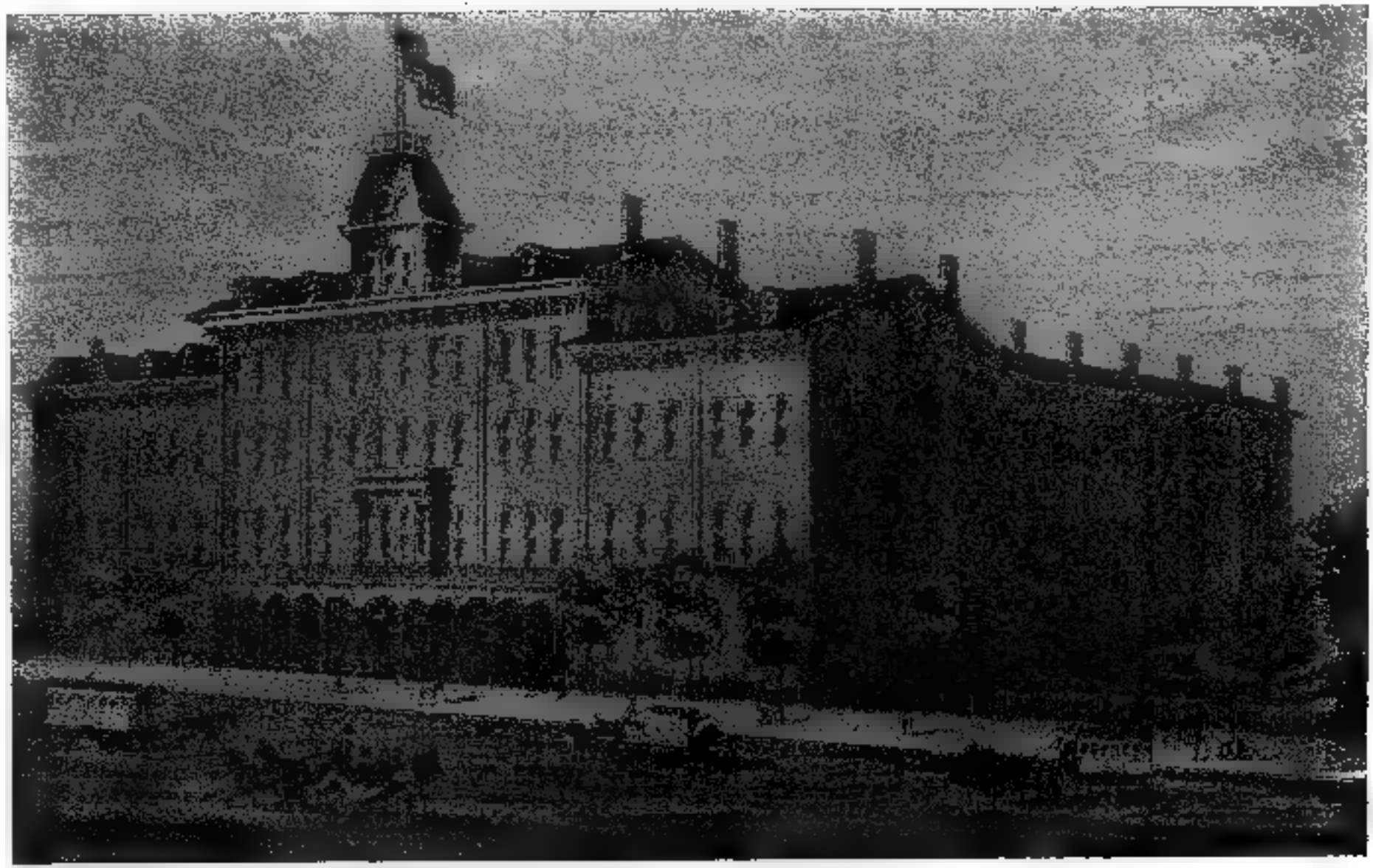
This notable building was erected in 1850.



Canadian Illustrated News.

FIREWORKS IN THE HORTICULTURAL (ALLAN) GARDENS, CIVIC HOLIDAY, 1881

The Horticultural Pavilion was one of the buildings which succeeded St. Lawrence Hall as a centre of social life.



Timperlake's *Illustrated Toronto.*

THE QUEEN'S HOTEL IN THE SEVENTIES

The "Old Queen's" was Toronto's best for nearly half a century.

the Indian Mutiny and the Crimean War are the numerous panoramic lectures which were delivered upon these subjects; while a similar representation of the American Civil War was shown for nearly three weeks in 1862. "King Solomon's Temple" was the subject of an entertainment in 1864, and other pictorial representations included La Prince's Panopticon Exhibition, Dr. Kane's Arctic Voyages, Brewer's Grand Mirror Panorama, P. T. Barnum's Crystal Palace Illustrated, and Howarth and Rathwell's Tableaux of the Holy Land.

Public meetings were frequently held in St. Lawrence Hall. On July 8, 1851, the Anti-Clergy Reserve Association met there under the presidency of the Hon. Adam Fergusson, founder of the Scottish settlement at Fergus. When the meeting was called to order it was found that plenty of defenders of Reserves were in attendance, and consequently the motion denouncing the system and demanding its immediate abolition met with great opposition. Finally an amendment carried, and the assemblage broke up in great confusion. Another political meeting upon a controversial subject which agitated the people of that day was held in March, 1852. Under the presidency of the Mayor the assembly was called to order to protest against the recent adoption of Free Trade as an English fiscal policy. Many of those present were of the opposite opinion, however, and the speakers aroused a warm debate. Among those who spoke were the Hon. William Cayley, George P. Ridout, M.P.P., Ogle R. Gowan and William Henry Boulton.

A meeting of a more local nature occurred on November 13, 1854. Mayor G. W. Allan presided, and the object was "to adopt means to set a limit to our enormous taxation, and especially in view of the Esplanade expenditure". The waterfront development of that day was rendered more necessary owing to the construction of the Grand Trunk Railway; and though it was a small affair in comparison with modern improvements, yet a considerable expenditure was essential to buy properties and control harbour facilities which might otherwise have fallen under the control of the Railway.

On January 8, 1855, a capacity audience assembled to devise means to raise runds in aid of the widows and

orphans of those who had given their lives during the Eastern (Crimean) War, and to assist the wounded and disabled. The Hon. J. H. Cameron acted as chairman, almost all of the notable public men of Toronto and vicinity were in attendance, and ten of them addressed the assemblage. Another meeting had as its purpose the raising of a memorial to the Duke of Wellington, but nothing was ever done. In May, 1855, the fourth anniversary meeting of the Anti-Slavery Society of Canada was held in the Hall, and, as usual, was largely attended. At meetings of societies of this nature arrangements were frequently made to hold bazaars, musicales and concerts to further the aims of the benevolent persons who composed their membership.

While ballroom dancing has always been a popular amusement there were many people eighty years ago who strenuously objected to it; consequently balls were frequently replaced by soirées, promenades and—later—conversaziones. Some of these entertainments combined dancing with more staid amusements, while on other occasions the dance was entirely supplanted. On January 8, 1852, a "promenade concert" was held in aid of negro fugitive slaves from the United States. The affair appears to have been in charge of women, among whom Mrs. Arnold, Mrs. Henning and Miss Macaulay were most prominent. The press reported that "the Rev. S. R. Ward (coloured) delivered during the evening an address suitable to the occasion". The general course of the remainder of the evening may be gauged from the same account, which states that "coffee and other refreshments were served from 7 to 8 o'clock in the supper room, and during this time the splendid band of the 71st Regiment played in the hall". In May, 1856, Mrs. John Beverley Robinson, long well-known in the musical life of Toronto, gave a "soirée musicale" in St. Lawrence Hall in aid of the City Industrial Farm, and the affair was a great success.

Most balls and soirées were, however, held under the auspices of the National Societies, the Fire Companies, the Regiments, or the chief lodges—Orangemen, Masons and Oddfellows. On February 22, 1856, a "Grand Orange Soirée" was given with the object of raising funds to provide a new Orange Hall and library in Toronto. A large

number were present, and the Toronto *Leader* notes that, "taking all things into consideration, the meeting was the best of the kind ever held in the St. Lawrence Hall". Another interesting soirée was that which took place on December 12, 1854, to commemorate the first anniversary of the Young Men's Christian Association; while on December 31, 1857, the Loyal Orange Cadet Lodge, No. 7, crowded the Hall to dance the Old Year out and the New Year in. Among the firemen's organisations which held balls in the Hall were the Rescue, Deluge, Hook-and-Ladder, and Hose Companies.

Among the more notable balls may be mentioned that given by the citizens on September 24, 1862, in honour of the Governor-General, Lord Monck, and Lady Monck. The committee in charge consisted of the Hon. J. B. Robinson, M.P.P., the Hon. John Ross, John Crawford, M.P.P., George Michie, Alderman J. E. Smith, John Bell, William Henderson, Sheriff Jarvis, John Cameron, J. D. Merrick, Lewis Moffatt and George Anthony Barber. Included in the Governor-General's party were his two daughters and Earl Mulgrave and his daughter, Lady Laura Phipps. Major-General Napier, Major Dillon, and most of the officers of the Garrison were present, while other prominent guests were the Hon. John Sandfield Macdonald and T. D'Arcy McGee. Over 350 people were in attendance, and the press reported that "the ball will long be remembered in Toronto as among the best the city has ever seen".

Another celebrated ball was held on the evening of October 15, 1851, in honour of the commencement of the construction of the Northern Railway. Her Excellency the Countess of Elgin, wife of the Governor-General, cut the first sod earlier in the day, and guests to the number of four hundred were present at the ball, among them the Hon. Francis Hincks and the Hon. John Ross.

Toronto was once accustomed to have a Mayor's Ball. In 1857 Mayor Hutchinson, assisted by the patronesses—Mrs. J. B. Robinson, Mrs. Crooks and Mrs. Philpotts (for the Mayor was a bachelor), provided an evening's dancing that was an immense success. He was complimented in the press by the comment: "We speak but the universal opinion

when we say that the Mayor's ball was the most successful ever given in Toronto."

The term "festival" was somewhat loosely used to denote a varied entertainment which generally included supper and dancing. In 1853, for example, a "festival ball" was held on May 24th to commemorate the Queen's Birthday. This celebration was under the patronage of the National Societies of St. Patrick, St. Andrew and St. George, and the sun was streaming through the windows of the hall before the dance concluded.

The Early Closing Association, consisting of most of the merchants of the city, held a festival on January 11, 1853. The Mayor acted as chairman, and five men delivered addresses, after which those in attendance were no doubt well able to appreciate the supper and the dance which concluded the entertainment. Another festival of a similar nature was that held on January 29, 1852, when the Toronto and St. Lawrence Division of the Sons of Temperance congregated in large numbers in St. Lawrence Hall; while a militia festival under the presidency of Colonel, the Baron de Rottenburg was well attended on December 3, 1857, and added a considerable amount to the funds of the Military Asylum at Quebec. On January 25, 1859, a festival consisting of a supper and ball was given by the Burns Club to celebrate the centennial of Robert Burns.

Among the public dinners held in St. Lawrence Hall one of the most important was that given by the Reformers on February 23, 1852, in honour of the Hon. Malcolm Cameron. Over 150 prominent members of the party attended, and eight columns of newspaper space were devoted to the proceedings. Mr. Charles Lindsey, son-in-law and biographer of William Lyon Mackenzie, was among those present. A similar complimentary banquet was tendered to Thomas D'Arcy McGee, M.P.P., in 1859. Complimentary breakfasts were not unusual at that time, one being given to the Rev. Mr. Duff, well-known missionary, on April 12, 1854; a more famous missionary, the Rev. Joseph Evans, D.D., was similarly honoured on December 17, 1858, just prior to the journey of Evans and his colleagues to the wilds of British Columbia, then under Hudson's Bay Company control.

Upon some occasions presentations were made at these

complimentary banquets. An event of considerable interest occurred on October 31, 1856, when the corporation of the city assembled at St. Lawrence Hall to do honour to Captain and Brevet-Major Frederick Wells, 1st Royal Regiment of Foot, who had just returned from the Crimea with a very distinguished record. He was presented with a sword of honour and a complimentary address. A few weeks later a ball was also held in honour of Major Wells and A. R. Dunn, V.C., 11th Hussars, who had displayed conspicuous gallantry in the same campaign. Perhaps a short digression will be pardoned to enable some further reference to this Toronto-born hero of the charges of Balaclava, the record of which is among the saddest but proudest memories of the British army. Dr. Henry Scadding tells much of interest in his account of Lieut. Dunn and his family, long important in the life of the city:

"On the south side of the expansion of Queen Street, in front of Petersfield and a little beyond Peter Street, (which, as we have previously noticed, had its name from Peter Russell), was the abode of Mr. Dunn, long Receiver-General of Upper Canada. It was (and is) a retired family house, almost hidden from the general view by a grove of ornamental trees. A quiet-looking gate led into a straight drive up to the house, out of Queen Street. Of Mr. Dunn we have already discoursed, and of Mrs. Dunn, one of the graceful lady-chiefs in the high life of York in the olden time. In the house at which we now pause was born their famous son, Alexander Roberts Dunn, in 1833; who not only had the honour of sharing in the charge of the Light Brigade at Balaclava in 1854, now so renowned in history and song, but who, of all the six hundred there, won the highest meed of glory.

"Six feet three inches in stature, a most powerful and most skilful swordsman and a stranger to fear, Lieut. Dunn, instead of consulting his own safety in the midst of that frightful and untoward *mêlée*, deliberately interposed for the protection of his comrades in arms. Old troops of the Eleventh Hussars long told with kindling eyes how the young Lieutenant, seeing Sergeant Bentley of his own regiment attacked from behind by two or three Russian lancers, rushed upon them single-handed, and cut them down; how

he saved the life of Sergeant Bond; how Private Levett owed his safety to the same friendly arm when assailed by Russian Hussars. Kinglake, the historian of the Crimean War, records that the Victoria Cross placed at the disposal of the Eleventh Hussars was unanimously awarded by them to Lieut. Dunn, the only cavalry officer who obtained the distinction.

"To the enthusiasm inspired by his brilliant reputation was mainly due the speedy formation in Canada of the Hundredth Regiment, the Prince of Wales' Royal Canadian Regiment, in 1857. Of this regiment, chiefly raised through his instrumentality, Mr. Dunn was gazetted the first major; and on the retirement of the Baron de Rottenburg from its command, he succeeded as its Lieutenant-Colonel.

"In 1864 he was gazetted full Colonel: at the time he had barely completed his thirty-first year. Impatient of inactivity, he caused himself to be transferred to a command in India, where he speedily attracted the notice of General Napier, afterwards Lord Napier of Magdala; and he accompanied that officer in the expedition against King Theodore of Abyssinia. While halting at Senafé in that country, he was accidentally killed by the sudden explosion of his rifle while out shooting deer."[2]

Presentations of another nature were made in St. Lawrence Hall from time to time, when the students of Upper Canada College, the Grammar School, and other public or private schools received awards in the Hall as a result of proficiency in their examinations.

While receptions to individuals were not uncommon in St. Lawrence Hall, there were very few official levees held there. When Sir Edmund Head came to Toronto as Governor-General in 1855, however, he held his first levee in the hall on November 19th, and the newspapers carried a complete list of the gentlemen who paid their respects to His Excellency.

Bazaars to raise funds for religious, educational and charitable purposes were held from time to time, and frequently included a soirée or concert. In December, 1853, the erection of a church at the corner of Mutual and Queen Streets was furthered by a bazaar and soirée; while in

[2]Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old.* 1873. pp. 342-3.

December, 1861, a bazaar in aid of the establishment of a Female Industrial School was liberally patronised, and was followed a few weeks later by a banquet in behalf of the same institution.

Educational exhibitions were to be found in St. Lawrence Hall on numerous occasions. The most frequent were those of the Toronto Horticultural Society, which usually held three exhibitions a year. In 1855 these took place in May, July and September. In April, 1854, pottery and earthenware received some attention when an Exhibition of Ceramic Art occupied the hall for three days. In 1861 there was presented for two weeks Thiobon's "Mechanical and Pictorial Royal Exhibition of Arts". In 1862 a large number of interested spectators were attracted by an exhibition of the handiwork of the New England glass-blowers, who occupied the Hall during the last three days of May. In striking contrast to these educational displays was one of a distinctly novel character—"The Exhibition of Industrious Fleas"—which, needless to say, brought large crowds of people to St. Lawrence Hall during the week of September 5, 1859. This particular show must have been an old-timer, for an advertisement announcing its appearance in Toronto occurs in the *Courier of Upper Canada* of October 13, 1835.

Another entertainment of a semi-educational nature was that presented in March, 1858, by "Kawshawgance and troupe", illustrating the manners and customs of the Rocky Mountain Indians; while a performance by A. McKeown of Hamilton entitled "Twa Hours in the Land o' Cakes" was given twice in the winter of 1856-7. Mr. Maitland's "Scottish Entertainment" may be presumed to have attracted much the same audience in March, 1857.

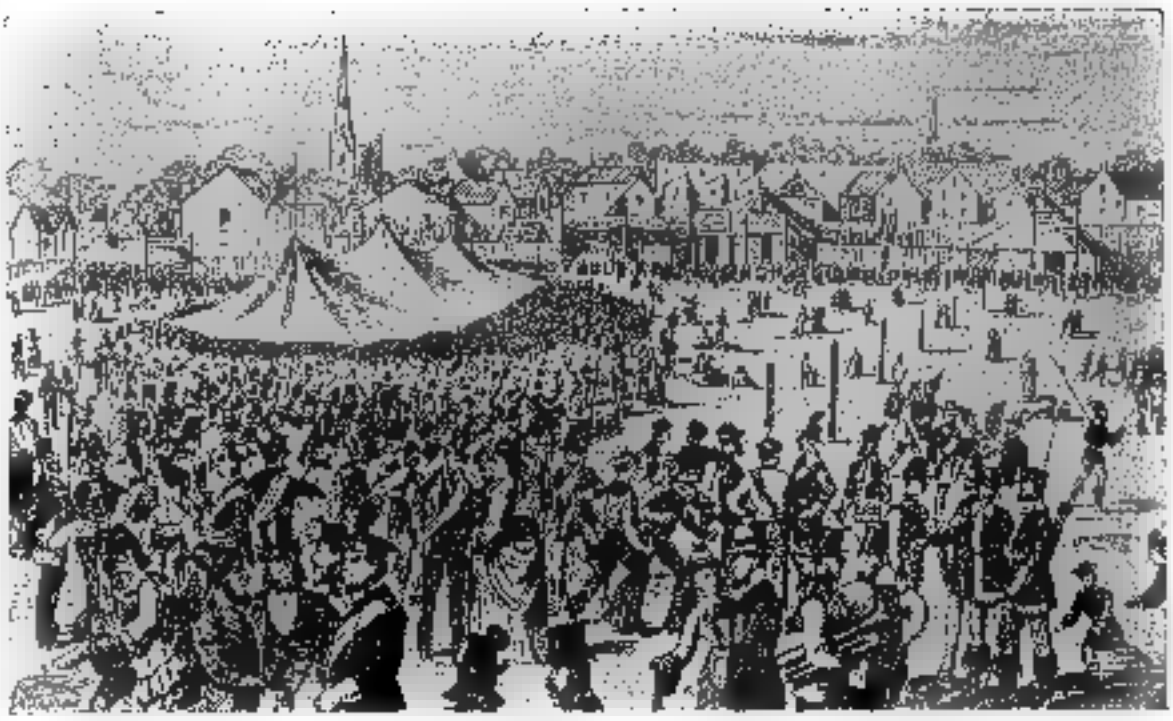
Among performances somewhat less intellectual in appeal were those of magicians, midgets, monstrosities and minstrels who visited St. Lawrence Hall on numerous occasions. Macallister, "the great magician", Signor Jerome Blitz, "the great Moravian Wizard", Professor Jacobs, "the World Renowned Wizard", and Professor Kergan, advertised as "the Great Wizard King and Ventriloquist", were among those who drew a good-sized audience whenever they appeared. The Aztec Lilliputians, Maxima and

Bartola, were on exhibition during the week of August 4, 1851; and "General" Tom Thumb held four of his periodic "receptions" in October, 1861. Minstrel shows had a considerable following in Toronto, and among those who played at St. Lawrence Hall were Christy's, Sharpley's, Stanley's, Birch and Donniker's, and Wood's.

If any one type of entertainment might be taken as typical of old St. Lawrence Hall perhaps it was the concerts and musicales which were so frequently held. As still holds true today, it appears to have been considered seventy-five years ago that foreigners excelled in musical ability; and Germans and Italians were more often in the spotlight than other nationalities. Bands were more frequently seen in parade and at balls than in concert activities. Regimental bands were very popular at that time, but there was also a Toronto Brass Band, for the benefit of which a concert and soirée was held on December 20, 1860. An interesting departure in a day of comparative seclusion of women must have been the Madden family brass band, "composed entirely of females", which gave an entertainment on two nights in October, 1854.

Not infrequently concerts were held to raise funds for benevolent and charitable purposes. In June, 1851, the Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society arranged an entertainment in aid of destitute negro fugitives who had taken refuge in Canada. Typical of a number of charitable efforts was that of the St. George's Society, which gave, on December 10, 1857, a concert in aid of "the prevailing distress among emigrant Englishmen". A fashionable benefit concert in 1855 was given by Mr. Haycraft, and the proceeds were devoted to "the widows and orphans of the heroes of Sebastopol". Among those who assisted upon this occasion were Mrs. John Beverley Robinson and Messrs. Haycraft, Griebel and Martin Lazare.

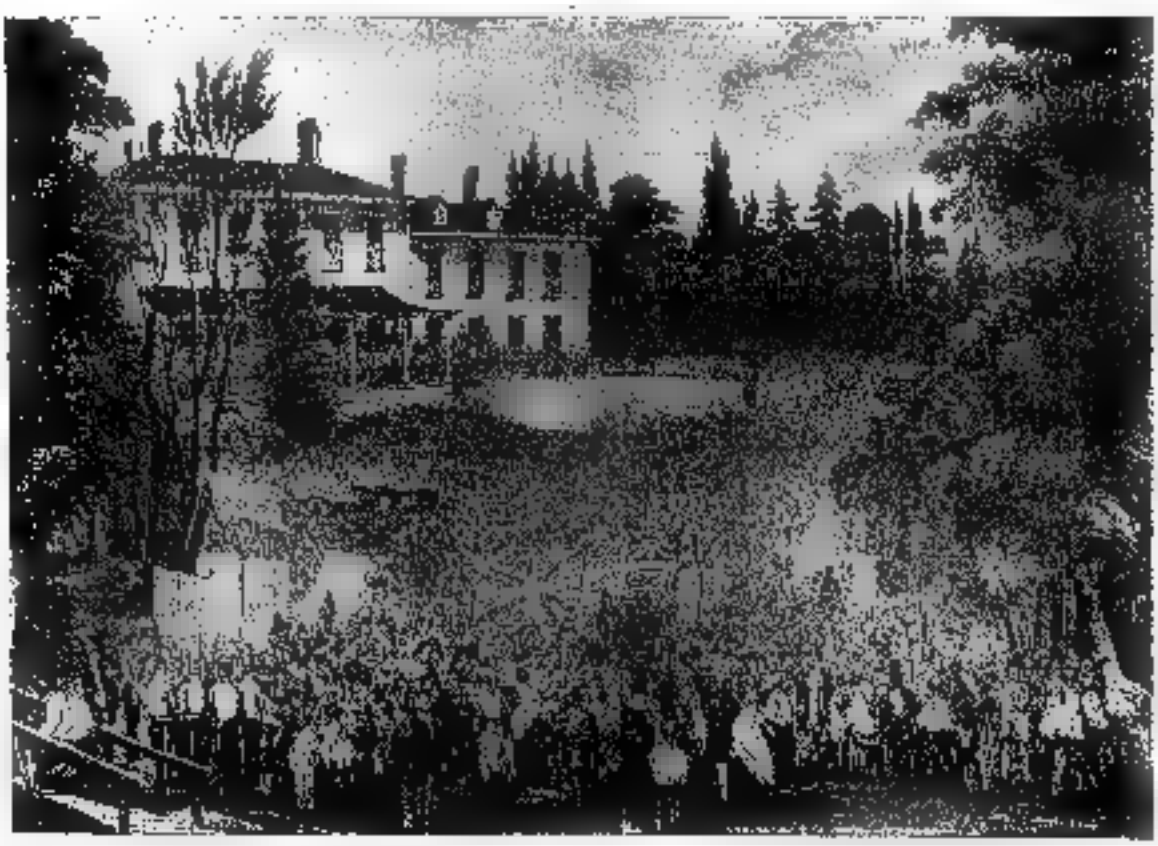
The majority of the musicales displayed the talents of foreign artists, but there were many in which British musicians were featured, and others where the talent was entirely local. In 1851 the Queen's Birthday was celebrated by a concert under the direction of Principal Barron of Upper Canada College, and those who contributed towards the entertainment appear to have been largely, if



Canadian Illustrated News.

THE FORESTERS' FÊTE, 1874

The second annual *fête* of the Foresters took place in the Cricket Grounds on July 29-31, 1874. Owing to the inquisitiveness of the inevitable small boy the grand display of fireworks took place unexpectedly and *en masse* several hours early!



John Ross Robertson Collection. Lucius O'Brien.

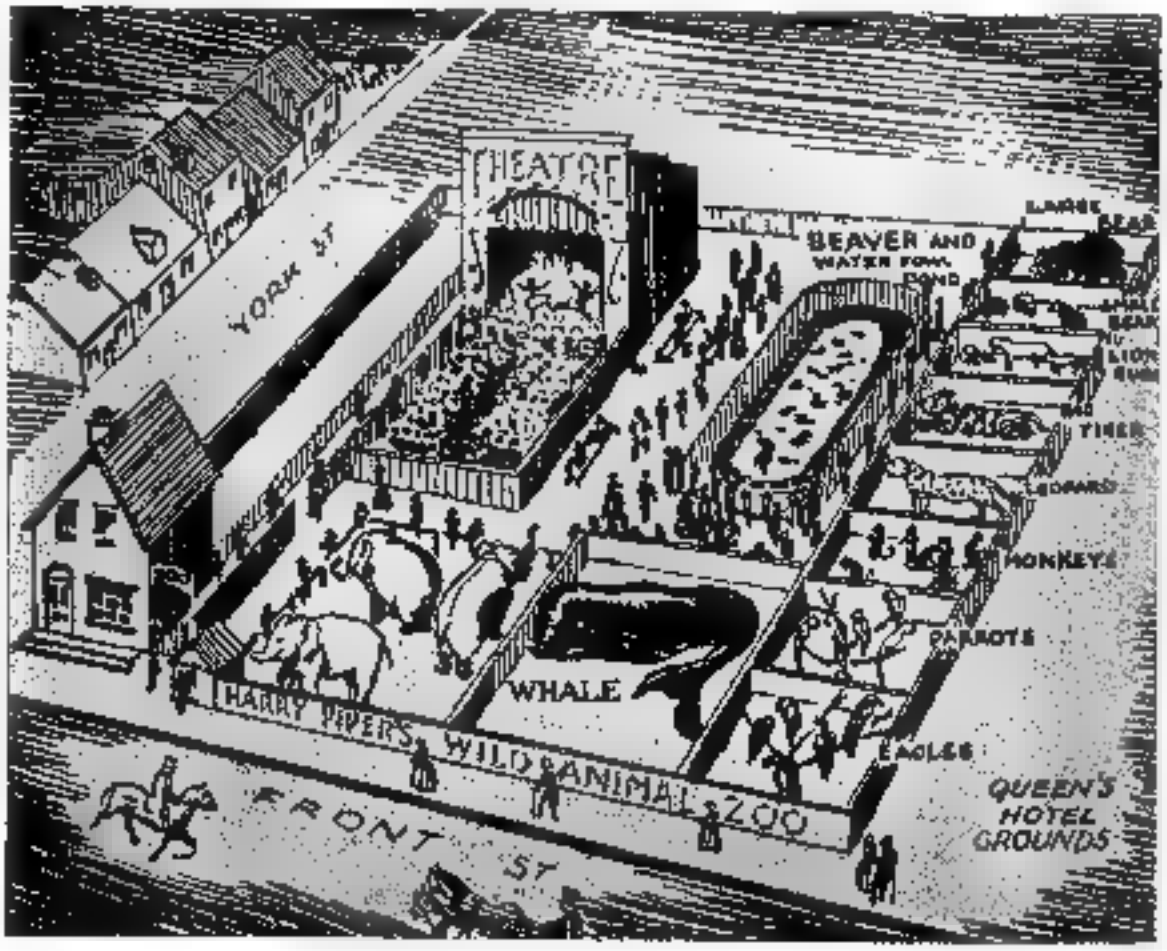
QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION, GOVERNMENT HOUSE, 1854

As the Crimean War was in progress at the time even the Turks were cheered!

Canadian Illustrated News. Arthur Elliott.

IN THE ZOO, TORONTO, 1881

This was Harry Piper's Zoo, which commenced about 1872. Among other locations it was for a time in the Crystal Palace.



Reproduced by Courtesy of the *Evening Telegram* and the Canadian Pacific Railway.

PIPER'S ZOO IN THE EIGHTIES

The layout of the Zoo when it was on the site of the Royal York Hotel is here shown.

not entirely, students of the school. The concert was held on the evening of the 23rd of May, and as the clock struck twelve a curtain at the north end of the hall was drawn, displaying an illuminated crown and the letters V.R. above the words "God Save the Queen". The whole assemblage joined in the National Anthem, after which a dance concluded the evening's entertainment.

"An agreeable entertainment by native Indians" was given in December, 1856, when Mr. Ma-zaw-ke-yaw-se-gay and Mr. and Mrs. Mah-koonce appeared on two occasions. The lady was described on the programme as a "granddaughter of the famous, brave and warlike, yet generous and hospitable Captain Brant". In July, 1857, Emma Stanley, "vocalist and imitator", in her "Seven Ages of Woman and Polymelos", gave eight entertainments which drew crowded houses. In September of the same year the European and Anacreontic Society gave three excellent concerts, Mrs. Macready, dramatic reader, followed with three evenings, and Mr. George Henry Russell's concert took place on the 29th of the month.

Typical of the enthusiasm aroused by Handel's oratorios was the first public performance of *The Messiah* on December 17, 1857. John Carter, organist and choirmaster of St. James', was the conductor, and the instrumentalists included Herr Griebel and Messrs. Noverre, Manle, Schmidt, Lazare and E. A. Hastings. Among the vocalists were Jacob Wright, S. Thompson, G. B. Wyllie, F. W. Barron, Charles Grasett and James Baxter. The concert was considered a wonderful achievement, and the audience included Governor-General Sir Edmund Head. The performance was repeated in 1858, and in June of the same year Handel's *Judas Maccabeus* was given before a very large audience. The patrons of these concerts included almost all of the notable residents of the city. The band and chorus in the production contained some 200 performers, including twenty violins and a proportionate number of other instruments. A few of those who took part in this excellent performance were guest soloists, but the others were all citizens of Toronto. A new organ had been installed for the occasion, and so successful was the presentation that it was repeated twice during the month.

Apart from these oratorios of Handel it would appear that the most socially exclusive audiences attended the performances of foreign artists, a large number of whom visited Toronto. It is easy to visualise the appearance of King Street near the entrance of St. Lawrence Hall upon these occasions: the elaborate carriages with their well-groomed horses and coachmen, each one bringing its quota of beautiful ladies and handsome men in evening dress; the somewhat less aristocratic occupants of hired cabs, and their less pretentious drivers, (though the city hackmen showed their *esprit de corps* by holding a ball under the patronage of His Worship the Mayor in 1867); and the uniformed doorkeepers, attendants and ushers busily but smoothly performing their duties with that polished etiquette and courtly ceremonial characteristic of the times. In July, 1851, Mlle. Teresa Parodi and Mlle. Amalia Patti gave a concert which was the first of its type in St. Lawrence Hall. Three months later, on October 21st, Jenny Lind, "the Swedish Nightingale", made her first appearance in Toronto, and attracted a capacity audience of nearly 1,000 people, all of whom paid at least $3 admission; and so many were disappointed in obtaining tickets that the concert was repeated the following evening.

From contemporary records of the impression which she made upon her audience it would seem that Jenny Lind's appearance in Toronto was the outstanding musical event of a generation. A lady who was present at her concert wrote most enthusiastically of the famous cantatrice and her singing:

"She is in my opinion quite an angelic creature. Her voice is exquisite. Every note clear, sweet and flute-like. Her Echo and Bird-songs are too fascinating. They are almost supernaturally sweet in some parts. She is not handsome, but the unaffected simplicity of her manner and the truthful expression of her countenance render her very attractive, and one cannot help respecting and even loving the lowly Swedish maiden who, unshaken in her high resolves by the temptations of the world, has devoted unceasingly her splendid talent to the best and noblest purposes, and, having raised her parents to comfort and affluence, has, it is said, given nearly a million of money

to the establishment of free schools through her native land so that the poorest fisherman's child may obtain an education in Sweden. . . . Her charities and her pure piety will be long remembered after the sweet voice has ceased to be heard on earth."[4]

In 1852 another celebrated cantatrice, Catharine Hayes, gave two most successful concerts on May 24th and 26th. She was assisted by Herr Griebel, violinist, Menzies, baritone, Kyle, the flautist, and Lavenu on the piano; while a month later the Germania Musical Society, assisted by Alfred Jaell, pianist, gave a musicale in St. Lawrence Hall. In November, 1853, Ole Bull, Amalia Patti and Maurice Strakosch drew a very large audience to a concert which was announced as Ole Bull's farewell appearance; the other two artists, assisted by Teresa Parodi, Signor Giovanni and Leo Lardi, gave two operatic concerts in July, 1855, and the same performers were heard from time to time in later years. In 1860, however, Amalia Patti's sister, Adelina, who for forty years was to be known as one of the world's foremost operatic singers, visited Toronto along with Amalia and her husband, Herr Strakosch, who was Adelina's instructor and conductor. While describing the concert as a great success, and Adelina's singing as productive of vociferous applause, a Toronto newspaper stated that it "would like to ask Herr Strakosch why, since Jenny Lind visited America, we get no new ballads in the concert room? *Within a Mile of Edinboro' Town* and *Home, Sweet Home* are very well, but ten years of perpetual repetition is rather too much. The charming Patti would raise a furore with some of the new English ballads judiciously selected". Among other renowned soloists to appear at St. Lawrence Hall were Thalberg, pianist, Mme. Eliza Biscaccianti, and Mlle. Piccolomini, "the charming Italian singer".

The heyday of St. Lawrence Hall was the first ten years of its existence. After 1862 it was not as extensively used, though until the early seventies numerous entertainments were held there. By 1872 the meetings in the old hall had become infrequent owing to the erection of other

[4]Mary Jarvis to Fanny Jarvis, October 29, 1851. See Alden Meredith: *Mary's Rosedale and Gossip of Little York*, 1928. p. 206.

buildings and the extension of the boundaries of the city westward and northward, which made the location less convenient and attractive as a centre of social life. The varied performances which for a quarter of a century had characterised it were held elsewhere, and the famous hall gradually passed out of general use. The Albert Hall, Queen and Yonge Streets, was the chief successor for miscellaneous entertainments, and Shaftesbury Hall, in the Y.M.C.A. Building at Queen and James Streets, was the best lecture hall in the city in the late seventies. The Grand Opera House and the Royal Opera House provided stages and auditoria specially constructed for dramatic and operatic entertainment, and they remained unrivalled in this field until Massey Hall was opened in the early nineties. Musicales and balls for the socially *élite* were sometimes held in the Music Hall in the old Mechanics' Institute Building, Adelaide and Church Streets, and in the Horticultural Pavilion in the Allan Gardens. St. Lawrence Hall itself had dropped into the category of less important assembly rooms, along with the Agricultural Hall, the Masonic Hall, St. Andrew's Hall and the Canadian Institute.

The old building was developed as a market centre in the early years of the new century; and the famous hall itself was considerably used as an armouries by the York Rangers and other regiments, particularly during the Great War. In 1911 several thousand dollars was spent in its renovation, but, apart from a few meetings, its use was limited to the soldiery and, in recent years, as a hostel for unemployed—rather different from the activities which centred there three-quarters of a century ago. And so, like many another early Toronto building, St. Lawrence Hall, its glories departed, has now little but proud memories of the times when the socially and intellectually prominent continually passed through its portals.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE PAGEANT OF SOCIAL LIFE

IN Toronto's early years the presence of government officials, officers of the army and navy, and other "gentlemen" gave a higher tone to social life than was usually to be found anywhere else except at Kingston and Niagara. The amusements of that day depended largely upon individual effort, or upon arrangements made by small groups of social equals. Life in York was much like that of an English town of the period. Alexander Macdonell, Sheriff of the Home District, resided in the town in 1799, and describes in his diary how the members of the official class spent their time.[1] Office duties usually ended at 2 p.m., and dinner was served at 3 o'clock. From Joseph Willcocks' diary we learn that an ordinary dinner included "a salmon, a fillet of veal, a pair of roast fowl and a bread pudding"; while on Christmas Day, 1800, a good old English dinner of "soup, roast beef, boiled pork, a turkey, plumb pudding and minced pies" was served at the Willcocks home.[2] Class distinctions were very rigid in early days, and the fashionable society of York was restricted to a comparatively small section of the population. The military and civilians alike were fond of horse-racing and field sports, fishing and sailing, football and cricket in summer, and of skating and carrioling in winter; while at all seasons dancing, chess, whist, wine and conversation served to while away the time.

Mrs. Simcoe gives some account of these activities in her diary. While at Niagara she wrote: "We play at whist every evening. Colonel Simcoe is so occupied during the day with business that it is a relaxation. I have not lost one rubber since the 28th of November. We usually play four every evening."[3] Two weeks later she notes: "Mrs.

[1]Macdonell's journal is printed in Middleton and Landon's *The Province of Ontario*. 1927. Vol. II.

[2]The quotations are, respectively, from the entries of October 6, 1800, and December 25, 1800. The diary is printed in Middleton and Landon, *ibid*.

[3]*Diary of Mrs. John Graves Simcoe*, December 31, 1792.

Macaulay gave me an account of a subscription ball she was at, which is to be held in the town of Niagara every fortnight during the winter. There were fourteen couples, a great display of gauze, feathers and velvet, the room lighted by wax candles, and there was a supper as well as tea."[4] In 1796 she refers to a ball at her house where "we danced eighteen couple and sat down to supper seventy-six".[5] It may be assumed that a similar social life flourished in York, especially after the seat of government was removed thither in 1796-97. Military bands supplied the music at these official social functions, and at all fashionable balls or "assemblies" in the garrison towns full evening or military dress was worn.

Some of the higher officials of the government had extensive estates on the outskirts of York, where they carried on farming and experimented in the growth of cherries, melons and peaches, in addition to many typically English vegetables and flowers which their gardeners produced. Their stables were noted for spirited horses, suitable for the pleasures of carrioling, the race-track and the hunt. A few of the wealthier inhabitants had yachts and were able to enjoy sailing on the Bay. Even in Indian days the peninsula (now the Island) was a resort for the purpose of regaining health; and, among the early citizens of York, a favourite ride or walk.

The gentlemen of the town also engaged in field sports—hunting, fowling, hawking and fishing. Many a canoe might be seen on the Bay in the evening, its occupants intent upon the exciting sport of spearing fish by jack-light. In the winter of 1801 William Jarvis held a fox hunt on the ice of the Bay, and when the fox was unbagged, "the chase was followed by a number of gentlemen on horse-back, and a concourse of the *beau monde* of both sexes in carriole and sleigh".[6]

Riding and carrioling were prominent in York during Simcoe's *régime*. A letter written by Peter Russell to John McGill in December, 1796, expresses the hope "that the ladies may be able to enjoy the charming carrioling which

[4] *Ibid.*, January 15, 1793.
[5] *Ibid.*, June 4, 1796.
[6] *Upper Canada Gazette*, February 14, 1801.

you must have on your Bay, and up the Yonge Street Road, and to the Humber, and up the Don to Castle Frank, where an early dinner must be picturesque and delightful".[7] There were picnics on the peninsula and along the Don and Humber, and dances for the social set at Castle Frank, Russell Abbey, or in the Government Buildings.

From time to time notices appear in the *Gazette* concerning the York Assemblies, or dances. The first of these announcements is in the issue of December 8, 1798, and asks "the gentlemen of the town and the garrison" to meet at Miles' Hotel to make arrangements for the winter and pay their subscription.[8] It may be presumed that similar social events were held during previous winters, when York had no newspaper in which the announcement might be inserted.

The earliest of these events of which we have an intimate account took place at Frank's Hotel in 1814. The original manuscript of the arrangements informs us that "at a meeting of the gentlemen of York, subscribers to the assemblies, Stephen Jarvis and George Ridout, Esquires, were appointed managers for the season, the sum to be paid by each subscriber to be three pounds, Halifax currency. . . . First dance on St. Andrew's night, dancing to begin at half-past eight o'clock". The dresses worn by the ladies are called "chaste and elegant"; while a private letter gives us the interesting information that "one lady of great loveliness" wore black lace over an underskirt of crimson, with an artificial rose in her waist and hair.[9] A few prominent merchants usually joined the government officials and the officers of the garrison in these dances.

Occasionally there would be a public holiday in York, and a special demonstration of loyalty sometimes occurred upon the receipt of war news from England. On August 1, 1798, was fought the Battle of the Nile, but it was over five months later, on January 3, 1799, that the news reached York. A celebration was immediately planned, however, and took place the following day. It is said that William Willcocks was the only inhabitant who did not light up his

[7]Quoted in Henry Scadding: *Four Decades of York*. 1884. p. 23.
[8]*Upper Canada Gazette*, December 8, 1798.
[9]See John Ross Robertson: *Landmarks of Toronto*. 1894-1914. Vol. I, p. 498.

home in honour of the occasion, so a mob led by one Thomas Smith smashed the windows of his house.

On June 4th the King's birthday was always celebrated. The *Gazette* of June 8, 1799, notes that the Queen's Rangers fired three volleys, the militia assembled on the beach, and a Royal Salute of twenty-one guns was fired by the Royal Artillery; after which, "at night the Government Buildings were superbly illuminated, at which place His Honour the President gave a splendid ball and supper".[10] Another notable event occurred in 1803, when the Duke of Kent visited the little town, staying at Oakhill, the residence of General Aeneas Shaw, to whose daughter Sir Isaac Brock was later engaged. The Duke was entertained in the log cabin which preceded General Shaw's frame house.

A social custom of the period was duelling, though death as a result was infrequent. The most notorious of York duels occurred on January 3, 1800, and though it was purposely passed over with little comment by the official government organ, the *Gazette and Oracle*, the *Canada Constellation* of Niagara, in announcing the death of Attorney-General John White, spared neither the participants nor society in general:

"Died at York, on the 3rd instant, John White, Esq., Attorney-General of this Province. His death was occasioned by a wound he received in a duel fought the day before with John Small, Esq., Clerk of the Executive Council, by whom he was challenged. We have not been able to obtain the particulars of the cause of the dispute; but, be the origin what it may, we have to lament the toleration and prevalency of a custom falsely deemed honourable, or the criterion of true courage, innocency or guilt, a custom to gratify the passion of revenge in a single person, to the privation of the country and a family of an ornament of society, and support: an outrage on humanity that is too often procured by the meanly malicious, who have preferment in office or friendship in view, without merit to gain it, and stupidly lacquey from family to family, or from person to person, some wonderful suspicion, the suggestions of a soft head and evil heart; and it is truly unfortunate for Society that the evil they bring on others should pass

[10]*Upper Canada Gazette*, June 8, 1799.

by their heads to light on those the world could illy spare. We are unwilling to attribute to either the Attorney-General or Mr. Small any improprieties of their own, or to say on whom the blame lies; but of this we feel assured, that an explanation might easily have been brought about by persons near to them, and a valuable life preserved to us. The loss is great; as a professional gentleman the Attorney-General was eminent, as a friend, sincere; and in whatever relation he stood was highly esteemed; an honest and upright man, a friend to the poor, and dies universally lamented; and we here cannot refuse to mention, at the particular request of some who have experienced his goodness, that he has refused taking fees, and discharged suits at law by recommending to the parties, and assisting them with friendly advice, to an amicable adjustment of their differences: and this is the man whom we have lost!"[11]

On the 20th of January Small was tried before Mr. Justice Alcock and a jury, but the verdict was "Not Guilty". Mr. White's remains lie in St. James' Cemetery, whence they were removed in 1871 when labourers discovered the original grave.

After the War of 1812 the social life of the town gradually became more complex. In the eighteen-twenties, though the town was still a village in population, there occurred small agricultural fairs, and meetings and celebrations of the National Societies, the Orangemen, and other lodges. In the same period the first fire company was organised, while the visits of circuses, theatrical companies, and other itinerant exhibitions became quite common.

It was nearly half a century after the arrival of the first settlers before commercialised theatrical exhibitions were to be found in Upper Canada. Writing in 1817 Robert Gourlay found that "the country is too young for regular theatric entertainments and those delicacies and refinements of luxury which are the usual attendants of wealth. Dissipation, with her fascinating train of expenses and vices, has made but little progress on the shores of the lakes".[12] Among the earliest dramatic efforts were occasional plays

[11]Niagara *Canada Constellation*, January 11, 1800.

[12]Robert Gourlay: *A Statistical Account of Upper Canada*. 1822. Vol. I, p. 250.

produced by the officers of the garrisons at York, Kingston and Niagara; in these the female parts were usually taken by men. As a general rule only comedies were attempted, Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer* being among the number. Mr. (later Sir) Allan MacNab was one of a number of amateur performers in York, and he acquitted himself so well that he was seriously advised to become a professional actor.

Among other early inhabitants of York who were greatly interested in amateur dramatics were the members of the Baldwin and Sullivan families. During the Christmas holidays of 1824-5 a rather elaborate drama called *The Revenge* was presented in the Baldwin home, Spadina House, parts of the production having been written for the occasion by Robert Baldwin, later an important figure in political life. The parts were taken by "the juvenile part of the family", and the entertainment included Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer*, and an afterpiece of a type popular at the time—*Bombastes Furioso*.[13]

The first theatrical performances by professionals were introduced by American companies in the early eighteen-twenties—possibly as early as 1820. Two plays were usually produced for one evening's entertainment, a rather serious melodramatic performance being followed by a boisterous comedy, with perhaps a little vaudeville during the intermission. As was true also of many other pioneer activities, the first theatrical entertainments in Upper Canada usually took place in taverns. The first theatre in York was the ballroom of Frank's Hotel, located in the rear of the establishment, which was on the north-west corner of Market Lane (Colborne Street) and West Market Square. There travelling companies of actors presented such plays as *Pizarro; Barbarossa*, or *The Siege of Algiers; Ali Baba*, or *The Forty Thieves; The Lady of the Lake;* and *The Miller and His Men*. A small stage, few dramatic effects, and little or no scenery were characteristic of this as of all other early theatres in Upper Canada.

Concerning York's first theatre Dr. Scadding gives some

[13]See J. E. Middleton: *The Municipality of Toronto, A History*. 1923. Vol. I, pp. 158-60, where a lengthy account of the entertainment is quoted from the Powell Papers in the Toronto Public Library.

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VIEW OF YORK FROM GOODERHAM'S WINDMILL, 1833

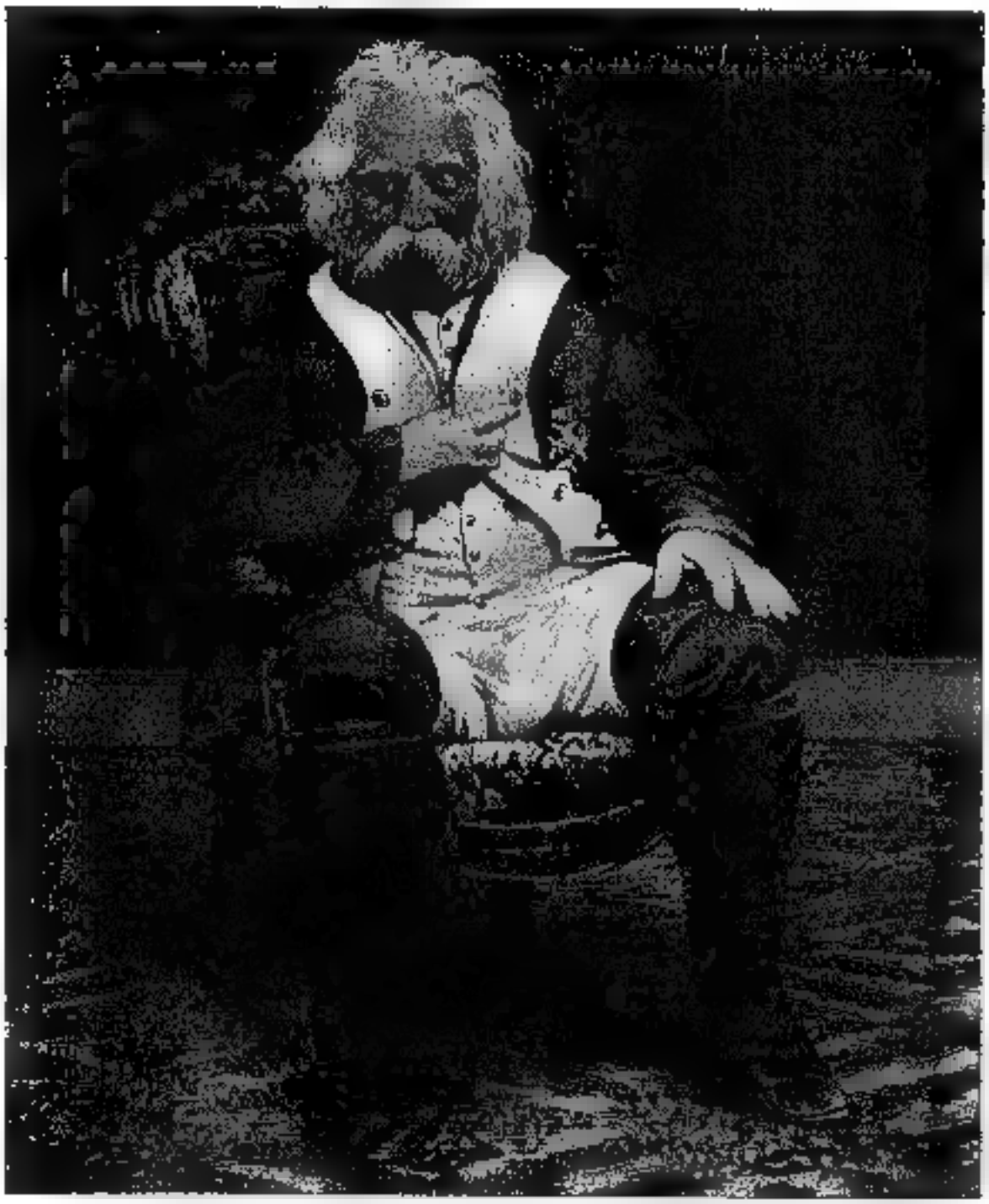
John Ross Robertson Collection. F. V. Poole.

FRANK'S HOTEL, NEAR THE MARKET

The first commercialised theatrical performances in Toronto were at Frank's.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

THE TAM O' SHANTER INN, QUEEN AND BROADVIEW, 1860



John Ross Robertson Collection. John Fraser.

JOHN NICKINSON OF THE ROYAL LYCEUM THEATRE

He is seen here as Havresack in *The Old Guard.*

details of interest. The hotel was a white frame building, and when the ballroom was fitted up for dramatic purposes it was approached by a stairway from the outside:

"Here companies performed under the management, at one time, of Mr. Archold; at another, of Mr. Talbot; at another, of Mr. Vaughan. The last-named manager, while professionally at York, lost a son by drowning in the Bay. We well remember the poignant distress of the father at the grave, and that his head was bound round on the occasion with a white bandage or napkin. Mrs. Talbot was a great favourite. She performed the part of Cora in *Pizarro*, and that of Little Pickle, in a comedy of that name, if our memory serves us. . . . . The body-guard of the Dey of Algiers, we remember, consisted of two men, who always came in with military precision just after the hero, and placed themselves in a formal manner at fixed distances behind him, like two sentries. They were, in fact, soldiers from the garrison, we think. All this appeared very effective.

"The dramatic appliances and accessories at Frank's were of the humblest kind. The dimensions of the stage must have been very limited; the ceiling of the whole room, we know, was low. As for orchestra—in those days the principal instrumental artist of the town was Mr. Maxwell, who, well-remembered for his quiet manner, for the shade over one eye in which was some defect, and for his homely skill on the violin, was generally to be seen and heard, often alone, but sometimes with an associate or two, here, as at all other entertainments of importance, public or private. Nevertheless, at that period, to an unsophisticated yet active imagination innocent of acquaintance with more respectable arrangements, everything seemed charming; each scene, as the bell rang and the baize drew up, was invested with a magical glamour, similar in kind, if not equal in degree, to that which, in the days of our grandfathers, ere yet the modern passion for real knowledge had been awakened, fascinated the young Londoner at Drury Lane."[14]

Phair's Tavern on the west side of Market Square had assembly rooms similar to those at Frank's, and the following advertisement describes in considerable detail the

[14]Henry Scadding: *Toronto of Old*. 1873. pp. 110-11.

performance given by Talbot's Theatrical Troupe, aided by the York Band, in October, 1824:

"Theatre York—This evening, October 7th, will be presented at Mr. Phair's assembly rooms Otway's celebrated tragedy of *Venice Preserved*, or *A Plot Discovered*—

Piere	Mr. Archold.
Jaffre	Mr. Talbot.
Priuli	Mr. Gilbert.
Duke	Mr. Trowbridge.
Badamar	Mr. Davis.
Renault	Mr. Gilbert.
Conspirators.	
Belvedera	Mrs. Talbot.

After the tragedy the following songs:

Comic Song—Cherry Cheek.

Patty	Mr. Gilbert.
Song	Mr. Davis.
Comic Song	Mr. Talbot.

The whole to conclude with a laughable farce of *Nature and Philosophy*.

Brother Philip	Mr. Archold.
Ronaldo	Mr. Gilbert.
Couin, a youth who has never seen woman	Mrs. Talbot.
Eliza	Miss Allan.
Gertrude	Mrs. Archold.

"On Friday evening will be presented the much-admired comedy of *Animal Magnetism*, with the laughable farce of *The Irishman in London*, together with a variety of comic songs, glees, etc., etc., as will appear in the bills.

"N.B.—Mr. Archold, ever anxious to merit the esteem of his generous patrons, has, in addition to the entertainments hitherto afforded, engaged the York Band, which will attend each evening during his stay in York. Tickets to be had at the *U. C. Gazette* Office, at the bar of Mr. Phair's Tavern, and at the Steam Boat Hotel. Boxes 3s. 9d. Back seats 2s. 6d. currency. Children half price. Two tickets

will admit a gentleman and two ladies. Doors open at six o'clock and performance at seven precisely."[15]

Two years later a similar travelling company advertised its performances to take place in the ballroom at the rear of Frank's Hotel. The press contained a news item about this company:

"Mr. & Mrs. Judah, with a *Corps Dramatique*, have arrived in town, and on Thursday and Friday evenings gave entertainments at Frank's, where they have fitted up a theatre. The estimation in which Mr. and Mrs. Judah were held in Montreal, and the liberal support they have met with in Kingston, will, we hope, entitle them to the patronage of the ladies and gentlemen of York. Mrs. Carres' singing is of itself an inducement to visit the theatre, to the lovers of rational amusement, where they have no doubt they will find Mr. and Mrs. Judah and company at home, happy and well prepared to receive them."[16]

The advertisement of this company read:

"Theatre—At Frank's Ball Room Mr. Judah respectfully informs the ladies and gentlemen of York and its vicinity that on this evening (Saturday), October 21st, 1826, will be performed, for the first time in York, Shakespeare's much-admired comedy of Catherine and Petruchio, or *Taming of the Shrew*, with the laughable farce of *Fortune's Frolic*, or *A Ploughman Turned Lord*. N.B.—For particulars see bills."[17]

York's next theatre, a frame building on the north side of Colborne Street, west of the Market, was a workshop the upper storey of which was altered in 1829 to suit the purpose of dramatic entertainment. A local amateur club produced several plays there. This theatre was long remembered by many people as the place where Charles French murdered a man named Nolan in the autumn of 1829. French was an apprentice in William Lyon Mackenzie's printing office, and the Reform leader tried his best to secure a reprieve for him, but without success. The murder and subsequent execution quickly wrote *finis* to the activities of the Colborne Street theatre.

[15] *Upper Canada Gazette*, October 7, 1824.
[16] *U. E. Loyalist*, October 21, 1826.
[17] *Ibid.*

A few years later, in 1834, the old Wesleyan Chapel, on the site of the present head office of the Canadian Bank of Commerce, was converted into a place of amusement which for a time was known as the Theatre Royal. *A Panorama of the Burning of Moscow* was the first entertainment presented in this theatre, which was operated by Waugh Brothers, proprietors of a confectionery store on King Street. Contemporary with the Theatre Royal was another place of amusement, a barn-like building on the north side of Front Street, east of Keating's British Coffee House. This frame hall had no gallery, but accommodated some two or three hundred people. Candles provided the illumination, and the scenic effects were very crude, but the performances, and particularly the acting of Mr. and Mrs. Thorne, were frequently very good.

It is, of course, impossible to gauge the value of any entertainment from the producers' announcements; nor can a press report of it always be accepted as unbiased criticism. The fact that most of the players were from the United States prejudiced the chances of a fair reception at the hands of a considerable number of people, among whom the editor of the *British Colonist* appears to have been one of the most pronounced in his views. With obvious dislike he records a visit to the second Theatre Royal in 1839, when "a party of strolling players from Yankee-land" were performing. He says that "the performance commenced with what was styled in the bills 'The much-admired farce of *Nature and Philosophy*', on the youth who never saw a woman. . . . Both the farce and the actors of it are altogether too contemptible for criticism". A Scotch song was "brutally murdered" by Mrs. Lennox. This was followed "by an attempt to act the opera of *The Maid of Cashmere*, and it was but an attempt. Miss Ince danced tolerably well, and that is all that can be said in favour of the performance. By this time our patience was quite exhausted; we left, and immediately set to write this notice, lest by delay we might so far forget what we had witnessed as to do injustice afterwards to any of the company by detracting from their just merits as players. . . . There is no reason why such a miserable catchpenny as that at present in operation should

be tolerated. The municipal authorities should interfere and abate the nuisance".[18]

In spite of such scathing criticism, however, it is probable that this company was no worse than the average of the day; and no doubt many unprejudiced patrons enjoyed the entertainment provided.

The first commercialised amusement to become available to all except the most remote settlers was the circus. Appearing first in the towns, they were soon stopping at taverns in every settled part of Upper Canada. The organisations were almost exclusively of American origin, and were advertised in the exaggerated style characteristic of all types of commercialised entertainment.

As early as 1827 York had a resident circus under the management of Besnard and Black. This was held in the barn of De Forest's Hotel on King Street, east of Sherbourne. There was no menagerie connected with it, the entertainment consisting of "riding and feats of horsemanship, trapeze and horizontal bar performances, and tricks of juggling". Mrs. Besnard was the favourite of the circus-goers of that period, and her "tossing of balls and knives was one of the principal features of the show".[19] From De Forest's the Besnard circus ring was moved to George Garside's Hotel on the west side of New (Jarvis) Street, near Duke; thence it was removed to Barney Roddy's Tavern on the west side of Church, just below King; and it finally was located on the south side of Wellington Street, a short distance west of Church. Here, enclosed by a high board fence, the circus was long operated by Besnard and was a well-patronised place of amusement.

The earliest stopping-place in York for itinerant menageries was a large open space on the west side of Yonge Street north of Lot (Queen) Street. The Sun Tavern (Elliott's) was located at the northwest corner of the intersection, and to the northward of that building numerous menageries pitched their tents in the eighteen-twenties. In the days of waggon transport the travelling circus was a wonderful spectacle all along the route, and a short stop on

[18]The *British Colonist*, September 4, 1839. The second Theatre Royal was near the north-east corner of King and York Streets.

[19]Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 479.

the outskirts of a community was sufficient to refurbish the parade with considerable pageantry, which was the more appreciated in a day when a surfeit of entertainment had not rendered the populace *blasé* and ultra-sophisticated.

In later years the old Fair Green near the Don became the favourite location for travelling shows, and P. T. Barnum's announcement of his "Grand Colossal Museum and Menagerie" of 1852 is typical of the "ballyhoo" which everyone has seen on barns and fences for over a century. We will attempt to preserve as fas as possible the original form of the advertisement:

"P. T. BARNUM'S

GRAND COLOSSAL MUSEUM AND MENAGERIE.

The largest travelling EXHIBITION in the World, being a combination of all the most popular and unexceptionable amusements of the age—enlarged and improved for the season of 1852.

A TEAM OF 10 ELEPHANTS

Will draw the Great Car of Juggernaut.

A BABY ELEPHANT

only one year old and but 3½ feet high, will carry upon his back, around the interior of the immense Pavilion, the Lilliputian General Tom Thumb. The magnificent *cortège* comprises 110 horses and 90 men. The Pavilion of Exhibition has been enlarged uhtil it is capable of accommodating 15,000 spectators at once. The collection of living Wild Beasts includes the most splendid specimens ever exhibited in America. Among many others will be found

SIX BEAUTIFUL LIONS,

Fresh from their native forests.

A SACRED BURMESE BULL,

from the Island of Ceylon, worshipped there by the Pagan Natives, and recently taken from an Idolatrous Temple.

A monster WHITE OR POLAR BEAR! of prodigious size and ferocity.

A magnificent ROYAL TIGRESS—the largest one ever captured alive.

AN INFANTILE CAMEL—only six months of age, the first one ever born in America.

The DROVE OF ELEPHANTS were captured in the jungle of Central Ceylon by Messrs. S. B. June and Geo. Nutter, assisted by 260 natives, after a pursuit of three months and four days in the jungles. They were finally entrapped and secured in an Indian Kraal or Trap, of enormous dimensions and prodigious strength, where they were subdued. The calf elephant accompanies its dam, and was weaned on its passage from India.

A NATIVE CEYLON CHIEF, of high caste in his own country, has charge of the elephants, having accompanied them from Ceylon."

But for fear these attractions should not prove sufficient, it was advertised in addition to the aforementioned wonders that "the real, genuine, original

GEN. TOM THUMB

is attached to this exhibition, and will appear, in all his performances, as given before the principal crowned heads of Europe, including Songs, Dances, Grecian Statues, and his admired personations of Napoleon and Frederick the Great. The Little General is twenty years of age, weighs only fifteen pounds, and is but twenty-eight inches high."

Then, besides all the foregoing attractions, there was

"MR. NELLIS,

the man without arms", who executed his extraordinary feats of loading and firing a pistol with his toes; cut profile likenesses; shot at a mark with a bow and arrow; played upon the accordion and violoncello, etc. And in addition to all these marvels a fine military band performed the most popular airs of the day as the procession entered town, and also during the hours of exhibition.

Finally, the charge for admission was "only 25 cents to the whole of this immense establishment, including General Tom Thumb, the entire collection of wild animals, wax statuary, Mr. Pierce's performances in the dens, the baby elephant, Mr. Nellis' performances, etc., no extra charge under any pretence whatever, let the reports be what they may. Doors open from 1 to 4, and from 7 to 9 o'clock, p.m."[20]

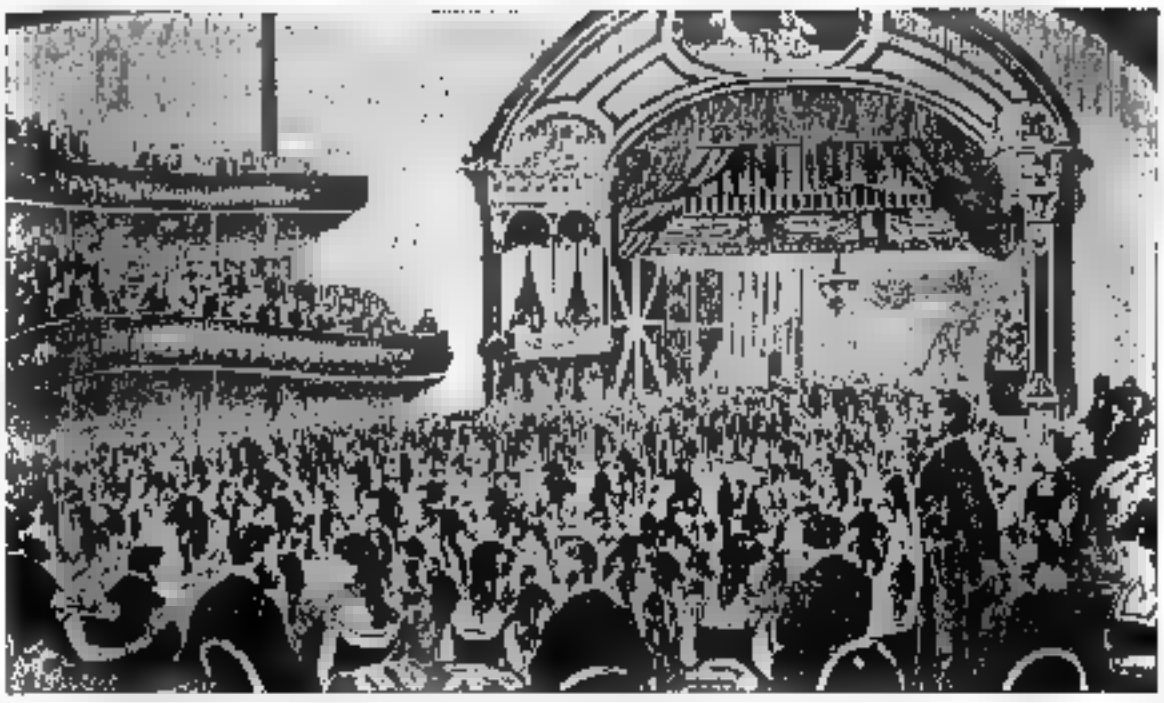
Dancing has long been pre-eminent among amusements, and the assemblies and balls of the society set of the capital

[20] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, pp. 813-14.

have always been characterised by brilliancy. Among the most notable of such events was that which occurred on April 22, 1842, the second day of Governor-General Sir Charles Bagot's visit to Toronto. The occasion was celebrated by a Grand Ball in Government House in honour of the distinguished visitor. A large Committee of Management, of which G. P. Ridout was Secretary, T. D. Harris Treasurer, and W. H. Boulton Master of Ceremonies, was in charge of the event, tickets for which were 30s. ($6.00) each. A press account of the ball noted that "towards 9 o'clock the fashionable world stirred into busy motion, and the rolling of wheels was fast and furious as carriages in quick succession deposited their lovely freight at the entrance door of the Government House. Passing through the ante-room, which was ornamented with the choicest green-house plants, the visitors passed on to the spacious ballroom, where the Lady Mayoress, who did the honours of the Ball, received the respects of the company, who were presented as they arrived by the Master of Ceremonies, W. H. Boulton, Esq."

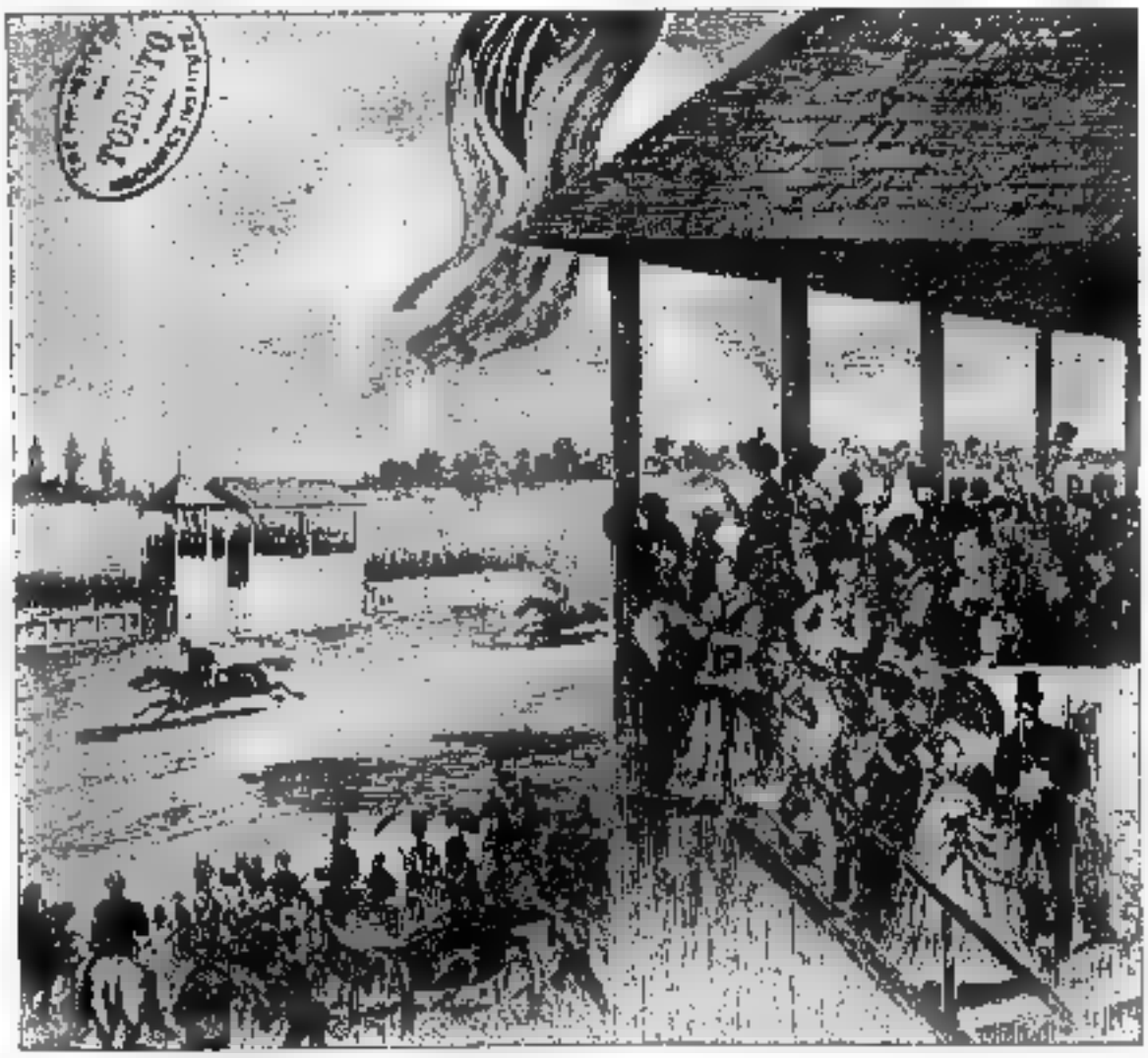
The arrangements for dancing were quite elaborate. In one room, "prettily ornamented to resemble a Turkish tent", was stationed the Quadrille Band of the 43rd Light Infantry; in another were the Band and Bugles of the 93rd or Sutherland Highlanders. The Turkish room contained "repose-inviting couches" around the walls, and in the centre "a most luxurious looking ottoman—long festoons of verdant wreaths hung in graceful sweeps, and, lighted by one handsome chandelier, the room was the beau-ideal of a temple prepared for Love and Beauty. The Ballroom was brilliantly lighted, and was decorated with gorgeous banners of the National Societies. On the walls were mirrors which "reflected many a lovely face radiant with hope"; and parallel with the Ballroom was the long picture gallery, an attractive promenade. The grand drawing-room was "superbly furnished with Turkey carpets, richly wrought *bergeres* and ottomans, and a harp and piano gave promise that vocal music would add its zest to the pleasures of the evening. Everywhere one went, taste and opulence displayed themselves in the arrangements."

At ten o'clock "the clang of steel without" announced the



Canadian Illustrated News. W. C. Canning.

ANNUAL BALL OF THE ROYAL YACHT CLUB AT THE GRAND OPERA HOUSE, 1874



Canadian Illustrated News.

THE TORONTO HUNT CLUB STEEPLE CHASE RACES, 1870

Even the stamp at the upper left is historical, for it recalls that the Toronto Public Library inherited the books of the old Mechanics' Institute.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

THE BUTCHERS' ARMS TAVERN, MILL LANE, 1850

Canadian Illustrated News. M. Mathews.

RECEPTION TO LORD AND LADY DUFFERIN, 1872

The triumphal arch at the corner of King and Yonge.

arrival of His Excellency, and, as the bands played the National Anthem, the Governor-General and his glittering staff entered, were received by the Lady Mayoress, and the ball commenced. Three quadruple sets of quadrilles inaugurated the program, and the scene was "as brilliant as beautiful women could render it".

The "whirling waltz" and the "inspiring galoppe" alternated with the graver quadrille during the evening. Those who did not dance visited the picture gallery, played cards, or merely watched the colourful scene, listening, perchance, to "the syren warblings which poured forth their melody in the drawing-room". At intervals the ladies visited the refreshment room and were regaled by tea, coffee and ices; while their more robust partners "rejoiced in the sterner luxuries of Roman punch and wine negus".

At one o'clock His Excellency led the Lady Mayoress to supper, which was served in four rooms upstairs; many, it is said, were forced to wait until "second table". Everything that could please the palate was served—"even the fragrant and grateful pine apple, opportunely brought from more southern skies"; champagne of superior flavour was poured forth in abundance, and (needless to say) goblet after goblet was drained in honour of the occasion. The guest of honour left after supper, but dancing continued until "the cock's shrill clarion" bid the gay revel cease; "and just as the orient sky was becoming tinged with the golden hues of morning" the last of the dancers were homeward bound. It was no exaggeration to say that "a more splendid and successful result never crowned the labours of a committee,—the judicious tact and complete finish of the thing, through all its appointments, reflect the greatest credit upon the taste and spirit of the gentlemen under whose able management the arrangements were matured and carried out."

Unfortunately we have no record of the ladies' gowns, but it is stated that among the five hundred guests one might see "fifteen varieties of uniform", of which that of the Governor-General, "a magnificent silver and blue dress", and the uniforms of his Aides-de-Camp, which "dazzled the eye with the sheen of scarlet and gold, their coats being actually covered with the richest bullion lace", were out-

standing for splendour and beauty. Take it for all in all, the occasion "will long continue a vivid beacon and 'the light of other days'."[21]

An early fancy dress ball of great interest is fully described by Dr. Scadding:

"It was in the assembly-room at Frank's, dismantled of its theatrical furniture, that a celebrated fancy ball was given on the last day of the year 1827, conjointly by Mr. Galt, Commissioner of the Canada Company, and Lady Mary Willis, wife of Mr. Justice Willis. On that occasion the general interests of the Company were to some extent studied in the ornamentation of the room, its floor being decorated with an immense representation, in chalks or water-colour, of the arms of the association. The supporters of the shield were of colossal dimensions: two lions rampant, bearing flags turning opposite ways: below, on the riband, in characters proportionably large, was the motto of the Company, *Non mutat genus solum.* The sides and ceiling of the room, with the passage leading from the front door to it, were covered throughout with branchlets of the hemlock-spruce: nestling in the greenery of this perfect bower were innumerable little coloured lamps, each containing a floating light.

"Here, for once, the potent, grave and reverend signiors of York, along with their sons and daughters, indulged in a little insanity. Lady Mary Willis appeared as Mary, Queen of Scots; the Judge himself, during a part of the evening, was in the costume of a gay old lady, the Countess of Desmond, aged one hundred years; Miss Willis, the clever amateur equestrienne, was Folly, with cap and bells; Dr. W. W. Baldwin was a Roman senator; his two sons, William and St. George, were the Dioscuri, Fratres Helenae, lucida Sidera; his nephew, Augustus Sullivan, was Puss-in-Boots; Dr. Grant Powell was Dr. Pangloss; Mr. Kerr, a real Otchipway chief, at the time a member of the Legislature, made a magnificent Kentucky backwoodsman, named and entitled Captain Jebediah Skinner. Mr. Gregg, of the Commissariat, was Othello. The Kentuckian (Kerr) pro-

[21]The quotations are from the most interesting account of the event appearing in the *Toronto Commercial Herald*, as reprinted a few days later by the *Examiner* of April 27, 1842.

fessing to be struck with the many fine points of the Moor, as regarded from his point of view, persisted, throughout the evening, in exhibiting an inclination to purchase—an idea naturally much resented by Othello. Col. Givins, his son Adolphus, Raymond Bâby, and others, were Indian chiefs of different tribes, who more than once indulged in the war-dance. Mr. Buchanan, son of the British Consul at New York, was Darnley; Mr. Thomson, of the Canada Company's office, was Rizzio; Mr. G. A. Barber was a wounded sailor recently from Navarino (that untoward event had lately taken place); his arm was in a sling; he had suffered in reality a multilation of the right hand by an explosion of gun-powder on the preceding 5th of November."[22]

People frequently travelled long distances to be present at the social gatherings of the *élite*. Mrs. Anna Jameson wrote on May 20, 1837: "Last night a ball at the government-house, to which people came from a distance of fifty—a hundred—two hundred miles—which is nothing to signify here. There were very pretty girls, and very nice dancing". The wealthier classes usually insisted on the best of music at their assemblies, and if the Paul Whiteman or Vincent Lopez of the day was not available the deficiency was quickly noticed; Mrs. Jameson, for example, referring to the same ball, observed that "we had all too much reason to lament the loss of the band of the 66th Regiment, which left us a few weeks ago—to my sorrow".[23]

It was not easy to be up-to-the-minute in dance steps when square and fancy dancing was in vogue. Quadrilles and schottisches were usual at the fashionable balls at Government House on such occasions as the opening of legislature; while dancing schools endeavoured in addition to insure proficiency in "Zodiac's New Pantomime, Scotch Sling, Children's Hornpipes, the 6th and 4th Hanoverian Waltzes, De la Cour Minuet walked in six corners, and Country Dances".[24]

There were numerous benevolent people in York, and their activities did much to alleviate the suffering and distress of immigrants. At the annual meeting of the

[22]Scadding: *Toronto of Old*, pp. 111-12.
[23]Anna Jameson: *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada*. 1838. Vol. I, p. 292.
[24]Kingston *Upper Canada Herald*, August 2, 1825.

Stranger's Friend Society held at De Forest's Hotel on November 30, 1822, it was reported that over £110 had been expended in relief of the destitute and sick. It was recognised that "the great expense attending the passage of emigrants and their families up the St. Lawrence frequently exhausts their means, depresses their spirits, and, added to the great fatigue of the journey and the exposure of the weather, produces sickness among them ere they reach York"; and to these, and others who needed provisions until their crops were harvested, the aid of the Society was most welcome. James Fitzgibbon, the secretary, reported that 7,898 rations had been distributed and 215 families relieved during the year.[25] In 1829 the same organisation was known as the Society for the Relief of the Sick and Destitute; while three years later the York Emigrant Committee, appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor, was assisting the Society in facilitating the settlement or employment of the large numbers who were then entering Upper Canada.

The first charitable bazaar in York occurred on September 2, 1832, in the commissariat storehouse near the foot of John Street. The interior of the building was gaily decorated with flags for the event, which was to provide funds for the relief of distress caused by the recent great cholera epidemic. The bazaar was under the patronage of Lady Colborne, and a piece of music called *Raven Plume* was written for the occasion by James M. Cawdell, dedicated to Miss Mary Powell, and sung by J. E. Goodson. A contemporary publication noted that "all the fashionable and well-disposed attended; the band of the gallant 79th played; at each table stood a lady; and in a very short time all the articles were sold to gentlemen who will keep as the apple of their eye the things made and presented by such hands. The sum collected was three hundred and eleven pounds."[26]

The fashionable caterer for such social events was an Italian, Franco Rossi, the first "scientific confectioner" in York. Dr. Scadding describes his shop as "ever fragrant and ambrosial. In his specialties he was a superior workman. From him were procured the fashionable bridecakes

[25] *Upper Canada Gazette*, December 12, 1822.
[26] *Sibbald's Canadian Magazine*, January, 1833.

of the day; as also the noyeau, parfait-amour, and other *liqueurs* set out for visitors on New Year's Day. Rossi was the first to import hither good objects of art: fine copies of the Laocoon, the Apollo Belvidere, the Perseus of Canova, with other classical groups and figures sculptured in Florentine alabaster, were disseminated by him in the community".[27]

Rossi's emporium of the artistic and delicious was located on the south side of King Street to the east of Bay Street, and is the *affiche* visited in 1832 by Thomas Hamilton, who was thereby reminded of Grange's—presumably a fashionable resort in London:

"In passing through the streets I was rather surprised to observe an *affiche* intimating that ice-creams were to be had within. The weather being hot I entered, and found the master of the establishment to be an Italian. I never ate better ices at Grange's."[28]

A place of entertainment of another variety was Hamilton's White Swan Inn, on Front Street East. An early Natural History Museum drew numerous persons to the hostelry, and Dr. Scadding outlines its rise and fall:

"The corner we approach after passing the Market Square was occupied by an inn with a sign-board sustained on a high post inserted at the outer edge of the footpath, in country roadside fashion. This was Hamilton's, or the White Swan. It was here, we believe, or in an adjoining house, that a travelling citizen of the United States, in possession of a collection of stuffed birds and similar objects, endeavoured at an early period to establish a kind of Natural History Museum. To the collection here was once rashly added figures in wax of General Jackson and some other United States notabilities, all in grand costume. Several of these were one night abstracted from the Museum by some over-patriotic youths, and suspended by the neck from the limbs of one of the large trees that overlooked the harbour."[29]

Of a similar nature was a travelling museum which

[27]Scadding, *Toronto of Old*, pp. 94-5.

[28]Thomas Hamilton: *Men and Manners in America*. 1833. Vol. II, p. 335.

[29]Scadding: *Toronto of Old*, p. 49. Charles Fothergill once received a grant of land in support of a projected museum in York.

visited York in 1826, stopping for a few days at Frank's Hotel:

"New Museum—Just arrived from the Southard, a new, curious and pleasing collection of wax figures, large as life, consisting of some of the most extraordinary characters the world has produced for centuries; among which are Duncan Bradley, the Yorkshire Giant, eight feet seven inches high, and well proportioned; Mr. Daniel Lambert, who weighed 739 lbs., 10 feet four inches round the body, three feet one inch round the leg, etc., who lately died in London. Also natural and artificial curiosities, paintings, electricity, etc., etc. Good music on different organs, tambourine, etc. N.B.—The above may be seen at C. Frank's in York, on the Market Square, every day from nine o'clock a.m. till nine p.m. during its stay in town. Admittance is 3d. Small children half price. York, August 19th, 1826."[30]

Somewhat more pretentious than these forerunners of the Royal Ontario Museum were the works produced by the York Artists and Amateur Association, described as follows by Dr. Scadding in his outline of the beginnings of artistic endeavour in the town:

"Looking up Parliament Street we are reminded that a few yards westward from where Duke Street enters it lived at an early period Mr. Richard Coates, an estimable and ingenious man, whose name is associated in our memory with the early dawn of the fine arts in York. Mr. Coates, in a self-taught way, executed, not unsuccessfully, portraits in oil of some of our ancient worthies. Among things of a general or historical character, he painted also for David Willson, the founder of the Children of Peace, the symbolical decorations of the interior of the Temple at Sharon. He cultivated music likewise, vocal and instrumental; he built an organ of some pretensions in his own house, on which he performed; he built another for David Willson, at Sharon. Mr. Coates constructed besides, in the yard of his house, an elegantly-finished little pleasure yacht of about nine tons burden.

"This passing reference to infant Art in York recalls again the name of Mr. John Craig, who has before been mentioned in our account of the interior of one of the many

[30] *U. E. Loyalist*, August 19, 1826.

successive St. Jameses. Although Mr. Craig did not himself profess to go beyond his sphere as a decorative and heraldic painter, the spirit that animated him really tended to foster in the community a taste for art in a wider sense.

"Mr. Charles Daly, also, as a skilful teacher of drawing in water-colours and introducer of superior specimens, did much to encourage art at an early date. In 1834 we find Mr. Daly promoting an Exhibition of Paintings by the York Artists and Amateur Association, and acting as Honorary Secretary when the Exhibition for the year took place. Mr. James Hamilton, a teller in the bank, produced, too, some noticeable landscapes in oil.

"As an auxiliary in the cause, and one regardful of the wants of artists at an early period, we name, likewise, Mr. Alexander Hamilton; who, in addition to supplying materials in the form of pigments and prepared colours, contributed to the tasteful setting off of the productions of pencil and brush by furnishing them with frames artistically carved and gilt.

"Out of the small beginnings and rudiments of art at York, one artist of a genuine stamp was, in the lapse of a few years, developed—Mr. Paul Kane; who, after studying in the schools of Europe, returned to Canada and made the illustration of Indian character and life his specialty. By talent exhibited in this class of pictorial delineation he acquired a distinguished reputation throughout the North American continent; and by his volume of beautifully illustrated travels, published in London, and entitled *Wanderings of an Artist Among the Indians of North America,* he obtained for himself a recognised place in the literature of British Art."[31]

Paul Kane spent his boyhood in York, and, though at much later periods it was possible to catch pike, bass and an odd maskinonge off the wharves, the days he recalled when he had seen "as many as 100 light-jacks gliding about the Bay of Toronto"[32] were not to be repeated, for fish-spearing from birch canoes was characteristic only of the pioneer period. In the eighteen-thirties Kane was following

[31]Scadding: *Toronto of Old,* pp. 202-3.

[32]Paul Kane: *Wanderings of an Artist among the Indians of North America.* 1859. p. 32.

the business of "Coach, Sign and House Painter" at 158 King Street. His father was a soldier who kept store on the west side of Yonge Street between King and Adelaide. His sign, "Kane, Spirit Store", was for some years familiar in that locality.

The private diversions of citizens varied with their wealth, inclinations and capabilities. Formal calls (leaving cards, of course,) were as fashionable then as in more recent times. It was a time when many people participated in the aristocratic sport of riding horseback, while picnics, boating, sleighing and skating were enjoyed in season. Among the socially select Family Compact set "there were dinners given by Sir John Colborne and other prominent people. There were 'Readings', 'Musicales', and private theatricals at Hazelburn, S. P. Jarvis' house; and at the close of the season the more elaborate and unique event of the Fancy Dress Ball given by the Sheriff and Mrs. Jarvis at Rosedale".[33] In less exclusive circles there were less elaborate "parties", but at the lower end of the social order, among the poverty-stricken, there was but little to divert the mind from life's cares except the crude and demoralising pleasures of tavern and saloon and their usual accompaniments—brawling, cock- and dog-fighting, gambling and prostitution.

Travellers visiting Toronto at this time—just after the creation of the city—were not favourably impressed with the facilities for social intercourse and cultural advancement. In 1837 Mrs. Anna Jameson found that there was a commercial news-room, but that this was "absolutely the only place of assembly or amusement, except the taverns and low drinking-houses. An attempt has been made to found a Mechanics' Institute and a literary club; but as yet they create little interest, and are very ill supported".[34] Four years later Sir Richard Bonnycastle was in Toronto and learned that there had been "various attempts to get up respectable races, to establish a theatre and a winter assembly for dancing", but without much success; he also states that a national Literary and Philosophical Society was organised with difficulty, but lasted only about a year.[35]

[33]A. Meredith: *Mary's Rosedale and Gossip of Little York*. pp. 155-6.
[34]Jameson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 273-4.
[35]Sir Richard Bonnycastle: *The Canadas in 1841*. 1842. Vol. I, p. 168.

While learned societies received but scant support, the advancement of music was no greater. In 1837 Mrs. Jameson found that Archdeacon Strachan was collecting subscriptions to provide a £1,000 organ for St. James' Church in Toronto, and that "an intelligent musician" had trained a good choir; but she learned that the conductor had received so little encouragement "that he is at this moment preparing to go to the United States".[36]

"Respectable races" had, in spite of Sir Richard Bonnycastle's comment, been held in York from very early times, though the Turf Club dates only from 1837. The gentlemen of the town and garrison formed steeplechase and other semi-private racing clubs, and had a race-course, previous to the War of 1812, at the commencement of the peninsula leading to what is now the island. This was a straight track, and its location was chosen largely because the peninsula was a popular resort for those who enjoyed the pleasures of walking, riding and driving; particularly did the military engage in these pursuits so characteristic of English watering-places. The importance attached both to the race-course and the other facilities for pleasure on the peninsula may be seen from the attempt to build by private subscription in 1822-23 two bridges over the Great and Little Don. Though these causeways were partially constructed, there was not money enough to complete them until 1835, and then only with the aid of a subsidy from the military chest, made available through the interest of Lieutenant-Governor Sir John Colborne. Their opening was an occasion of gratulation no less than that in modern Ontario when a stretch of paved highway is officially inaugurated; but in this instance the old-world pomp and ceremonial was reminiscent of a lord mayor's installation.

In September, 1837, there were three days of racing at Runnymede, "Mr. Scarlett's Simcoe Chase Course", in the Humber Valley. This meet probably inaugurated formal racing in Toronto, the Upper Canada Turf Club having just previously been organised as a result of interest aroused in military races on the Garrison Common. In the early forties another track was in operation on the Boulton property in the rear of The Grange, to be followed by Mait-

[36]Jameson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 274.

land's track east of the Don, and Gates' near the corner of Danforth and Broadview. Several other race-courses were constructed in the late fifties, and from time to time in after years.

Tandem and carriole clubs were other organisations dependent upon horses, the membership of these societies being largely restricted to officers. The Toronto Tandem Club was organised in the winter of 1839-40, and the activities included weekly drives in sleighs and cutters to the Peacock Inn or some other favourite resort, where gay dinners not infrequently drew forth poetical effusions from the more gifted members. Concerning winter sleighing parties Mrs. Anna Jameson wrote:

"I stood at my window today, watching the sleighs as they glided past. They are of all shapes and sizes. A few of the carriage sleighs are well-appointed and handsome. The market sleighs are often two or three boards nailed together in form of a wooden box upon runners; some straw and a buffalo skin serve for the seat; barrels of flour and baskets of eggs fill up the empty space. Others are like cars, and others called cutters are mounted upon high runners like sleigh phaetons. These are sported by the young men and officers of the garrison, and require no inconsiderable skill in driving, as I am assured that they overturn in the snow not above once in a quarter of an hour, and no harm and much mirth ensues. But the wood sleighs are my delight; a large platform of boards is raised upon runners, with a few upright poles held together at top by a rope; the logs of oak, pine and maple are then heaped up to the height of six or seven feet. On the summit lie a couple of deer frozen stiff, their huge antlers projecting in a most picturesque fashion, and on these, again, a man is seated with a blanket round him, his furred cap drawn down upon his ears, and his scarlet woollen comforter forming a fine bit of colour. He guides with a pole his two patient oxen, the clouds of vapor curling from their nostrils into the keen frosty air."[87]

During the same period many another sport saw its inception in Toronto. Though the first Curling Club was

[87]Anna Jameson: *Sketches in Canada and Rambles among the Red Men.* 1839. 1852 Edition, p. 7.

not organised until the winter of 1836-37, the Scottish inhabitants of the district were playing "the roarin' game" on the Don River at least as early as 1829, and matches between the curlers of Toronto and those of Scarborough Township were being held in the thirties. In later years it was customary for devotees of the besom and stane to keep the snow off sections of ice between the wharves in the Bay; while other groups were curling on Grenadier Pond and the Humber River. Annual bonspiels which drew curlers from all parts of the province were long notable events; but of famous teams none could approach the Toronto Red Jackets, who won seventy-five successive matches against picked teams before suffering their first defeat.

Cricket developed in York in the early thirties as a result of the enthusiasm of G. A. Barber, one of the first masters at Upper Canada College. In 1834 the Toronto cricketers defeated Guelph in a match played at Hamilton, each team having to make an all-day journey to and from the match. In September, 1840, a remarkable hoax on someone's part led to the unexpected arrival in Toronto of a team of New York cricketers. The ensuing match was, however, the forerunner of others with several American cities. Many of those who played cricket were also enthusiastic lawn bowlers, the green being located near the Caer Howell grounds just west of University Avenue.

Baseball, developing in the United States in the late forties, reached Canada some ten or fifteen years later. Just as, in the opinion of many, cricket and lacrosse were "gentlemen's games" ("A cricketer", says the *Patriot*, "as a matter of course detests democracy"),[38] so baseball, like football, was early relegated to the "rude mechanicals". In the seventies and eighties, however, baseball became more and more popular, though the element of professionalism which gradually entered the sport was objectionable to many.

Lacrosse, however, was not an important pioneer sport. The Indian game, called *baggatiway*, was played with a deerskin ball filled with hair, and the goal posts were frequently a mile apart. Adapted for Canadian athletes in Montreal at the middle of the century, the game was first

[38]The *Patriot*, July 15, 1836.

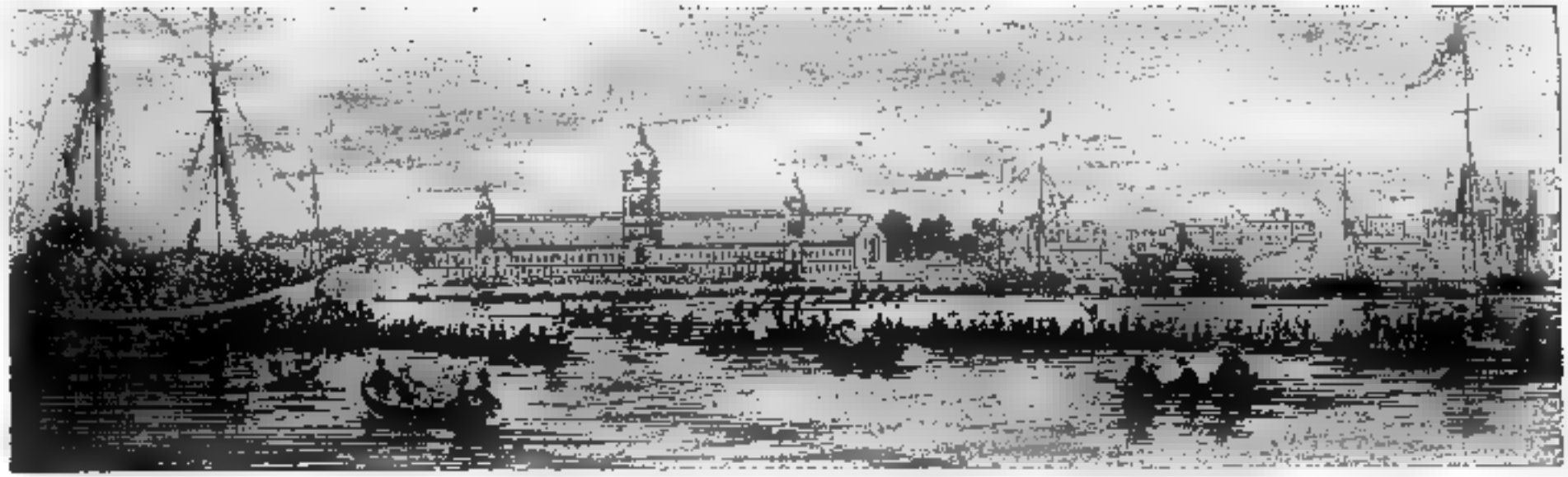
played in Toronto in the sixties. Hockey, the winter counterpart of lacrosse, developed from "shinny" many years later.

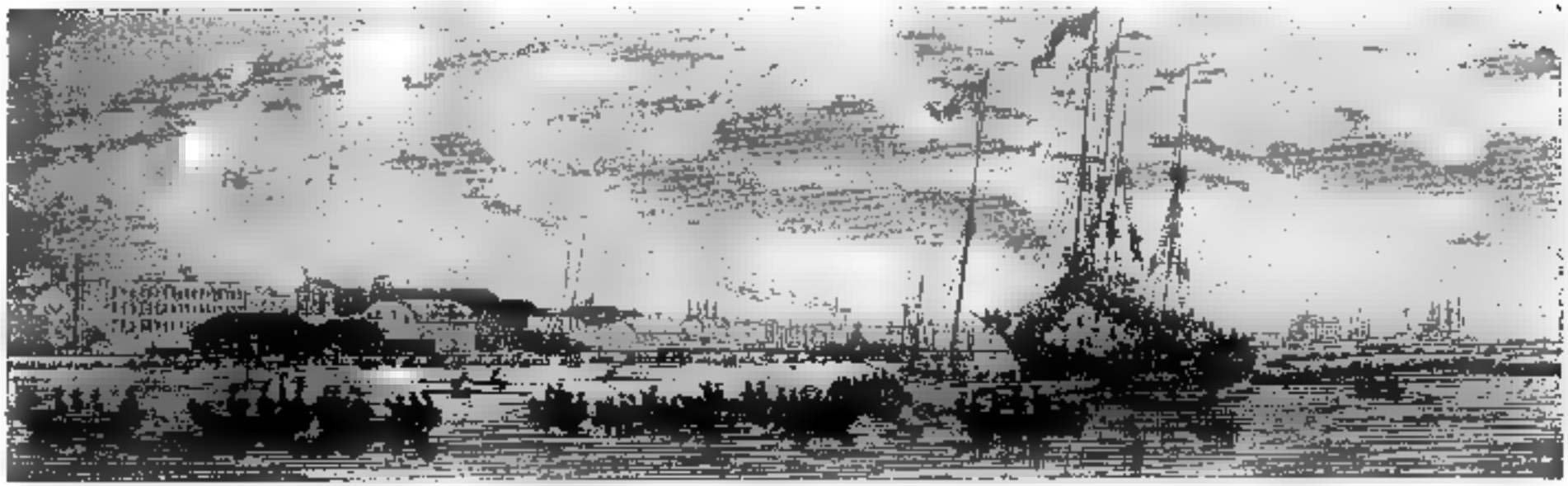
From the earliest years of the town the officers of the Garrison enjoyed sailing on the Bay, and as time passed, the birch canoe and bateau, early used in spearing fish by jack-light, were superseded by sailing yachts. In the thirties and forties sailing races, in which yachtsmen from Cobourg, Hamilton and other towns participated, were occasionally held, most of the boats being owned by retired naval officers or other gentlemen. In later years the regattas along the waterfront were of a more elaborate nature, and were accompanied by fashionable balls and other select social activities.

Rowing was early popular in Toronto, but even as late as 1870 there were no oarsmen in America who could compete with the best English scullers. Born in 1855, Ned Hanlan, son of a hotel-keeper on the Island, was rowing in the early 70's, champion of Ontario in 1876, and defeated all-comers everywhere until 1884, when his supremacy was ended. He usually won with ease, sometimes, like the modern Bob Pearce, making his opponents look foolish.[39] The Tinning brothers, Richard, John and Thomas, attained as oarsmen something more than local fame about twenty years earlier. In 1858 they were members of a crew which defeated Chicago for "the championship of the Lakes" and a purse of $2,000.

The city of Toronto of the late eighteen-forties was just commencing to lose the characteristics of a town. Public amusements at that time were still comparatively few. The members of the Mechanics' Institute might read books or papers by gas light at their club rooms, and William Wakefield's auction room was a favourite evening resort for many because of the entertainment and humour provided. Stock companies in primitive theatres were attractive to some people, while itinerant circuses and other shows visited the town from time to time. L. J. Privat's horse-boat transported picnic parties to the island (then a peninsula), but, apart from Privat's Hotel, on the site of the present Eastern

[39] An outline of Hanlan's chief contests may be found in Middleton, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 311-12.





Canadian Illustrated News. THE INTERNATIONAL REGATTA ON TORONTO BAY, 1873 F. M. Bell Smith.

Though most of the events were won by Americans it was nevertheless considered a most successful regatta. The old Union Station may be seen in the background of the upper sketch.

Reproduced by Courtesy of T. A. Reed, Esq.

CRICKET MATCH AT TORONTO, SEPTEMBER 2ND AND 3RD, 1872

The Cricket Grounds were situated just south of College Street, west of University Avenue. This match was between "twelve of the Gentlemen of England and twenty-two of the Toronto Club".

Reproduced by Courtesy of the Maple Leaf Gardens, Inc.

"THE FASTEST IN THE WORLD"
PROFESSIONAL HOCKEY—CHICAGO BLACK HAWKS VS. TORONTO MAPLE LEAFS

13,500 fans at the Maple Leaf Gardens, Toronto, November 12, 1931. Modern professional sports provide "thrills" equal to Spanish bull fights—and in other respects, too, they have much in common.

Gap, the island contained only two or three fishermen's huts at the West Point. C. C. Taylor recalled that a favourite place for a swim was off Rees' Wharf, nearly opposite the Parliament Buildings, and at other quiet spots along the shore of the Bay:

"Here, on a fine summer's morning, many of the leading merchants and clerks from King Street might be seen indulging in the healthy exercise. The only restriction was as to time, there being none as to dress. No person was allowed to bathe after seven o'clock, before which time it was perfectly legal. By those of us who had been accustomed to 'disport beneath the crested wave' on the Atlantic Coast, *in puris naturalibus*, the privilege was highly appreciated and enjoyed.

"One morning the writer chose a spot in front of the Commissariat Depot, which was always guarded by a sentry, who, with fixed bayonet, 'walked his lonely round' in front of his box. These sentries appeared to be authorised to enforce the rule as to time. Not knowing it was past seven o'clock I had quite prepared for a dip when the sentry advanced a few paces and, in a very decided tone, said if I went into the water he 'would do his duty'. Not liking the look of the cold steel, and thinking that in this case discretion was the better part of valour, I quickly dressed and, apologising for having mistaken the hour, beat a retreat."[40]

As early as 1812, it may be explained, the Magistrates forbade bathing in front of the town between sunrise and sunset. Another favourite "swimmin' hole" was that section of the beach south of Sir Richard Bonnycastle's residence, near the south-west corner of Front and Peter Streets. The boys of Upper Canada College were frequently to be found swimming there in the eighteen-forties. When the Bay was unsuitable because of cold weather those who wished might patronise the Royal Baths of Angus Blue. This popular resort was located on King Street, west of Lamb's Hotel, and extended to the rear of a small frame building where the keeper lived. The *Examiner* in 1844 contained the announcement that "the baths (opposite Stone's Hotel), King Street, for ladies and gentlemen, are now open. Hot and cold baths can be had at all hours from

[40]C. C. Taylor: *Toronto Called Back*. 1886. p. 77.

6 a.m. to 10 p.m. Entrance for ladies on King Street. Entrance for gentlemen on the lane leading to the Racquet court."[41] Baths were not, however, the commonplace institution which they have become since the great development of plumbing accessories, for the first bathtub in Canada is said to have been that installed in a Toronto home in 1844.

At all seasons, but especially on Saturday nights, when those most closely associated could conveniently be present, fires could be depended upon to provide some excitement, particularly for the volunteer Fire Brigade, and for the carters racing with puncheons of water to secure the prizes for early arrival. Perhaps, too, one might have his likeness taken by Eli Palmer, Daguerrean Artist, successor to Mr. and Mrs. Cook, portrait-painters of the late eighteen-thirties, and of the silhouette-cutters who travelled about making profile likenesses in paper. (The name, by the way, originated in Paris, the economy of detail in this type of portrait suggesting to frivolous Parisians an unpopular parsimonious Minister of Finance, Etienne de Silhouette). The ladies of the period passed a great deal of time pleasantly perusing the styles in the current *Godey's Lady's Book*, or imitating the latest "fashion dolls" from Europe or the United States—the Butterick patterns of that day. And if all else failed, a person might at least watch the arrival of passengers and mail at Weller's Stage Coach Office, at the intersection of Front, Wellington and Church Streets; the arrival of the English mail once a fortnight was an outstanding event for many citizens.

The general attitude towards the theatre in the early forties was not unlike that of the editor of the *Examiner*:

"We are glad to learn that Messrs. Dean & Co. of Rochester are about to establish a respectable theatre in this city. We have of late been so completely over-run with pseudo-professors of every description that the public are very naturally becoming disgusted with public exhibitions. Since, however, performers of a higher order have chosen to come among us, we trust their efforts will be greeted with the cordiality which they merit, and their endeavours to introduce the legitimate drama to Toronto be not only ap-

[41]The advertisement is quoted in Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 444.

preciated but rewarded by a liberal patronage. From having seen them play at Hamilton we are enabled conscientiously to declare that their performances are highly creditable, and calculated to gratify every true lover of the drama."[42]

The buildings which served the stage during the early years of the city were at first little improved over those of the eighteen-thirties. Derring's was a barn-like building at the corner of Scott and Wellington Streets, near the Ontario House; another, on William Street above Queen, had originally been a barn; while a third was the old coach-house on King Street West near Government House. Theatrical companies staged in these rather crude buildings such plays as *The Golden Farmer, The Happy Cobbler, The Brigands, The Swiss Cottage* and *Contentment vs. Riches.* In 1848, however, the Royal Lyceum, Toronto's ninth (or tenth) theatre, was the first to be erected for the purpose. This building was located on the south side of King Street, between Bay and York, and was the city's most popular theatre until it was burned in the early seventies. Until 1853 it was "a queer little theatre. There were (for boxes) little holes in the wall fringed with pink curtains, but so arranged that their occupants faced the audience instead of the stage".[43] John Nickinson, long a notable figure in Toronto's theatrical life, became manager at that time, however, and rearranged the interior. Using gas to provide the illumination, this excellent actor and producer was responsible for several seasons of fine plays at the Royal Lyceum. A contemporary publication gives an interesting, if not particularly flattering account of the theatre and Nickinson's company of 1858. The Royal Lyceum, "although small and, since the hard times commenced, has not met with the encouragement its management merited, is an exceedingly pleasant resort". The manager, Mr. Nickinson, was himself "a first-rate actor", and he was ably assisted by others "equally good in their line", notably Mr. Petrie, Mr. Marlowe, Mr. Lee, Mrs. Marlowe and Miss Frost. The "general run of pieces" were well presented by

[42]The *Examiner*, September 7, 1842.

[43]See Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 483-9, for a full account of the Royal Lyceum.

this stock company, and we are glad to learn that "the performances are always characterised by morality and good breeding".[44]

The restricted area of the Toronto of the forties is apparent when it is remembered that apart from Church and Yonge Streets, there were practically no buildings north of Queen Street. The important suburbs of Brockton, Parkdale, Seaton Village, Riverside and Leslieville did not exist at that time, and Yorkville had but a few scattered houses, of which the best was Mr. Bloor's. An old resident gives an interesting account of pleasant walks in the vicinity of the city, though his enjoyment was somewhat tempered by memories of the flora of the Old Land:

"Our first tour of exploration in the outskirts was along Carlton Street from Yonge, then a clay road without houses or sidewalks. Having got as far as the present Homewood Avenue, we found a small gate-house, and on entering the wicket discovered a natural pathway through a thick pine grove. Proceeding north we reached the house now occupied by Homer Dixon, Esq., and finding further progress that way, or egress, impossible, retraced our steps.

"Our next adventure was along Bloor Street, east to the present cemetery fence, and thence backwards again; and these for a time constituted our only recreation grounds, except the College Avenue.

"In taking a morning or an afternoon walk, there was the absence of many pleasing objects so familiar in former everyday life. The 'wee crimson-tippit' flowers that covered the pasture fields like a carpet; the banks of primroses, buttercups and violets, abounding by every roadside; the double line of hawthorns whose blossoms perfumed the air with their delicious fragrance, and the honeysuckle and wallflowers in every lane; the meadows, thick with May flowers,—all were missed during this first summer in Toronto. For the hedgerows we found the unsightly snake fence, and for the evergreens of holly, laurel, and ivy, the everlasting, monotonous pines, good for use but not very ornamental.

"The study of this class of flora no doubt might be in-

[44] *Descriptive Catalogue of the Provincial Exhibition, 1858.* Second edition, 1858, p. 79.

teresting to those who studied the subject from a utilitarian point of view, and the smaller species might have been discovered by an adventurous descent down the ravine to where the River Don flowed in its native beauty; and some ferns and beautiful wild flowers might have been discovered, very interesting to students in botany; but to the casual observer these beautiful objects were at that time conspicuous by their absence.

"Along Church Street, any summer's afternoon, especially in a swamp at the south-east corner of the present beautiful Normal School grounds, could be heard the music of a frogs' concert, accompanied at a short distance with the tintinabulation of the bells on the necks of the cows which roamed through the browny-green pastures and amongst the thick bush which prevailed east of Church and north of Queen Street. These sounds were further augmented by the cackling of flocks of geese, which, in their amphibious character, had their choice of both native elements. The song of the lark, the thrush, the blackbird and goldfinch, so familiar before, was no more heard; the buzz of the bumblebee and the whirr of the numerous insects that abounded in the bush being the only substitute."[45]

In a more cheerful strain W. H. Pearson recalled[46] that in his boyhood days he "gathered strawberries on the site of the Roman Catholic Cathedral, and beechnuts on what is now the Normal School Square, and shot a wild pigeon near the corner of Gould Street. In the forties and well on in the fifties, during the summer months, immense flocks of pigeons in their migration flew over the outskirts and sometimes the city itself, and everybody who had a gun took advantage of the opportunity to shoot them. I have seen quite a number of men and boys firing at them near Mr. Allan's property on what is now Shuter Street, since there was then no prohibition against discharging firearms in the

[45]Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 50-51.

[46]W. H. Pearson: *Recollections and Records of Toronto of Old*. 1914. pp. 51-2. The shooting of mosquito hawks on the streets of York and near the bay is said by Lieutenant E. T. Coke in his *The Subaltern's Furlough* (1833) to be "the chief diversion of young men", though one hesitates to accept this exaggerated generalisation; and Major T. W. Magrath describes the excellent woodcock-shooting available during the summer months. (See *Authentic Letters from Upper Canada*. 1833.)

city. One of the amusements of the day was shooting nighthawks, and the foot of Church Street was quite a popular place for this sport."

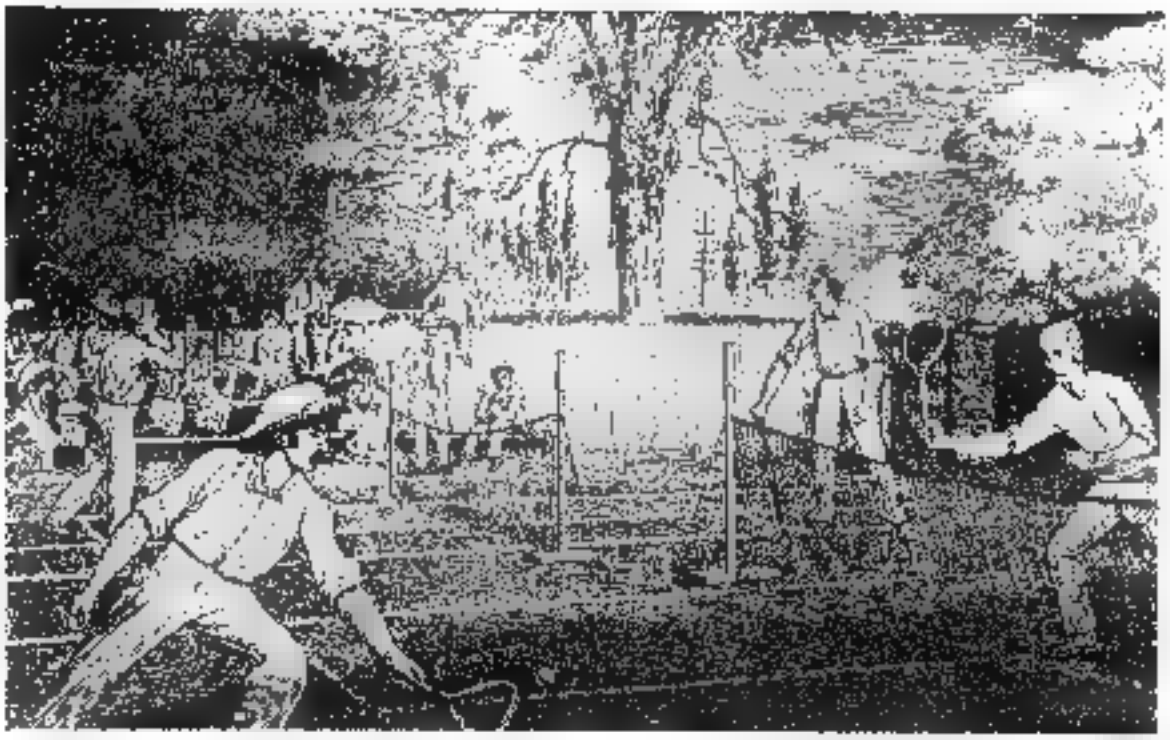
Both women and men were fond of visiting their friends and associates, and such calls, especially on New Year's Day, were frequently of a very formal nature. Sunday was the favourite day for calling,—after church was over, of course. Of interest concerning church services is C. C. Taylor's description:

"On Sundays, generally, three carriages could be seen at St. James' Cathedral, and, as a good deal of rivalry existed between the owners of two out of three, in the style of the appointments, the coachmen's livery, and horses and harness, their appearance on driving from church was a standing topic at almost every dinner table, the dresses of the ladies coming in for a full share of the criticism, of course of a good-natured character.

"On enquiry we found, rather to our surprise, that there were two churches having organs, something we had not expected to find: one was in the old Cathedral and the other in the Richmond Street Wesleyan Church. On being introduced to Rev. Messrs. Cooney and Harvard by letters, the former took us with pride to see the new church on Richmond Street. It then stood on an almost vacant lot, there being no buildings between it and Bay Street. On entering he pointed with a good deal of satisfaction to the fine organ, which stood behind the pulpit at the time. We attended divine service on the following Sunday, when Mr. Cooney preached, and were much interested. The musical portion of the service was very pleasing and effective. A well-known alderman of the city at the present time was leader of the tenors, and the writer has a distinct recollection of his flexible voice as he glided from tenor to counter-tenor, and occasionally appeared imperceptibly to run into a falsetto, which added much to the harmony and contributed very greatly to the general effect.

"We were equally pleased in the old Cathedral. The beautifully composed and impressively delivered sermons of the Rev. Mr. Grasett were such as should never be forgotten, while the music was of a high order."[47]

[47]Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 48 and 56.



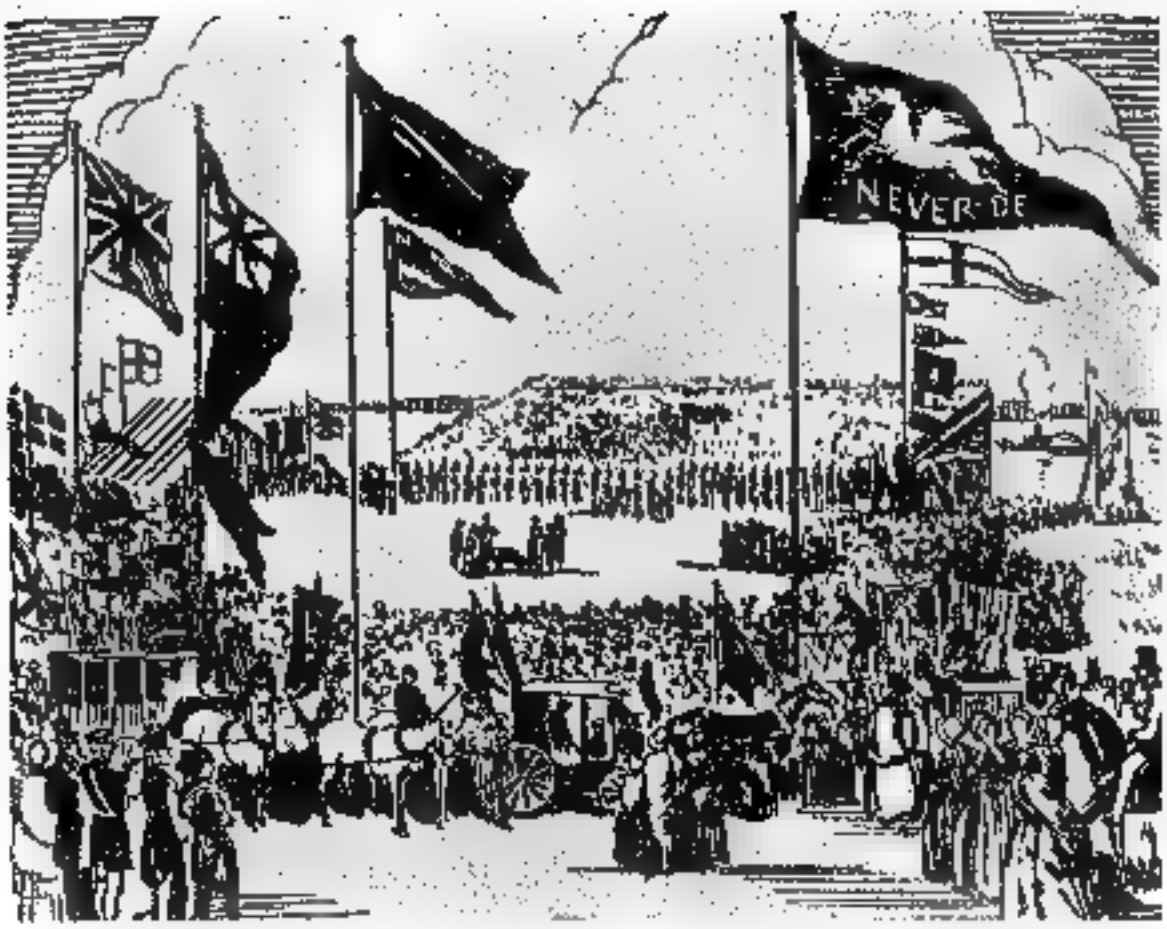
Canadian Illustrated News. A. Dickson Patterson.

TOURNAMENT AT THE TORONTO LAWN TENNIS CLUB, FRONT STREET, 1881

Canadian Illustrated News.

AT THE BEACH IN THE SEVENTIES

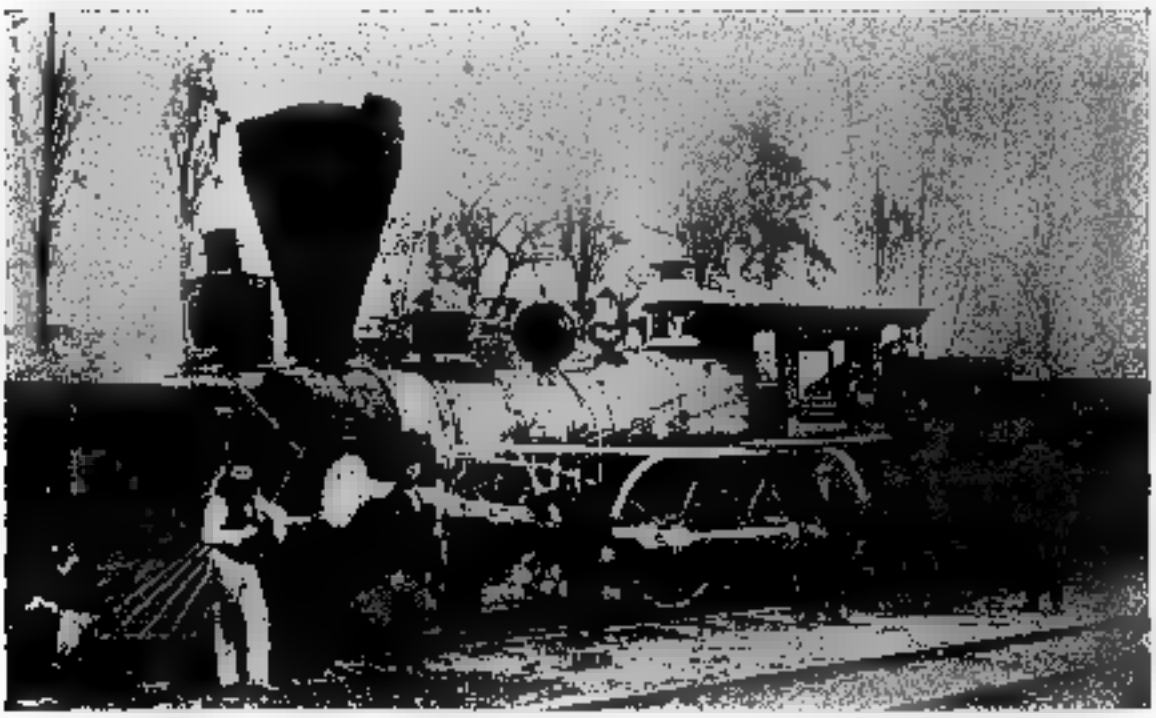
There were no bathing beauties in those days!



Reproduced by Courtesy of T. A. Reed, Esq., and the Canadian Pacific Railway.

THE AMPHITHEATRE, OCTOBER 15, 1851

The illustration shows Lady Elgin turning the first sod of the Ontario, Simcoe and Huron Union Railroad, on the Bay Front near Simcoe Street.



THE TORONTO, FIRST LOCOMOTIVE BUILT IN CANADA, 1853

It was constructed in Good's Foundry, Yonge Street near Queen, opposite the present Eaton store.

Characteristic of the days of great changes, and just as popular today, were ceremonial celebrations inaugurating buildings, railroads and bridges. We have an account, for example, of the laying of the corner-stone of York's new Town Hall in April, 1824 :

"On Saturday, the 24th instant, his Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, attended by his staff, was met by the Honourable the Members of the Executive Council, the Judges of the Court of King's Bench, and the Gentlemen of the Bar, with the Magistrates and principal inhabitants of York, in procession, for the purpose of laying the foundation stone of the new Jail and Court House about to be erected in this Town. A sovereign and half sovereign of gold, and several coins of silver and copper, of the present reign, together with some newspapers and other memorials of the present day, were deposited in a cavity of the stone, over which a plate of copper, bearing an appropriate inscription, was placed; and after his Excellency had given the first blow with a hammer handed to him for the purpose, the ceremony concluded with several hearty cheers from all who were present. If the question were of any real importance, we might have the curiosity to inquire why the deposit was made in the south-east, rather than in the north-east corner of the building."[43]

A quarter century later occurred the inauguration of Ontario's first steam railway—the Ontario, Simcoe and Huron Union, from Toronto to Machell's Corners (Aurora). It was first attempted to finance the Company by an elaborate lottery, but more orthodox means were finally employed. One who lived in Toronto at the time outlines the activities at the turning of the first sod:

"On October 15th, 1851, the first sod of the Northern Railway was turned by Lady Elgin, assisted by Mayor Bowes, nearly opposite the Parliament Buildings. Mayor Bowes was in full official costume—cocked hat and sword, knee breeches, silk stockings, and shoes with steel buckles. The earth dug by her ladyship with a beautiful silver spade was taken by His Worship a short distance in an oak wheelbarrow, the whole ceremony creating great interest.

"Mr. F. C. Capreol had so far seen his much-ridiculed

[43]The *Canadian Review*, July, 1824.

scheme carried into effect. No longer laughed at and spoken of as 'Mad Capreol', as the writer has often heard him called, he had shown great method in his madness. Having been a fellow-passenger with him when crossing on his visit to England to raise the necessary capital—at first by a kind of lottery scheme, and afterwards in the legitimate way—I saw his determination to carry on his plans, and the clear prospect he had of the future of the undertaking."[49]

The mention of a lottery recalls their prominence in early times. The *Toronto Herald* of December 30, 1841, contains the following item:

"We invite attention to Mr. McConkey's advertisement of a Lottery for plum cakes, sweetmeats, etc., the Tickets for which we hope will be readily disposed of. The principal prize is a mighty cake of some 120 weight, the largest, we suppose, ever made in 'these diggings', and it is well deserving of a visit of inspection."

Among eight other lotteries advertised in the same issue of the *Herald*[50] are the Sylvester Lottery, the Virginia Monongolia Lottery, the Virginia Leesburg Lottery and the State of New Jersey Lottery,— all of them American. The extensive advertising which they were able to pay for shows how deep-seated was the gambling spirit and also how profitable such enterprises were—in spite of the fact that the prizes ranged up to $40,000.

Militia parade day, on June 4th, birthday of George III, was never the crude holiday in Toronto that was usually characteristic of the event in other parts of the province. A dignified parade of the garrison and militia, including a *feu de joie* and possibly an inspection on the old Fair Green by the Governor, and a grand ball in the evening, provided a celebration of a type not usually found elsewhere in Upper Canada. The *feu de joie* was performed in the following manner: Each man of the company fired in succession, the fire running continuously and quickly down the front rank from right to left and up the rear rank from left to right. This is done three times, and, on the completion of each burst of fire, a portion of a national air is played by the band.

[49]Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 99. [50]The *Toronto Herald*, December 30, 1841.

The honour of establishing a holiday on Queen Victoria's birthday is said to belong to Toronto citizens. It was first suggested in 1847, when political and social unrest in Europe was endangering many thrones, but a celebration did not occur until May 24th of the following year. Soon afterwards many other towns followed Toronto's example, and a legal holiday was created. The events of the day have long been associated chiefly with fireworks for the amusement of the children, but in earlier times they usually included activities of a military nature. A notable celebration occurred on May 24, 1854, while the Crimean War was in progress. Escorted by Colonel Denison's troop of Provincial Cavalry, a procession composed of officials, the fire brigade, the National Societies, and other citizens passed from the City Hall along King Street to Government House, a number of elaborate triumphal arches having been erected *en route*. A public meeting at which the Mayor presided adopted an address to the Queen. Over 5,000 people were present on this occasion, and cheers for Victoria, the Emperor of the French, and the Turks were given amid the greatest enthusiasm.

Some years earlier an interesting holiday celebration occurred in Toronto. This rather unique affair took place on April 2, 1840, in honour of Queen Victoria's marriage on February 10th. A peculiar account of the event says that "one ox roasted whole . . . . was brought into the centre of the Market Square in Procession. . . . Every person, Man, Woman and Child who intended to partake of this banquet was requested to come cleanly attired, each with a 'Knife, Fork and Plate'. The City was beautifully illuminated from 8 o'clock to 11. There was also a display of Fire Works and Balloons".[51]

William Helliwell, who was present at the celebration, recalled in 1896 many details of the event; though, unless there were two such occasions, he confuses the time by referring to it as in honour of Victoria's Coronation, which occurred on June 28th, 1838. In describing the arrangements for the festival he says:

"To carry out the celebration several tables were placed in the Market square or court. The butchers' stalls were

[51]The *Mirror*, April 3, 1840.

vacated, decorated with evergreens, and converted into booths where tea, coffee, etc., were served to the citizens. The tables were loaded with all kinds of eatables—beef, mutton pudding, pies, etc., contributed by the people, the most notable gift being a huge plum pudding furnished by Charles Daly, who was then Clerk of the Council. This pudding weighed over 100 pounds, was two days in boiling, and turned out satisfactory.

"There was also an entire ox roasted, the cooking being done in the basement of Judge Sherwood's house, which stood then where the Board of Trade building now stands on the corner of Yonge and Front Streets. On Coronation Day the ox was well cooked and placed on a sledge, which was drawn by four horses, gaily decorated, and driven by a prominent citizen noted for his loyalty—Mr. James Browne, the wharfinger. On arriving at the Front Street entrance of the market the four gates were simultaneously opened, and two military bands, stationed on the balconies overlooking the square, struck up *The Roast Beef of Old England*, when the expectant crowd marched in, and the good things provided were served by Messrs. George Percival Ridout, Thomas D. Harris, and other gentlemen of the town.

"Everyone contributed his mite. The hardware stores lent knives, forks and spoons; the crockery stores, plates and dishes. Beer was supplied by Messrs. Helliwell, and it is creditable that, although everyone was free to eat and drink as he pleased, there was no abuse of the privilege. In the evening there were fireworks and a general illumination, and every window in the town and its suburbs had a light of some kind. The festivities were kept up to an early hour of the morning, a day of rejoicing without accident that will be remembered by many of our citizens who are still to the fore."[52]

"Illuminations" were long popular as a means of celebration. Originally consisting of candles in every window in town, the festival was gradually developed by the use of fireworks, which in time became the most prominent part of the celebration—and they have never lost their popu-

[52]William Helliwell's reminiscences are to be found in Robertson, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 1038.

larity. Early in January, 1842, the information reached Toronto of the birth of an heir-apparent to the throne some seven weeks before. The 4th of January was the day appointed, though the *Examiner* states that many citizens were against the idea of an illumination, preferring instead that the money be spent upon "an Asylum for the houseless poor". The illumination, however, was carried in public meeting "by the Orange bullies", and the celebration took place. The *Examiner*, while claiming that of those desiring the illumination, "nine-tenths were influenced by a desire to have a little amusement on the occasion, to get drunk and go through the city breaking windows and creating disturbances",—yet felt constrained to admit that the rejoicings were conducted "in a manner highly creditable to the city. The illuminations were most brilliant, and quite equal to those on the occasion of the Royal nuptials. . . . King Street was so crowded with people that it was almost impossible for the sleighs to pass. Everything was conducted in a perfect good humour, and we are not aware that any accident occurred."[53]

Whenever royalty or the highest officials of the country honoured communities with a visit, the occasion was always a memorable one. The progress through Canada in 1860 of the Prince of Wales, later Edward VII, was punctuated by a series of enthusiastic receptions and balls wherever he went, marred only by a few partisan demonstrations arising out of the strong religious prejudices of the times. Triumphal arches were everywhere erected, and the inhabitants lost no opportunity to show the popular prince everything of interest along his route. His visit to Toronto was the occasion of the most notable celebration the city had seen. C. C. Taylor, who was present, gives a good summary of the magnificent reception:

"The Prince disembarked at the western extremity of the Esplanade. Here a splendid pavilion was erected facing the city; the hangings were of crimson, blue and white, and the building was adorned with green leaves and festoons of flowers. The whole was surmounted by a Royal crown, on all sides protected by flags.

"The greatest charm was the entrance arch, which

[53]The *Examiner*, January 5, 1842.

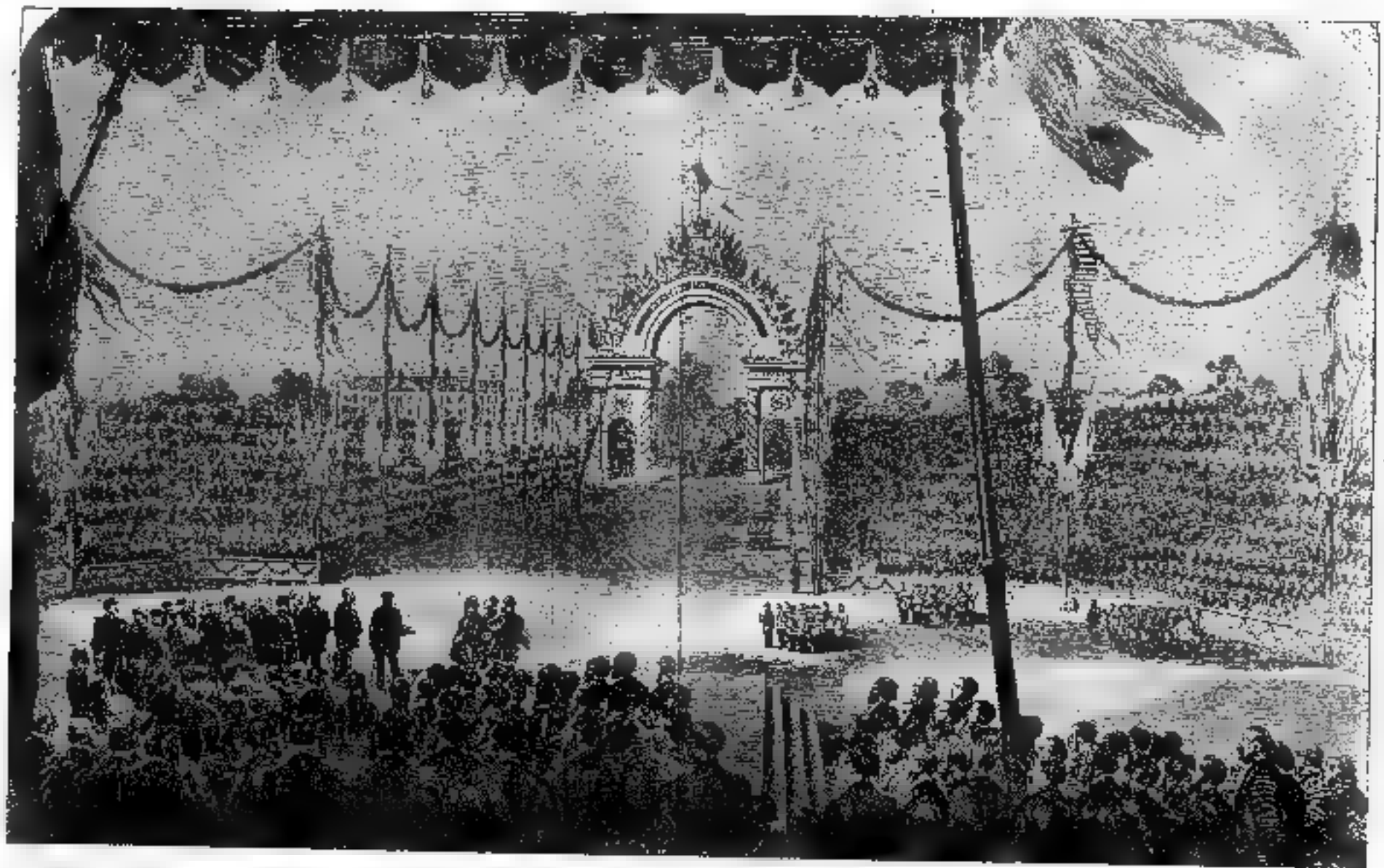
spanned the street and was really magnificent. It was of the Grecian order, but exceedingly rich in ornament, and stood sixty feet high. The pillars were massive, palmated at the top. The interior of the arch was adorned with beautiful fresco paintings, and the whole surmounted with a shield bearing the Royal Arms and a Royal crown supported on each side by a fine display of flags. A semicircular platform was erected, with tier upon tier of seats, and was ornamented with shields and banners, and more than 10,000 people were in position on it.

"In the open space was a troop of cavalry, and in the centre was a great level platform, with the dais and throne under a gorgeous canopy. Here the Prince was received by the Mayor, Corporation, Judges, Members of Parliament, Officers of the Army and Volunteers, etc. After the reading of the address the National Anthem was sung by 5,000 children, under the leadership of Mr. John Carter, the Cathedral organist.

"It is impossible to do justice to the imposing spectacle presented when the vast assembly stood up and united in one tremendous burst of cheering which lasted several minutes, the ladies waving their handkerchiefs, and men nearly killing themselves with shouting the loyal hurrahs, while several bands played the National Anthem. The Prince was intensely affected at this glorious welcome, which was so hearty and magnificent.

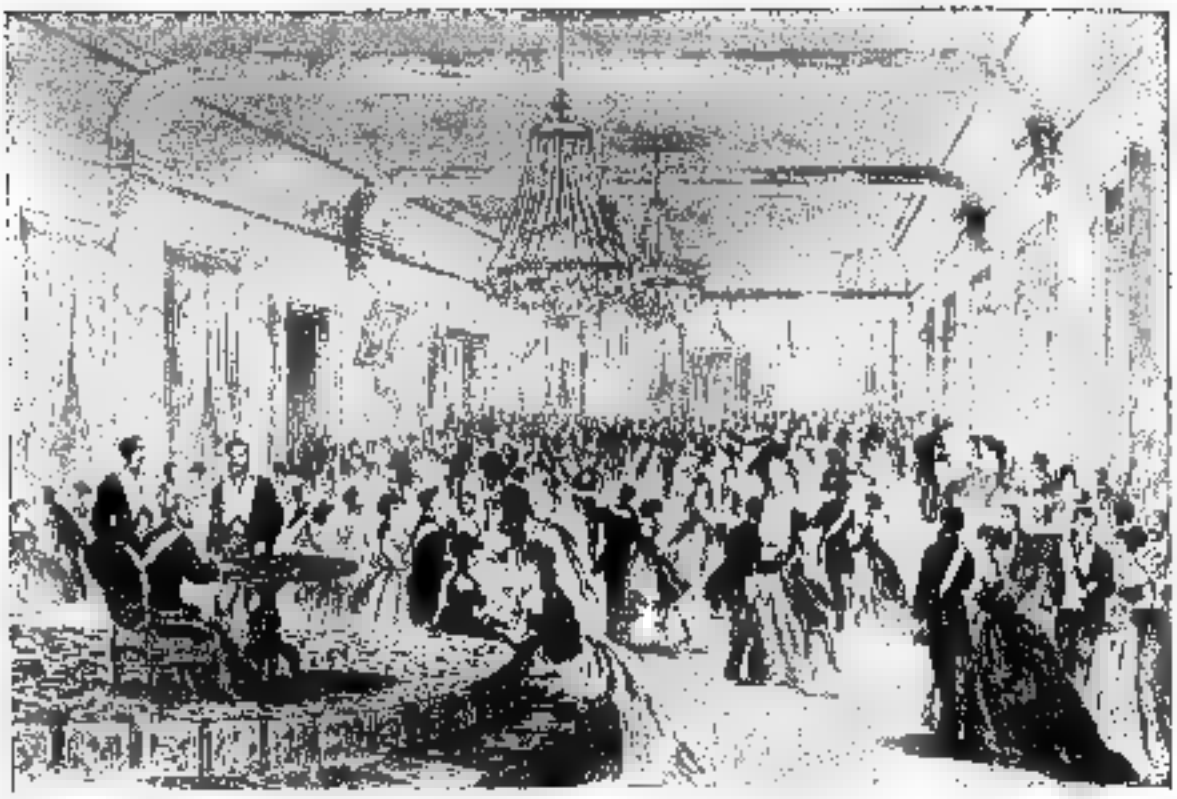
"A procession of militia, firemen and national societies filed past, drooping banners and cheering vociferously. The Prince's carriage followed the procession through the principal streets, cheered by the people, while flowers were strewed before him. Night having come on by this time, the city was most brilliantly illuminated, and the whole formed a spectacle which for magnificence was never surpassed in Canada. The Prince and suite were entertained during their stay at Government House.

"On Sunday the party attended divine service in St. James' Cathedral, and were met at the door by Bishop Strachan, Rector Grasett, and other clergymen. The sermon was preached by the Bishop from the text, 'Give the King Thy judgment, O God, and Thy righteousness unto the King's son'. The demeanour of the Prince during the



Illustrated London News.

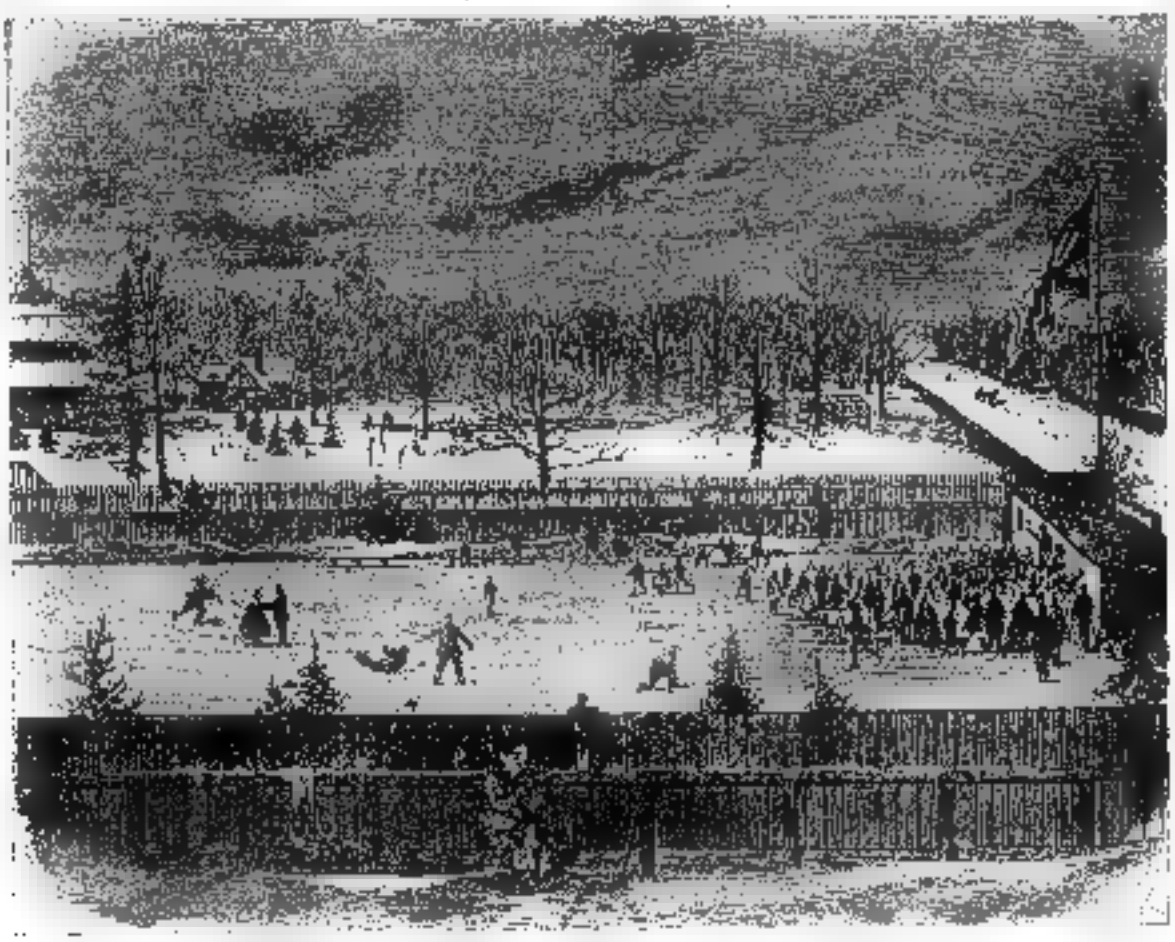
RECEPTION OF H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES BY THE INHABITANTS OF TORONTO, C.W., 1860



Canadian Illustrated News.

INAUGURATION OF THE ODDFELLOWS' HALL, NOVEMBER 9, 1870

The Hall was in a new block of buildings at Yonge and Albert Streets.



Canadian Illustrated News, April 4, 1863.

THE VICTORIA SKATING RINK, MARCH 7, 1863

The location was the south-west corner of Gerrard and Sherbourne Streets. The Horticultural (Allan) Gardens, and forest land beyond, may be seen to the northward. Prizes were awarded on this occasion.

service was what might have been expected. He joined heartily in the responses, and his entire manner might be copied by some church-going young men with decided advantage.

"The Orangemen had erected a splendid arch at the intersection of Church and King Streets, with a large painting of King William III in a conspicuous position. Instead, however, of the party driving under the arch along King Street, the carriage went down Church to Wellington, and so to the Government House. It transpired that this was done by the positive order of the Duke of Newcastle.

"During the week the Prince visited all the principal objects of interest, and planted a tree in the Horticultural Gardens, at the same time opening the rustic arbour then recently erected. He also planted an English silver oak in the Queen's Park, which stands to the east of the guns, and laid the foundation stone of the statue to the Queen, surrounded by civic, provincial and other dignitaries; and in addition to all he turned the first sod of the Toronto, Grey and Bruce Railway.

"He attended a public ball given in his honour in the Crystal Palace, wearing the uniform of a colonel of the British Army, unattached, and led off the dance by taking the hand of the accomplished wife of Mayor Wilson, one of the present Justices of Ontario. The ball was a brilliant scene, and wound up the entertainments given in honour of the Prince in Toronto."[54]

One incident which was not on the official program showed the disappointment of Orangemen because their demonstrations were in vain:

"The only untoward event which occurred during the Prince's stay was a foolish escapade by a few young hotheads who assembled on Colborne Street and burnt in effigy the Duke of Newcastle and Sir Edmund Head. The objects of the demonstration having set their faces against the exuberant Orange decorations at Kingston and Belle-

[54]Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 156-9. An excellent account of the Prince's visit to Toronto appeared in the London *Times* of September 25 and 27, 1860, and much of it is quoted in Middleton, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 274-8. The Horticultural (Allan) Gardens, in which the Prince planted a tree, were developed as a result of the munificence of the Hon. G. W. Allan, who donated the land to the city in 1850.

ville, the effigy-burners resorted to this method of expressing their dissatisfaction."[55]

Eighteen years earlier the Governor-General, Sir Charles Bagot, received a welcome in Toronto that was redolent of the pageantry of other times, and which for splendour and magnificence has never been excelled. The procession in his honour was organised as follows:

Two Police Constables—Mounted
(With their Staves)
Band
Marshall of the day—Mounted
Fire Companies
(In order of precedence)
St. Andrew's Society
(With Banners)
St. Patrick's Society
(With Banners)
St. George's Society
(With Banners)
The Mechanics' Institute
Two Police Constables—Mounted
(With their Staves)
The Corporation
(In Carriages)
The Bishop—The Mayor
The Governor
The Chief Justice
Judges and College Council
The Sheriff—The Warden
Members of the Learned Professions
(In Carriages or Mounted)
Other Inhabitants generally
The High Bailiff—Mounted
(With his Baton)

"As soon as the Government Steamer heaves in sight the town Bells will be rung to give notice of the approach of His Excellency, and the procession will then be immediately formed in front of the City Hall."[56]

On the second day of his visit a levee was held, and

[55]*History of Toronto and the County of York*, 1885, Vol. I, p. 270.
[56]The *Examiner*, April 20, 1842.

various associations and bodies, including Indians and a group of Toronto's negro citizens, presented addresses and were welcomed by His Excellency. In the evening a Grand Ball was held in Government House. St. George's Day, the third of the Governor's visit, was particularly colourful owing to the ceremony of the laying of the corner-stone of King's College. An elaborate procession was formed on "the pretty lawn of Upper Canada College". The Principal, Dr. McCaul, addressed His Excellency "in a well-written Latin speech", and fortunately Sir Charles was able to reply "in a happy and eloquent manner" in the same language. Marshall Gurnett then "uncoiled a dense and never-ending column" of Dragoons, pupils of the Grammar School and Upper Canada College with their teachers and attendants, the Medical Profession, Barristers, Clergy (in full Canonicals), the College Masters in their Academic garb, the Council and Visitors ("mostly in legal costume with Bedels, Verger, and the Esquire Bedel"); after all of whom came the Governor-General, supported on either hand by the Lord Bishop and the Chief Justice, "both in full dress, the latter clothed in Judicial ermine". Lest you should think this was the end, however, it must be recorded that "a countless host, Staff, Officers Military and Naval, Members of Parliament, Mayor and Corporation, Judge, Sheriff, Warden, Societies of St. George, St. Patrick and St. Andrew, Masonic Lodges, Fire and Hook-and-Ladder companies, and another detachment of Dragoons" brought up the rear as the *cortège* passed up Graves (Simcoe) and Lot (Queen) Streets to the "long and beautiful Avenue of the University", which at that time merited the following description:

"A fine hawthorn hedge, a great rarity in this Province, skirts the bounds. Between it and the spacious gravel walk is a deep shrubbery on both sides, planted with the choicest trees—the gentle waving acacia, the graceful horse-chestnut, the flowering catalpa, the variegated locust, the dark green balsam, and the elegant cypress."

Innumerable banners, the martial music of regimental bands, the picturesque variety of costume, the dazzling brilliancy of officers and high officials contrasted with the grave and classic robes of the professors, churchmen and lawyers—all combined to form over a mile of pageantry

perhaps unequalled before or since that day. And at the grounds to which the procession led were gathered all the rank, beauty and fashion of Toronto, there to see His Excellency lay the corner-stone of King's College. Cheers from 15,000 throats preceded the return of the great parade to the Upper Canada College grounds, and the masters of that institution later entertained the Governor-General and a select party "at a very elegant collation set out in the College Hall".[57]

In the same year Charles Dickens paid a short visit to Toronto, and an equally brief account of his stay in the city is recorded in the press:

"Mr. and Mrs. Dickens left this city on Friday in the steamer *City of Toronto*, Captain Dick, for Kingston. The very short stay made by 'Boz' prevented any *public* demonstration of respect, but all the leading persons in the city left their cards at his hotel, the Honourable the Chief Justice entertained him at dinner, and a large party was invited in the evening to meet the distinguished strangers."[58]

Meanwhile, at the middle of the century, the chief places of public resort for no small section of the population appear to have been the 152 taverns and 206 beer shops which dotted the city in 1850—the inhabitants then numbering about 30,000. Many men "loaded up" every Saturday night (if not oftener), and spent the week-end drunk. One of the more pretentious establishments—the Apollo Saloon and Concert Room on King Street—staged nightly a cheap burlesque show comprising two men who impersonated a negro and an Irishman; and a contemporary publication assures its readers that "the place is well worthy of a visit". For a modest charge—a York shilling (12½c.)—patrons were entitled to "a smoke or a drink" as well as the performance.[59] Another restaurant-saloon, the Terrapin, located near the site of the present King Edward Hotel, is advertised as "the largest and most magnificent restaurant west of New York". Carlisle and McConkey were the pro-

[57] *Ibid.*, April 27, 1842. The interesting description of University Avenue is from Thomas Rolph: *A Brief Account . . . . of the West Indies and the United States . . . . ; together with a Statistical Account of Upper Canada*, 1836, pp. 178-9.

[58] *Examiner*, May 11, 1842.

[59] *Descriptive Catalogue of the Provincial Exhibition, 1858*, p. 79.

prietors, and it is announced that "green turtle soup and steaks" may be had daily.[60] Apart from these two establishments the saloons of the city in the eighteen-fifties were in general little more than miserable dens of dissipation, vulgarity and fighting.

In other respects, however, Toronto was beginning to assume characteristics of city life more attractive and conducive of better citizenship. In April, 1851, the St. Lawrence Hall was opened, and for twenty years provided, particularly for the middle and upper classes, a place of public assembly. In addition to balls, soirées, festivals and dinners connected with lodges, regiments, the National Societies and similar organisations, there were frequent public lectures, panoramas, concerts and musicales, in which appeared the best local and foreign talent; while itinerant companies occasionally provided in this hall the less exclusive amusements generally associated with minstrels, magicians, and similar entertainers.

An event of special interest occurred in St. Lawrence Hall prior to its completion. On August 8, 1850, some two hundred prominent men and women of Buffalo visited Toronto on the invitation of the City Council. The *Chief Justice Robinson,* one of the palatial steamers of the day, was chartered for the occasion and met the guests at Lewiston. In spite of rain the city was elaborately decorated, and a salute of cannon and a procession of welcome in the manner characteristic of the times made the Buffalonians feel at home. A band, the national societies of St. George, St. Andrew and St. Patrick, and the various fire companies in their regalia, escorted the visitors to the North American Hotel where dinner was served; and in the evening a Grand Ball was held in the partially completed St. Lawrence Hall. Evergreens, flowers and flags decorated the ballroom, which was "brilliantly lighted with gas laid for the occasion"; while a canvas passage led 500 feet to the old City Hall, where a midnight supper was served. The Governor-General and Lady Elgin, the Speakers of both Houses of the Legislature, and the Mayors of the two cities were among the prominent guests. The toasts were many, including the Queen, the President of the United States,

[60]Alfred Sylvester: *Guide to Toronto.* 1858. p. 102.

General Washington and the Duke of Wellington, who was still living at that time. Mr. Justice Sill of the Supreme Court of New York was one of the speakers, but perhaps he was difficult to hear, for we learn that the remarks of Mayor Gurnett passed unheard owing to "the popping of champagne corks and the excitement created by so large an assembly busily engaged in showing their appreciation of the good things of this life".[61] The accommodation being insufficient, many partook of the banquet while standing, and afterwards dancing was resumed with spirit.

The great event had a somewhat bitter aftermath, however. A military review on the following morning was followed by a garden party given by Lord Elgin at his residence, Elmsley House, near the corner of College and Yonge Streets, at which no members of the City Council were present because they were not invited. At the next meeting of that body a strong protest was embodied in a lengthy resolution of which the sum and substance was that such an action on the part of the Governor-General could not be considered as anything but "a wanton and intended insult or a gross neglect towards them as a body and towards those whom they represent". Though some portions of the press were inclined to treat the matter as a good joke on "their worships", yet it was a most unpleasant occurrence in an otherwise well-planned and nobly executed gesture of goodwill towards the citizens of Buffalo. But the Governor's *fête* was none the less enjoyable to those present, and we learn[62] that "as the night advanced, gas illuminations in elegant devices and covering two sides of the villa were lit up and threw a brilliant light over the grounds. Fire-

[61]See Middleton, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 245-6, and the *Globe*, August 10, 1850.

[62]This quotation is from the *Globe* of August 10, 1850, which contains a description running to three columns of fine print. Lord Elgin's attitude no doubt resulted from the somewhat cool reception which he had been accorded by the City Council of Toronto on October 9, 1849, when he had but recently signed the Rebellion Losses Bill. Perhaps his political sagacity would have been more appreciated in the United States, for one of the fair ladies of Buffalo was sufficiently attracted by him to suggest in somewhat gushing language that, if he would only enter American politics and take the stump for the Presidency, she was confident he would sweep every state of the Union! For further interesting material concerning these events see Samuel Thompson: *Reminiscences of a Canadian Pioneer*, 1884. pp. 268-73 and 344-8.

works followed soon after, and still later one of the bands was withdrawn from the lawn and placed at the services of the dancers. . . . Few persons present will fail to remember with pleasure for many years to come Lord Elgin's *Fête* to the Citizens of Buffalo."

Many of the more celebrated events which took place in the St. Lawrence Hall are described in the previous chapter, but some account will be given here of entertainments of a distinctly lighter nature.[68] Among the travelling organisations which visited the Hall in the fifties and sixties was that featuring "General" Tom Thumb. On one occasion the advertisement stated that he was accompanied by "his beautiful little wife, the fascinating Queen of Beauty, and Commodore Nutt, the $30,000 Nutt, (so called because he received that amount from P. T. Barnum for three years' service), and Elfin Minnie Warren, the smallest lady of her age ever seen—all four weighing but 100 pounds". As an extra attraction it is announced that Tom Thumb's wife "will wear the identical wedding costume as worn at Grace Church on February 10, 1863, when $60 was offered for a ticket to the wedding; here the same thing can be seen for a trifle". Before the show commenced there was—as has long been customary with circuses and minstrel shows—a street parade.

Previous to the days of motion pictures there were numerous attempts to give graphical representations of popular subjects, usually with an accompanying lecture, or with music on the tambourine or some sort of "musical machine". There were figures in wax as well as illustrations of other kinds. Large numbers of pictures illustrative of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* comprised one entertainment, while others consisted of panoramas of Biblical themes, the Holy Land, and kindred subjects.

Another performance, "sure to inculcate a high moral tendency and to warn every young man, and older one, too, who has commenced to tamper with the intoxicating glass", was Verey's Zographicon, consisting of a lecture accompanied by 150 views from *The Pilgrim's Progress* and Arthur's *Ten Nights in a Bar Room*. The allegorical repre-

[68]The attractions outlined in the next few paragraphs were advertised on various occasions in the eighteen-sixties.

sentations and striking scenes were given "full and very often touching and vivid explanations", and were of a character "calculated to give an elevated tone to the morals of the community".

It was early considered—and it still holds true—that concerts, lectures and shows were more attractive to patrons if they were advertised as from London or New York. Friend's *Panorama of the British Isles* was heralded as "direct from St. James' Hall, London, England", and the work is described as "a moving panorama painted by Mr. Friend himself on over 50,000 feet of canvas". The exhibitor is referred to as "the celebrated artist, vocalist, musician and entertainer", who "will sing melodies, accompanying himself on different instruments, including a Grand Euphonium Piano". Performers and lectures of this kind may be assumed to have been neither better nor worse than those of today; the best of them must have contributed greatly to the education and enjoyment of those who attended.

It has always been characteristic of showmanship to advertise productions in a most bombastic and exaggerated manner. To this was added in the pioneer period, and later, an evident intention of attracting people to performances by announcing them in huge, almost unpronounceable words; possibly this was a recommendation in a day when education was not so generally diffused. We find, for example, the Papyrotamia, or gallery of paper cuttings, which was shown in Meighan's Ball Room, York, in 1827; and in the sixties a magician advertised his show as "the Grand Thaumaturgic Psychomanteum", and himself as "the celebrated artist and arch-magician, Professor Anderson, known throughout the civilised Globe as the Wizard of the North, and an Illusionist, Physicist, Thaumatist and Traveller", whose "Soirés de Prestidigitation constitute the most marvellous entertainment in which, at any time, the attempt has been made to blend the highest science with the most genial amusement".

The same high-sounding names were still further developed in the advertisements of circuses and menageries of the sixties. J. B. Lent's show was travelling through Canada West in 1862 under the name "Hippozoonamadon",

which was described as "the largest exhibition in the world", a combination of three circuses, a hippopotamus and elephant exhibition, and an aquarium. A word large enough to frighten the most learned savant is used to describe a part of the Hippozoonamadon—the Athleolympimantheum—in which Mlle. Ariane Felecia from Paris formed the main attraction, for she is described as "the most beautiful, graceful, daring and dashing equestrienne in the world". Numerous other features, including the Grand Opera Band, were offered as a part of the Hippozoonamadon—and all for a mere twenty-five cent piece!

In the following year J. B. Lent came around again, probably with the same show; but he had been able to invent for it a new name—Equescurriculum. In addition to the "unparalleled combination of three circuses" there was "a troop of acting bears, the educated sacred Indian bull, leaping buffaloes and performing dogs and monkeys". The whole formed "a magnificent phalanx of exhibitions—perfection in every detail"; and, as before,—all for a quarter of a dollar.

Several organisations of minstrels were playing in Canada West in the early sixties, among them being Christy's and Sharpley's; a similar performance was given by Kelly's Theatrical Troupe. Some minstrel shows had a repertoire of "stock" plays, particularly of the more emotional and humorous types, and many of them had brass bands. With its light program of vaudeville and burlesque, broad comedy and sentimental melodrama, the minstrel show is a type of entertainment which has retained its popularity with the average amusement-seeker, for it does not require the same capabilities and attention that are necessary for the proper appreciation of the higher operatic and dramatic performances.

There were, however, many entertainments of a higher type in the Toronto of seventy-five years ago. Instrumental and vocal concerts by both local and foreign talent, and including the most famous operatic stars of the day, were not infrequent, while many citizens took an active part in the Philharmonic Society, the Toronto Vocal Music Society, the Toronto Musical Union, and the Metropolitan Choral Society, which were at one time or another prominent in the

musical life of the city.[64] Until the mid-sixties most concerts were held in St. Lawrence Hall, but immediately thereafter operas and comic operas, as well as comedies and farces, were being produced in large numbers at the Royal Lyceum Theatre. *Robert Macaire, Il Trovatore, Aladdin* and *The Doctor of Alcantara* were among the operatic performances, while the farces included *Dombey & Son, A Thousand Milliners Wanted, The Débutante, Slasher and Crasher, Beauty and the Beast, The Streets of New York* and *Nobody's Daughter.* At this time Toronto audiences were being educated in the proper theatrical etiquette *à la* New York, for we find on the playbills that "the audience is respectfully requested not to call the artists before the curtain, excepting on their benefit nights, being a custom long discontinued in all first-class theatres".[65]

The Royal Theatre was erected on the site of the Lyceum in 1874, and about a week later the Grand Opera House was opened on Adelaide Street just west of Yonge—now a parking space. The inauguration of this playhouse on September 23, 1874, was under the distinguished patronage of Lord and Lady Dufferin, and the opening play was Sheridan's *The School for Scandal,* particularly appropriate since the Governor-General was a descendant of the playwright. Some memories of these theatres, and of the days when Sheppard Street, now buried amid office buildings, was a quiet residential street of roughcast cottages where many an actor and actress lived, are recalled by a 77-year old Canadian actor:

"About 1872 the Holman Opera Company was in full swing at the old Royal Lyceum Theatre. I myself joined the Holman Company about 1879 to appear in *H.M.S. Pinafore,* and I remained with them for some time at the New Royal Opera House on King Street. Miss Amelia Shaw, a pretty young blonde, lived in her father's cottage on the east side of Sheppard Street, next to Robert Bond's

[64]See Taylor, *op. cit.,* pp. 272-87, for a comprehensive account of Toronto's musical life. See also Chapter XXIII of the present work.

[65]For considerable material on early Toronto theatres the author is indebted to John Ross Robertson's invaluable *Landmarks of Toronto,* Vol. I, pp. 478 *et seq.*

livery stable near the corner of Richmond Street. Bond ran the first sight-seeing turnout with four horses, or 'rubber-necks' as they were called. Anyway it was a 'swell turn-out'.

"Next, towards Adelaide Street, was a new red brick house built and lived in by A. S. Irving, wholesale news-dealer and publisher of 'Irving's Sheet Music', a cheap edition of all the popular songs of the day. Next to his place, in one of two cottages in the rear of the lot, lived George Barton, a versatile actor and very clever.

"Nearly all the married actors of the Holman Company lived on Sheppard Street. My mother and her sister lived in the next two cottages on the front of the lot now occupied by the Bell Telephone building. On the corner of Adelaide, facing Sheppard Street, there was a row of two-storey white-brick houses. In the corner one Mrs. White kept a boarding house where some of the actors lived. Her son was assistant carpenter at the new Royal Opera House about 1879.

"On the west corner of Adelaide and Sheppard there was a big red-brick house that a doctor lived in. I just cannot remember his name now. Next, going north on the west side of Sheppard Street, there were two two-storey rough-cast houses. In the first a stage carpenter of the old Royal Lyceum lived. He had served in the American war and when he came back he erected a flagpole in the back-yard with the flags of all nations, I think, strung down the sidelines or stays. It could be seen from the lane at the side of the house. Next there was a large cottage in the rear of the lot, and then a two-storey roughcast house nearly opposite the Shaw house, where Allen Halford and his family lived. Allen Halford was the matinee idol of the Holman time."[66]

As the years passed, still better theatres were erected in Toronto. The first Grand Opera House was destroyed by fire on November 29, 1879, but in little more than two months' time the new Grand Opera was ready for the opening performance. Replacing old St. Lawrence Hall as the fashionable centre of musical and operatic entertainment,

[66]Reminiscences of R. L. Milligan, Harriston, Ontario, in a letter appearing in the Toronto *Mail and Empire*, February 6, 1934.

the two Grand Opera Houses long attracted the *élite* of the stage. The new theatre had a seating capacity of 1,750, and in the long list of operatic and dramatic stars who appeared there in the eighties were Adelaide Neilson, Henry Irving, Ellen Terry, Adelina Patti, Albani, E. H. Sothern, Fanny Davenport, Modjeska, Rose Coghlan, Lillian Russell, Tom Keene, Clara Morris and Sara Bernhardt, several of whom retired from the stage only in recent years. The earlier stock companies of the drama had long since given way to the travelling company, usually organised in New York, and Toronto audiences saw the best performances of the times; and until recent years dramas and girl-and-music shows provided Toronto's typical theatrical entertainment. But the "movies", the "talkies" and the radio have combined with depressed business conditions to cripple the legitimate stage, and its society devotees—the "first-nighters"—have consequently become almost a thing of the past.

Musical education of a valuable type became available to many men as a result of the organisation of brass bands, so frequently in demand for processions, holidays and similar celebrations. There was a "York Band" at least as early as 1824, and others were later formed in imitation of those usually provided by the garrison units. Writing in 1884 C. C. Taylor outlines the development of bands after the last regular regiment left the city in 1867:

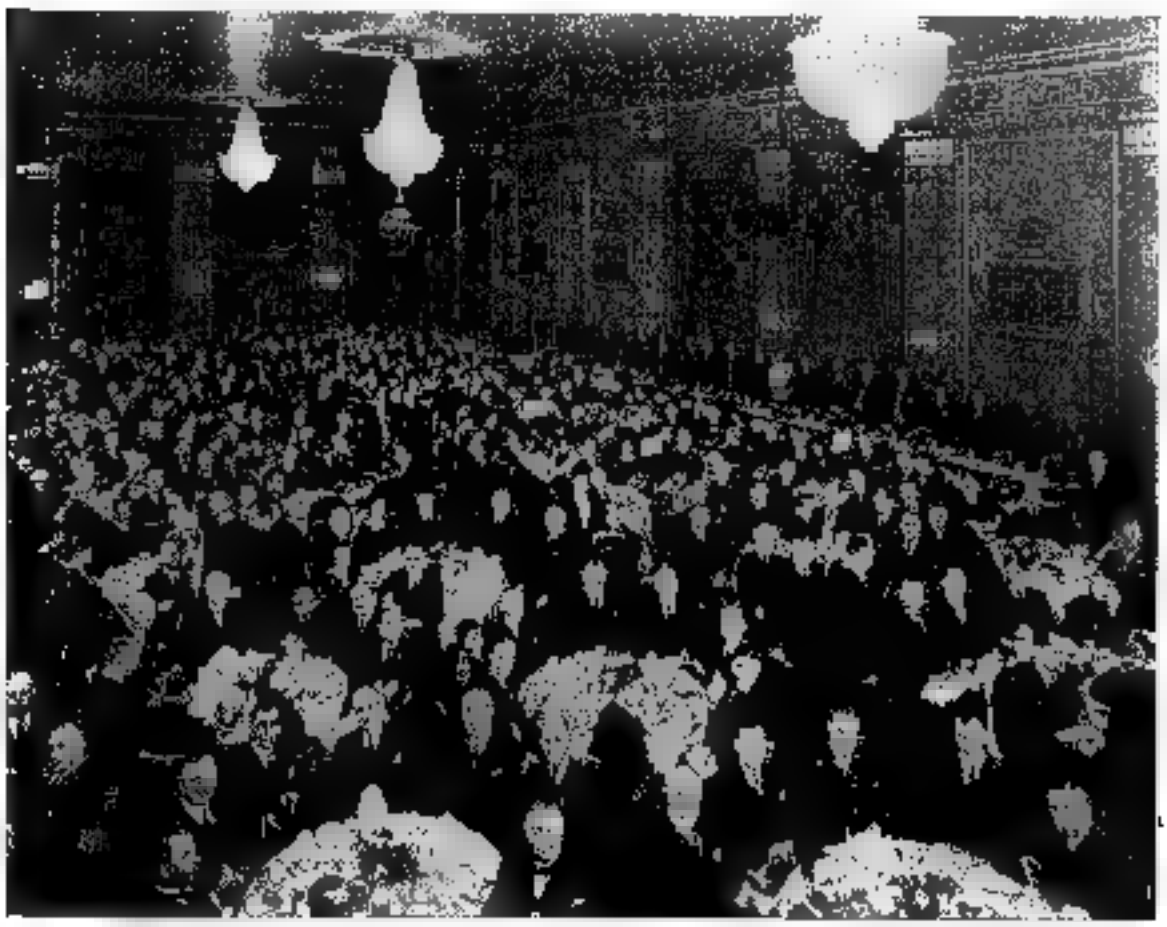
"The removal of the regular troops from Toronto by the English Government caused the want of a military band for several years, the last being that of the 13th Hussars, under command of Colonel Jennings. That want has been well supplied of late years by the splendid bands of the volunteers: the Queen's Own, Mr. Bayley bandmaster, and Royal Grenadiers, with Mr. Toulmin, also the Governor-General's Body Guards, and the Garrison Battery of Artillery. Besides the fine band of C Company, Infantry School, which completes the list of military bands, there are the bands of Heintzman & Co., the Massey Manufacturing Co., and the Christian Brothers, all of which contribute to the pleasure of the citizens, and show a wonderful development of musical talent in our midst."[67]

[67]Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 286-7.

John Ross Robertson Collection.

VETERANS OF 1812
ON SHERIFF JARVIS' LAWN, "ROSEDALE", OCTOBER 23, 1861

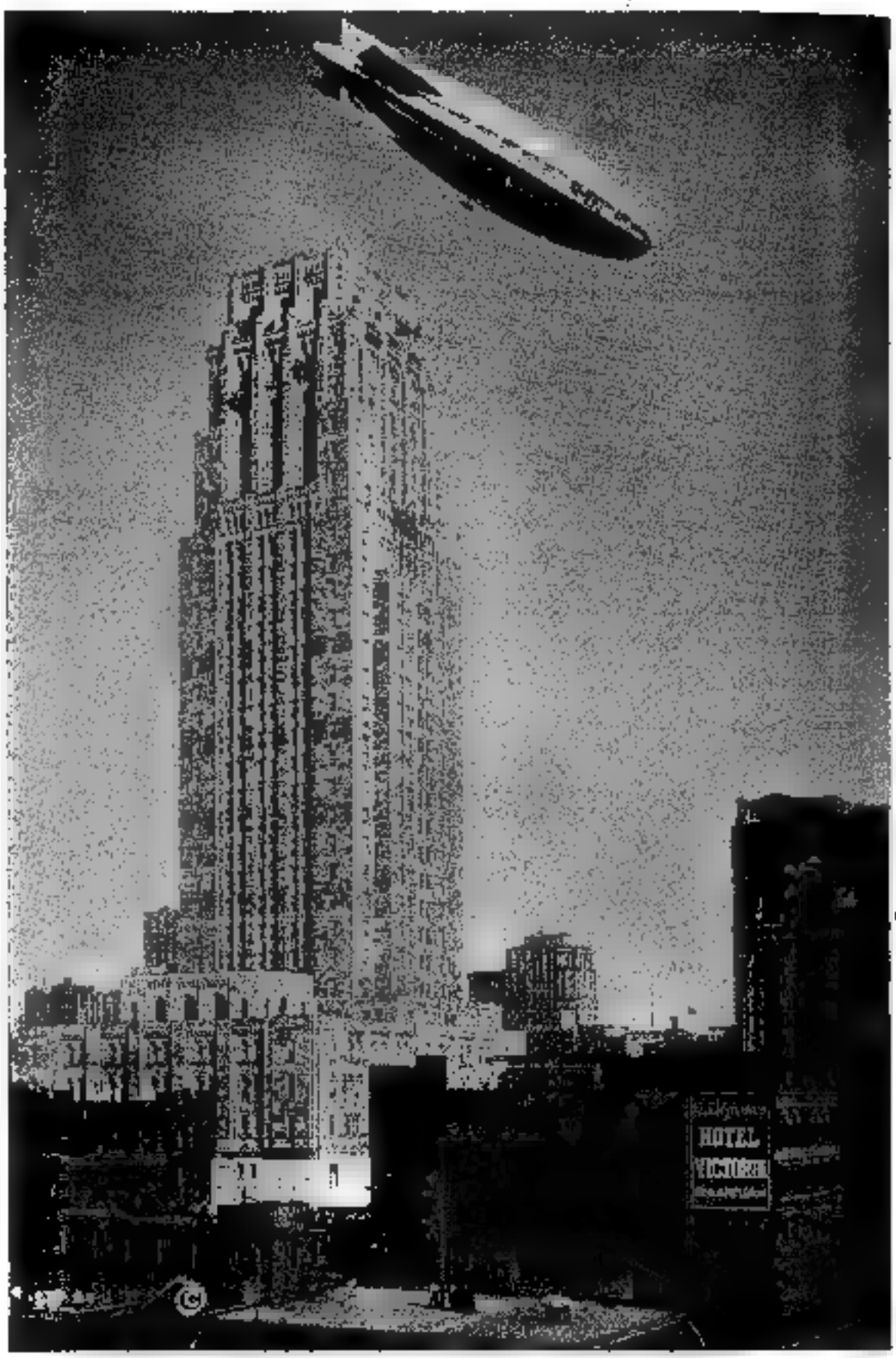
The ten men in this notable group are, from left to right, Colonel George Duggan, Rev. George Ryerson, William Roe, Jacob Snyder, Rev. James Richardson, Joseph Dennis, William J. Woodal, James Ross, Colonel Bridgeford, George Ridout.



Reproduced by Courtesy of the King Edward Hotel.

OFFICIAL CENTENNIAL LUNCHEON, MARCH 6, 1934

This historic gathering took place in the Crystal Ballroom of the King Edward Hotel.



Reproduced by Courtesy of Alfred Pearson, Esq.

His Majesty's Airship R-100 Flying Over Toronto, August 11, 1930

A building as lofty and beautiful as the Canadian Bank of Commerce—apart altogether from the airship soaring above it—would have been beyond the imagination of the citizens of early Toronto.

In the realm of "popular" music we find that the latest pieces which could be purchased at A. & S. Nordheimer's in 1855 included a number reflecting the times of the Crimean War, and others more suitable to the dance. The following list contains the "biggest hits" of that day: *The Queen's Letter; Mother, is the Battle Over?; Sebastopol is Ours; Sebastopol is Won; The Battle of Alma; Barnum's Baby Show Polka; Cupid's Polka;* and *Victoria Polka-Mazurka.* The nearest approach in those discreet days to *Gather Lip Rouge While You May* or *Pettin' in the Park* appears to have been *The Ratcatcher's Daughter.* Among dances recently introduced were the highly-admired Esmeralda Gallopade and Zingarella Mazurka, and Mr. Robertson, 64 King West, was a prominent teacher of the latest steps.

Lodges and fraternal societies have always provided facilities for social intercourse—which indeed, is their chief attraction for the majority of members. The Masons, Orangemen, and a number of other associations date their origin upwards of a century ago, while other organisations have been of a more ephemeral nature. Of special significance were the National Societies of St. Patrick, St. George and St. Andrew, which were long prominent in social life in the towns and persist in some instances to the present, though greatly changed in spirit and importance from the organisations of even half a century ago.

Though the National Societies in Toronto date from 1835-36, yet in earlier times prominent citizens frequently met at dinner on St. George's, St. Patrick's or St. Andrew's Day. In 1822, for example, the "Sons of St. Andrew residing in York celebrated the anniversary of the Saint by giving a dinner to the principal gentlemen of the place on the 30th ult. The company, consisting of nearly forty persons, sat down to an elegant dinner at Forest's Hotel".[68]

In 1835-36, however, the three societies were more firmly established, and on April 23, 1934, the Toronto St. George's Society held its 101st annual banquet. The numerous meetings, processions and balls held by these organisations during the first half century of their history were illustrative of a close feeling of fellowship, characteristic

[68] *Upper Canada Gazette*, December 12, 1822. Similarly a St. George's Dinner was held in 1824, but the Society dates from 1835-6.

of the times when many had but recently come from the Old Land. The round of toasts and songs—including *The Fine Old English Gentleman, When I a-Courting Went* and *Old King Cole*—was, perhaps, more attractive in a day of social drinking. Similarly the St. Andrew's Society of old enjoyed *The Scottish Thistle, Wha wad na fecht for Charlie, The Miller of Fife, Scotland Yet* and *The Laird o' Cockpen* until the wee sma' hours o' morn; and their brethren of St. Patrick were regaled by the songs and stories of Auld Ireland.

In 1841 many members of the St. Patrick's Society broke away because it was "managed on party principles". The seceders, some 200 in number, formed the St. Patrick's Benevolent Society. A press account describes the celebration of "the day" in 1842, and in many respects it may be taken as typical of the festivals of the National Societies in Toronto:

"The anniversary of Ireland's Patron Saint was duly celebrated by the two National Societies. We have copied from the *Mirror* an account of the proceedings of the St. Patrick's Benevolent Society, whose muster was larger than any ever made in this City on a similar occasion. The St. Patrick's Society was as usual accompanied to the Cathedral by the Sister Societies of St. George and St. Andrew, where an excellent sermon was delivered by the Chaplain, Dr. McCaul, a gentleman who stands deservedly high in public estimation. In the evening the members of the Society dined together at the Ontario House, Ald. Dixon, President of the Society, in the chair, Ald. Dr. King acting as Vice-President. The Presidents and Vice-Presidents of the St. George's and St. Andrew's Society were present as guests, and several of the officers of the Garrison.

"The dinner went off well. No disturbances took place during the day. Owing to the inflammatory articles published by a portion of the press the Orangemen showed some intention of making a party display in the forenoon, and we were shocked to hear that Allan, the misguided individual from whose house the murderous fire proceeded on the day of Messrs. Dunn and Buchanan's chairing, had the temerity to display an Orange flag. This was immediately removed by order of His Worship the Mayor, who deserves

great credit for his unceasing exertions throughout the day to preserve peace and harmony.

"It is gratifying to be able to state that everything passed off in the most perfect good feeling, and we venture to hope that in future the only rivalry between the two Societies will be in acts of benevolence to their countrymen."[69]

It seems that the Society applied to Mayor Sherwood for permission to use the City Hall on St. Patrick's Day, but the request was refused on the grounds that their activities did not constitute "a general interest". The *Examiner* suggested that if this was a bar to admission all applications would be refused, for "it is notorious that the Hall has been granted to various Companies of Actors whose performances were disapproved of by a portion of the citizens as injurious to public morals. For a long time the congregation of Saint James' Church attended Divine Service in the Hall, the Methodists have had tea parties there—in fact, as the address states, all sorts of uses have been made of the building".[70]

The St. Andrew's Day celebration in the same year consisted chiefly of a dinner. Eleven main toasts, with accompanying speeches and band music, were followed by fourteen "Voluntary Toasts and Sentiments", which varied from the health of diverse personages to the success of the Press, the City, the Bench and Bar, and the Curling Club.[71]

But the elaborate dinners and processions of other days are no more, and the associations have in reality become merely a "high festival of once a year", a change due largely to the development of national feeling in Canada, and a corresponding diminution in the importance attached to original nationality after the passing of the earlier generations who had come directly from the Old Land. Even in 1858 the societies were in some quarters considered to have outlived their usefulness, a writer observing that, while they were still frequently of great assistance to newly-arrived immigrants, yet "our National Societies, formed for a purely benevolent purpose, may be considered to have

[69]The *Examiner*, March 23, 1842.
[70]*Ibid.*, March 16, 1842.
[71]See *ibid.*, December 7, 1842.

seen their day, and violence would not be done to the most sensitive feeling were they allowed quietly to fall into desuetude. . . . We are all, or ought to be, Canadians, and whether of English, Irish or Scotch descent, it signifies very little to society unless we make ourselves good citizens".[72] Until almost the end of the century, however, they retained much of their original significance.

Two other organisations long important in Toronto's social life came to an end in the seventies or eighties—the volunteer Fire Brigade and the Mechanics' Institute. At first all citizens were expected to protect property endangered by fire, but in 1826 York had its first organised fire company. For thirty-five years the members, gradually increasing in numbers, worked their hand fire-engines, held at least monthly meetings, and provided social intercourse by means of processions, balls, competitions and other entertainments. The introduction of the steam fire-engine in 1862 was the beginning of the end of volunteer fire companies, though a diminished membership remained for some years longer.

The Mechanics' Institute was instituted in York in 1831, and was long important in providing educational facilities for "the middle classes, working men and intelligent mechanics", as a contemporary publication[73] denominated them. In addition to a library and courses of lectures, the Toronto Institute held occasional exhibitions of fine and decorative arts, designing, fancy work and other crafts. The Free Libraries Act of 1882 did much to replace the activities of the Institutes by public libraries, and the Toronto association came to an end in the following year.

As the century drew to a close the social life of Toronto was in its essence not greatly different from that of the present, though developments in transportation, and equally great changes in attitude towards social status and the conventions, have considerably altered outward appearances. The Island had become a noted centre of aquatic sports, carrying along the tradition of yacht clubs of the fifties and before; while the numerous debating, oratorical and literary societies which followed the one organised by

[72] [G. P. Ure]: *The Handbook of Toronto*. 1858. pp. 161-2.
[73] *Cobourg Sentinel*, January 17, 1863.

Dr. Strachan in 1831 appealed to many of the more highly educated. In 1879 a writer outlined the social clubs of Toronto in terms which, with some amplification, might apply today:

"Toronto literary and journalistic life has not as yet developed its club; though the growing professional status, and the increasing emoluments of writers for the press, will no doubt see it rise at an early date to that dignity. Special interests of a social, professional, or commercial character combine, however, to support one or two city clubs. The Royal Canadian Yacht Club, we have already mentioned, has its habitat on the Island. The National Club, situated on Bay Street, has a large membership drawn from the professions, and from the captains of industry and commerce. The Toronto Club, on York Street, draws its membership from much the same source, with a sprinkling of the more leisured class, and some few sticklers for caste. The United Empire Club, which, as the headquarters of Liberal-Conservatism in the city, styled itself the Canadian Carleton, has recently disappeared. Its building, centrally situated on King Street West, might be secured for a much-needed Merchant's Exchange, or, better still, a Free Public Library. The various societies, national and benevolent, have their respective lodge-rooms and halls in almost every section of the city. There are also a number of rowing and swimming clubs; curling and skating-rink organisations, with several gymnasia, and that latest craze of athleticism, a Bicycle Association."[74]

The following description of the winter sports of the period of the semi-centennial has also a modern ring:

"The winter enjoyments consist of skating, curling, tobogganing, and ice-boating, and for all of these the facilities are unlimited. The bay in front of the city, with its thousands of skaters, with numerous rinks in all parts of the city, which, under cover of splendid glass roofs, with comfortably heated dressing-rooms, and every convenience, might well excite the envy of skaters who, for want of

[74]G. M. Grant (Ed.): *Picturesque Canada*. 1879. Vol. I, p. 428. The clubs of Toronto in the eighteen-eighties, as well as "the Secret and Other Societies", receive individual mention and extensive comment in C. P. Mulvany: *Toronto, Past and Present*. 1884. pp. 119-141.

better, hasten to the 'Serpentine' in London when ice has formed, and continue to use it long after it has lost its native purity, and when it would not tempt any small boy in Toronto to skim on its dark surface. Canada is indeed beautiful in her winter aspect.

"One cannot imagine how animated and brilliant is Toronto when she puts on her snowshoes, and gets herself up on runners and fills all the air with the chimes of the sleigh-bells. There is an endless variety in design, and pattern, and colour of sleigh, and robe, and bell, and plume, and the streets look like Christmas as long as the snow lasts. Even the street cars feel the infection, and mount themselves on bobs (short runners), and jingle the loudest bells, and take the best half of the street.

"Robert J. Burdette, after a visit, asks: 'Who are these in blanket suits? It is pleasant to tarry among people whose girls wade through the snow. Our fair Canadian cousins have no dread of discomfort. The snow has no terrors for them. They dress prettily; and if there is a prettier figure on the North American Continent than a daughter of Canada apparelled for the ice or the toboggan-slide, herself a part of the snow-drifted landscape, a picture of health and comfort that fairly softens the piercing wind into a sense of warmth, I have not seen it. She dresses in perfect harmony with the winter landscape. She has a complexion clear as the ice of Ontario, and her warm blood shines through it rich as the flashes of the Aurora, graceful and free in every movement'."[75]

In modern times, however, the population of Toronto has so greatly increased that social life has become infinitely more complex. Amateur and professional sports have developed through commercialisation, and many people who have never played a game delight to gather in stadium and arena to observe others. The rising standard of living has enabled the spending of much more money by the average person, and the great development of public entertainment since the invention of the motion picture, together with the new accessibility resulting from the use of motor-cars,

[75]Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 213-4. The best description of the semi-centennial celebration of 1884 is to be found in Henry Scadding and J. C. Dent: *Toronto, Past and Present: Historical and Descriptive*. 1884. pp. 302-330.

makes it possible for people to congregate quickly and enjoy themselves in a manner which would have been beyond the comprehension of our pioneer citizens—though the modern development of radio has proven equally effective in eliminating the necessity of leaving home in search of amusement. For now one may experience some of the "thrills" of the featured football or hockey classic, or, without moving from his own fireside, he may listen to "Amos 'n' Andy", the Romanellis or Eddie Duchin, Toronto's Mary Pickford, Toscanini or Al Jolson—who was once, by the way, a bell-boy in the old Iroquois Hotel, York Street. Apart altogether from the entertainment value of the radio and the motion picture they have become strong forces for educational and cultural advancement; and they have aided in decreasing the rigidity of class distinctions and in creating that democratic feeling which, while by no means universal, characterises modern social life to a degree which would have astonished—even alarmed—the chief citizens of Toronto of old.

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The unprinted materials consulted during research into the history of Toronto consist largely of the proceedings, records and reports of the City Council, the various departments of civic government, and of the commissions related thereto; similar information was also obtained from certain corporations. To these may be added letters, reminiscences and other material of the kind, provided by citizens or former citizens of Toronto. With reference to the construction of the Garrison at York, 1793-99, a document in the Public Library, Toronto, entitled "Report Concerning Public Buildings in Upper Canada, 1799", has been of great value. The records of the old Court of Quarter Sessions have been printed in part in various publications, and where this is the case the printed source is given to enable easier reference.

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The *Canada Year Book*.
The *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*.
The *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, and other works of reference.
The *Reports* of the Ontario Railway and Municipal Board.
Reports printed by the City Council and the various departments of civic government.
Publications of the Toronto Harbour Commission.
Publications of the Toronto Transportation Commission.
Publications of the Canadian National Exhibition.
The reports and other publications of the Toronto Public School Board and the Board of Education.
The *Toronto Municipal Handbook*.
Papers and Records of the Ontario Historical Society, the York Pioneer and Historical Society, and the Women's Canadian Historical Society of Toronto.
Miscellaneous clippings, scrap-books, etc., in the Toronto Public Library, the Toronto Transportation Commission Library, and the various newspaper libraries have also been consulted.

Newspapers

In most cases the files of Canadian newspapers are only partial, and in many instances but few copies—if any at all—have come down to us. A survey of existing files of the following newspapers, all of which are quoted in the work, has provided much invaluable material. Unless otherwise noted they were published in Toronto.

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Canada Constellation. (Niagara.)
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Colonial Advocate.
Courier of Upper Canada.
Empire.
Evening News.

Evening Telegram.
Examiner.
Financial Post.
Globe.
Gore Mercury.
Mail.
Mail and Empire.
Mirror.
New Outlook.
Patriot.
Patriot and Farmers' Monitor.
Times. (London, England.)
Toronto Albion.
Toronto Commercial Herald.
Toronto Daily Star.
Toronto Herald.
Toronto World.
Upper Canada Gazette, or American Oracle. (First published at Niagara, later at York. For a time known as the *York Gazette*, and by other names).
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Electrical Review.
Financial Post.
Illustrated London News.
Quarterly Review.
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The extensive bibliography which formed the basis of *Early Life in Upper Canada* is similarly, to a very considerable extent, the foundation of the present work. The following list, however, is composed of works which, with but very few exceptions, have directly contributed by quotation or citation to the text of this volume:

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KEY TO THE INDEX

An exhaustive index has been compiled, but attention to the principles upon which it is based will enable the most effective use:

1. Except where confusion might occur, persons are listed only under their surnames and Christian names. Those whose names occur only as proprietors of taverns, stores, factories, entertainments, etc., are so indexed, and are not repeated as individuals unless their Christian names or other information concerning them makes such additional listing of value.

2. All buildings of importance are indexed every time they occur, so that anyone interested in any particular aspect of local history may follow the references throughout the book.

3. To eliminate continual repetition and avoid confusion the following subjects are indexed in one place only and appear under these general heads:

Cabs
Dramas and Operas
Ferries
Inns, Taverns and Hotels
Regiments
Sailing-Ships
Songs, Dances, Marches and Oratorios
Steamships

4. Cross-references have been provided whenever considered valuable.

5. Individual churches are indexed under their denominational names.

6. Societies and other organisations are indexed under the names by which they are commonly known, the word "Toronto" being omitted unless it appears to be an integral part of the name.

7. Newspapers and periodicals are indexed under their names, and the place of publication of newspapers is given if it is outside Toronto.

8. All authors cited or quoted in this work are indexed under their names, but the source of the reference is not repeated. Artists and their works are listed in the forematter but are not repeated in the index.

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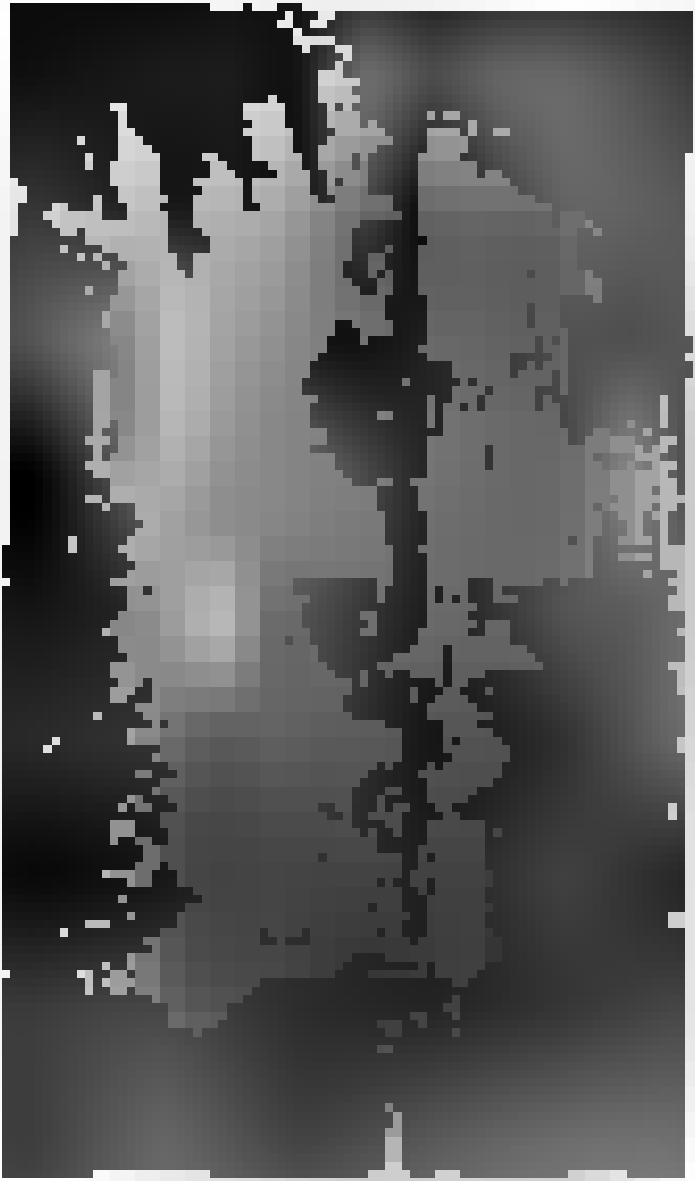

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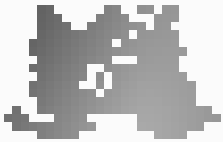

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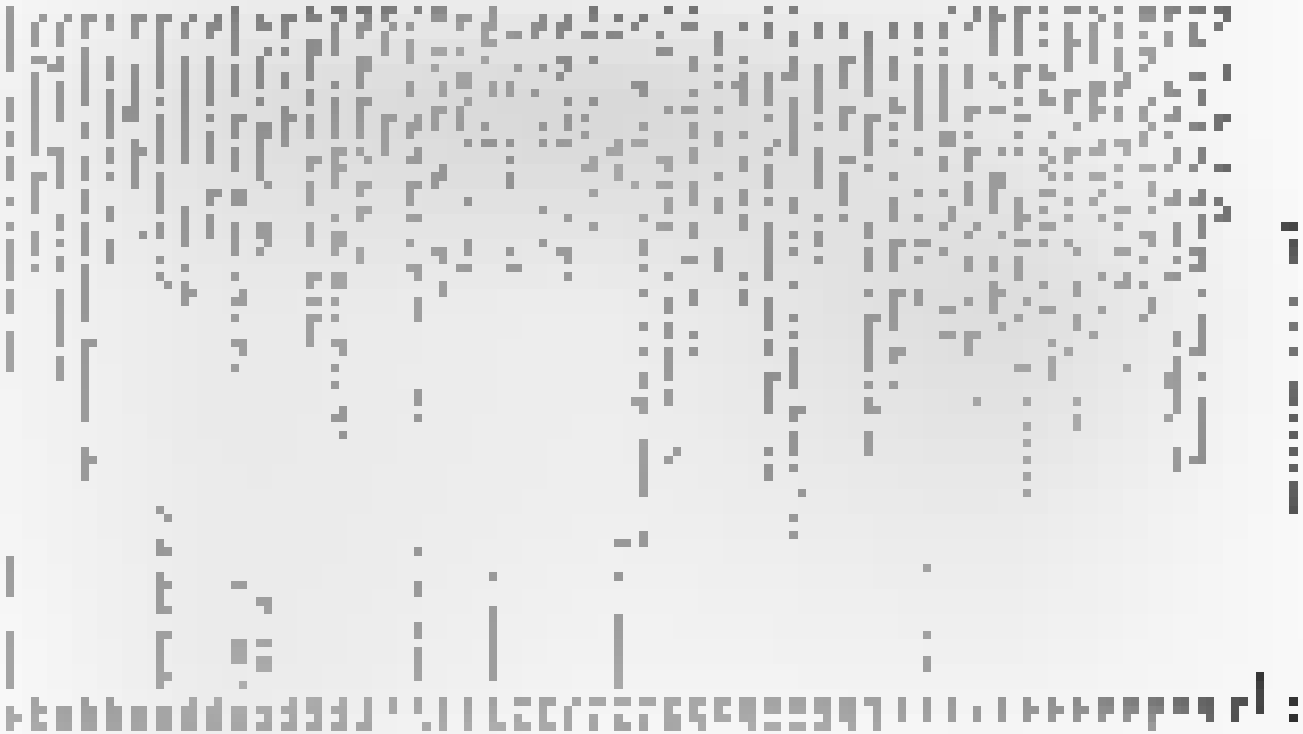

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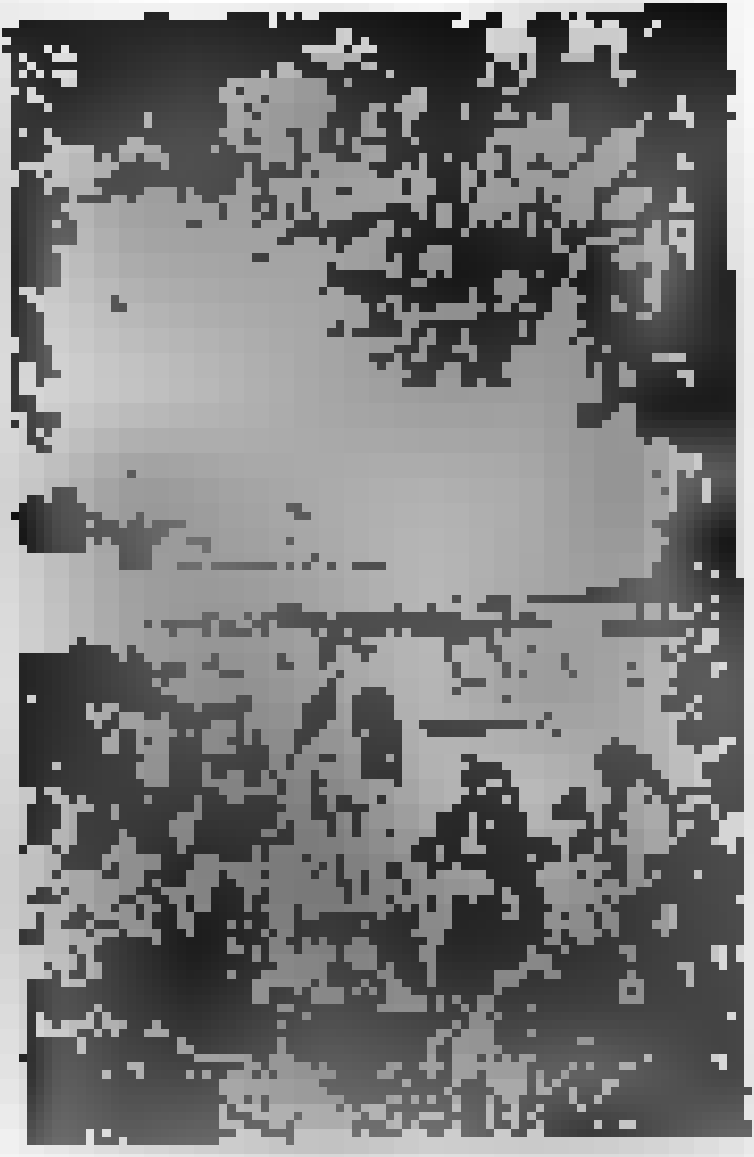

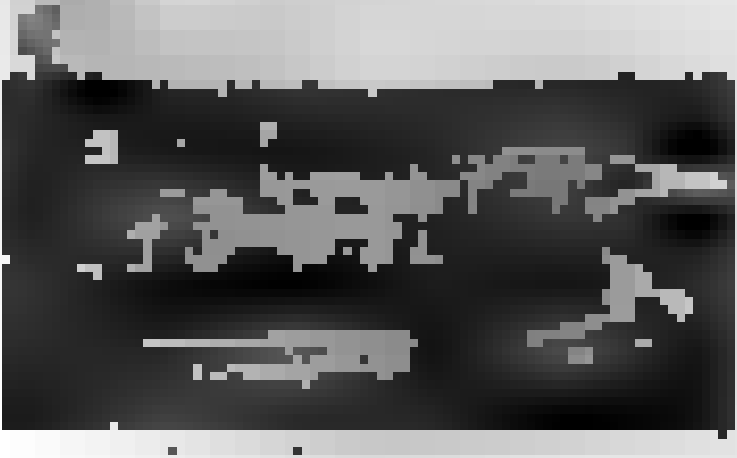

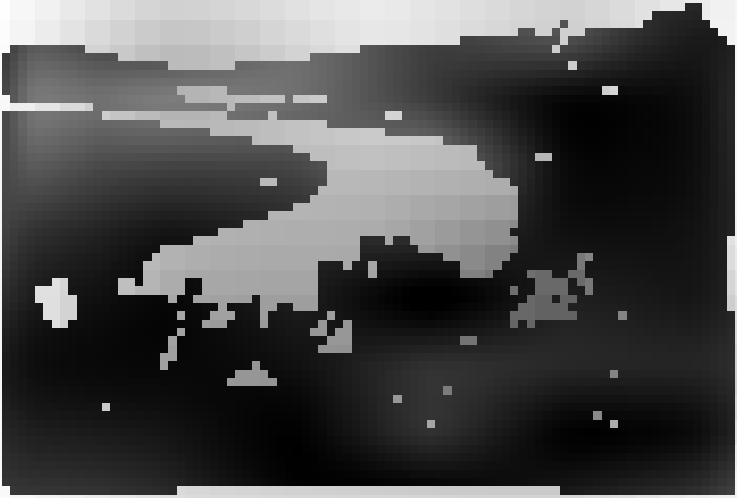

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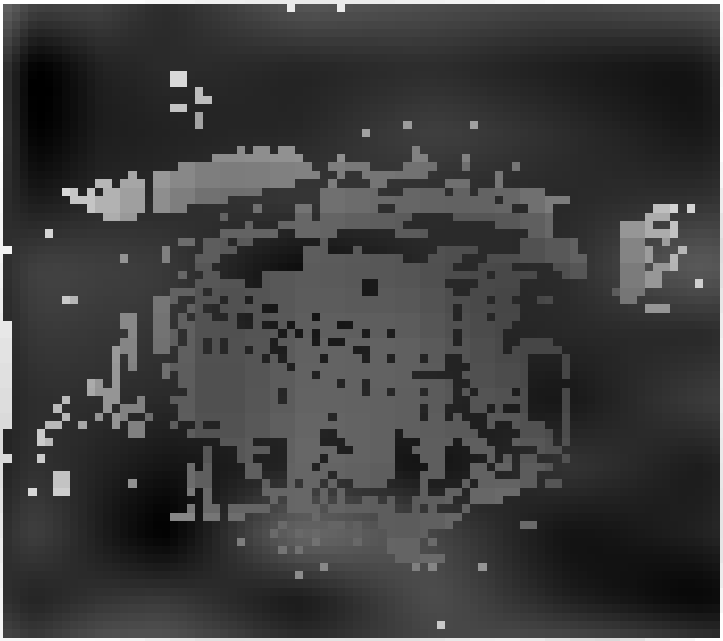

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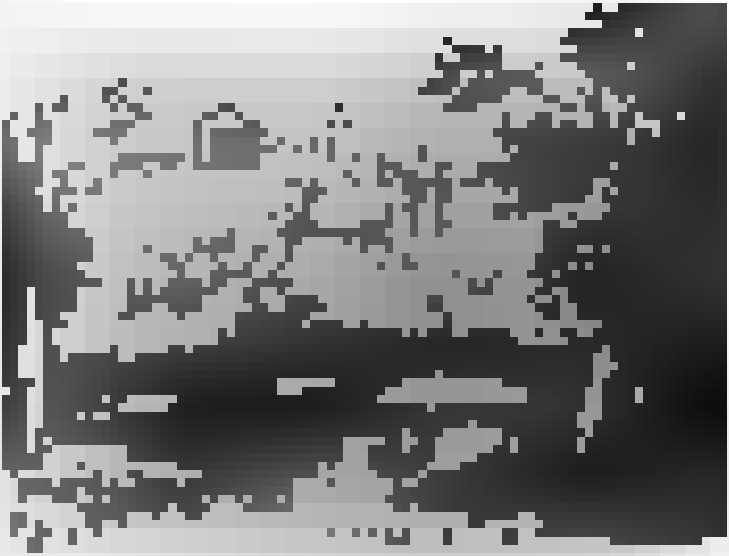

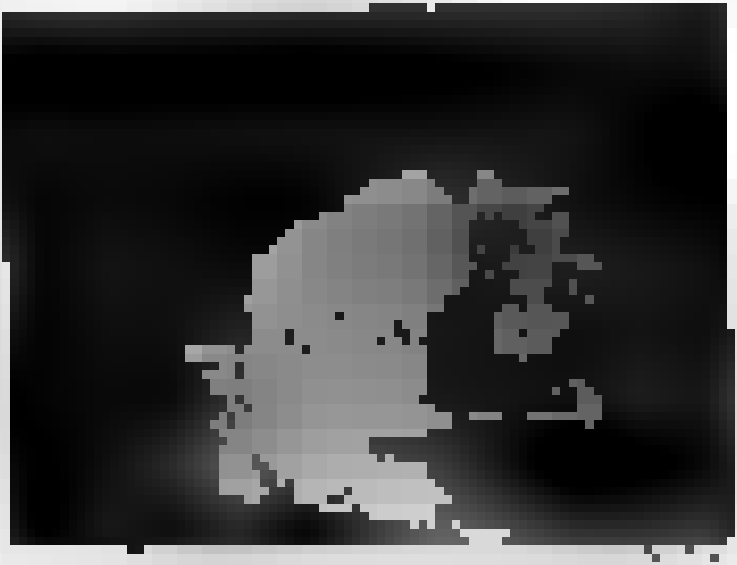

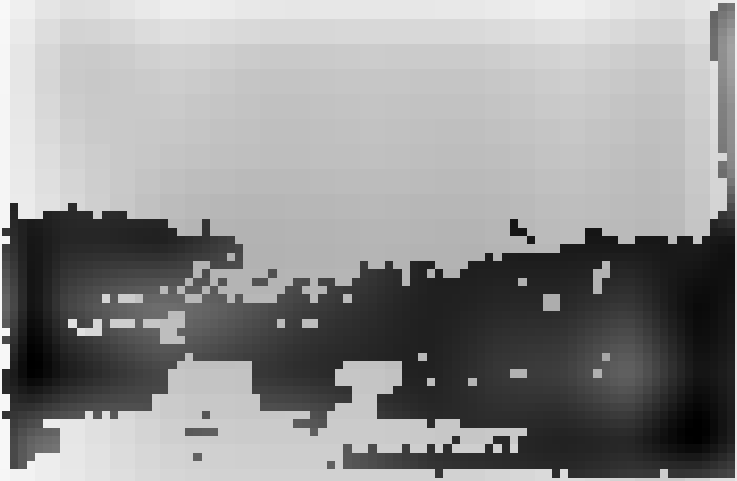

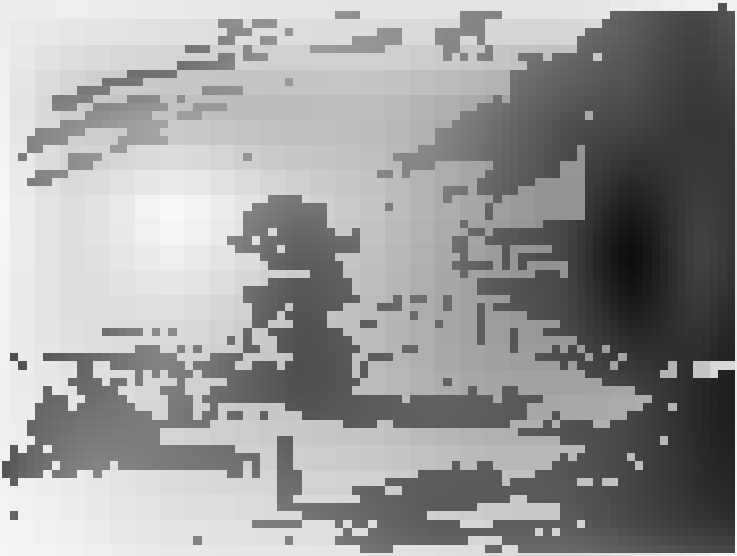

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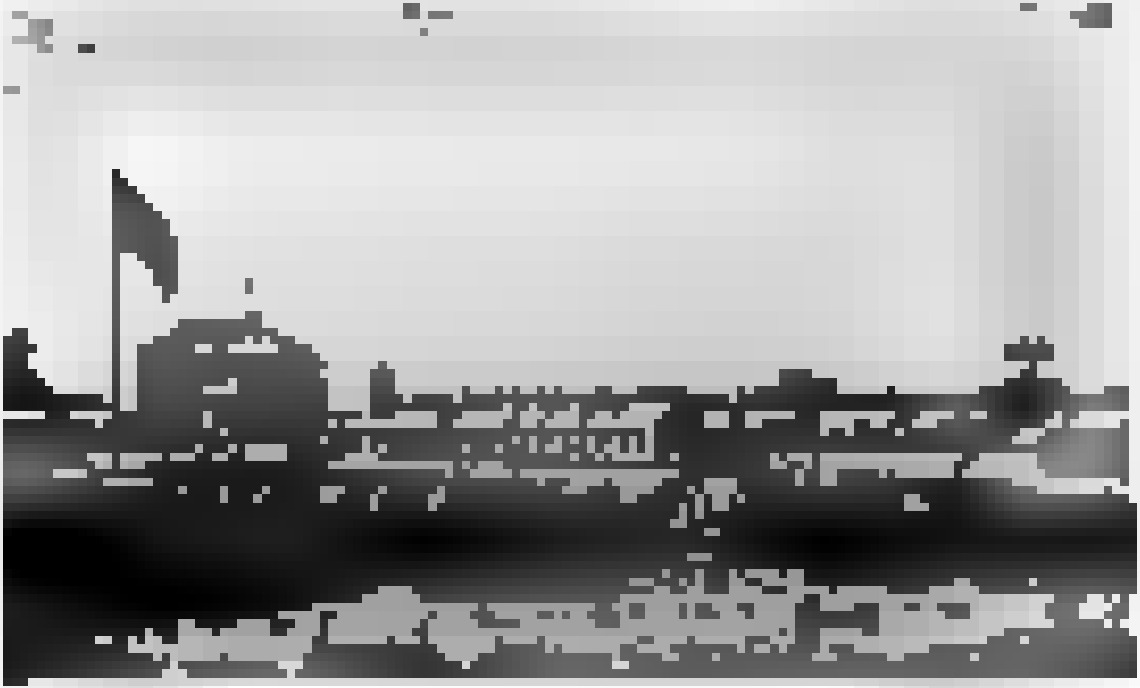

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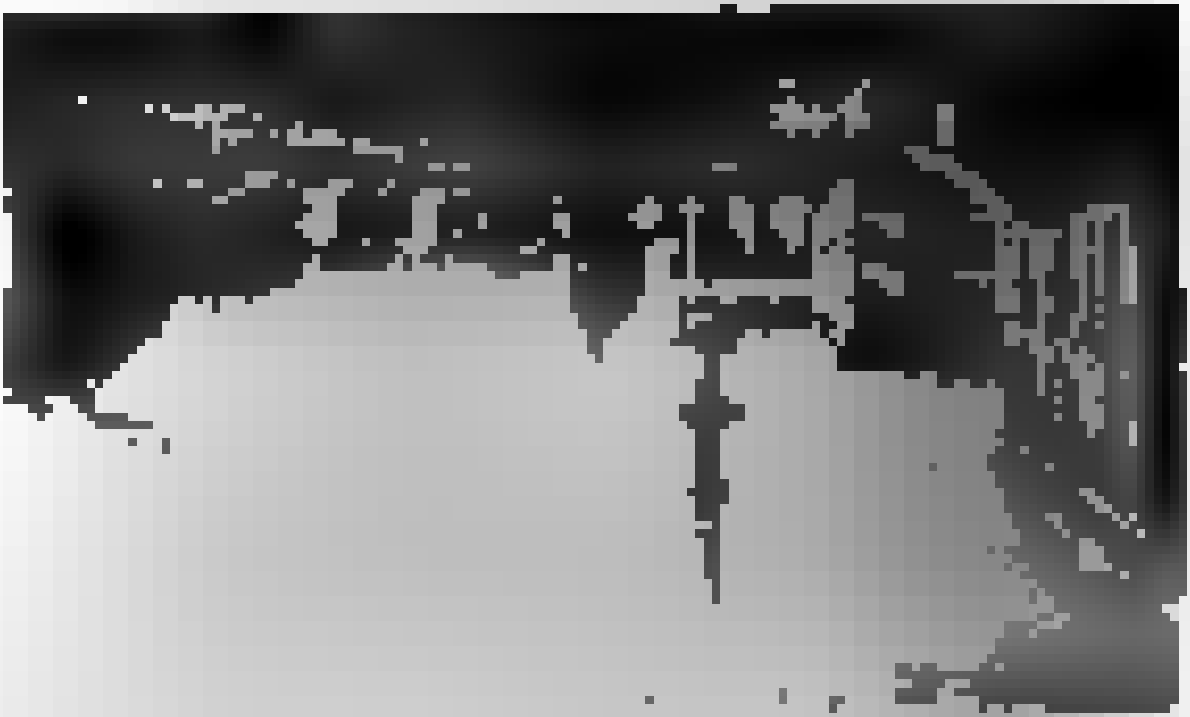

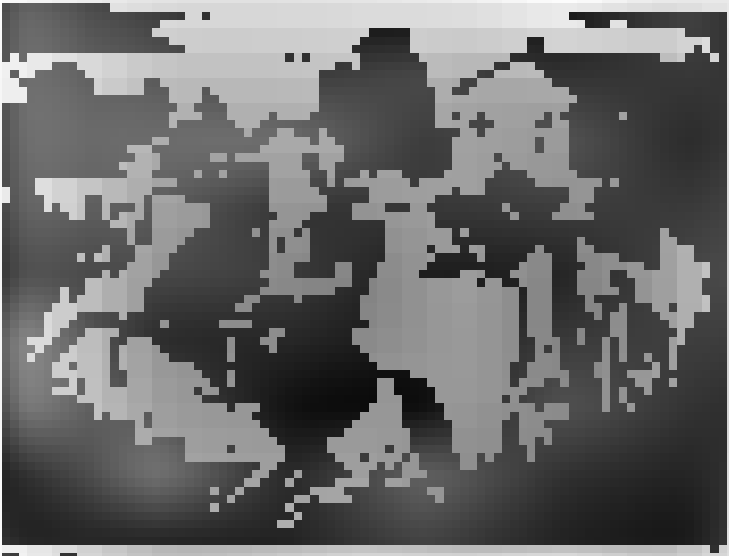

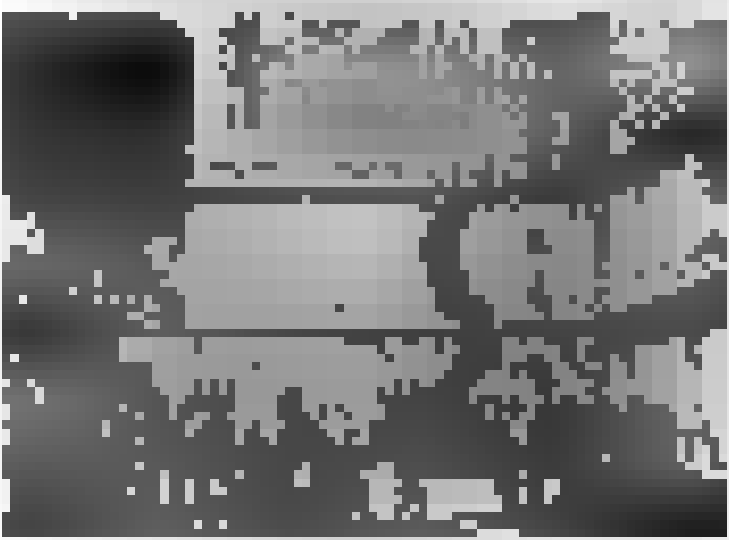

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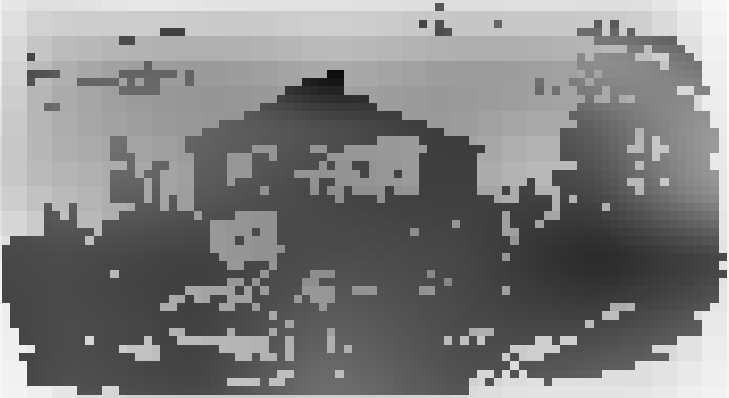

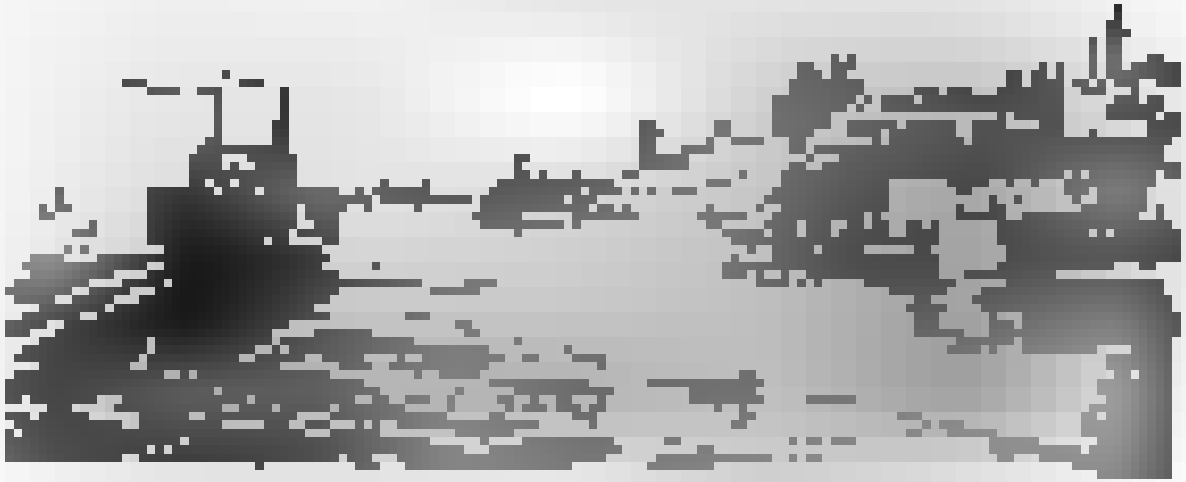

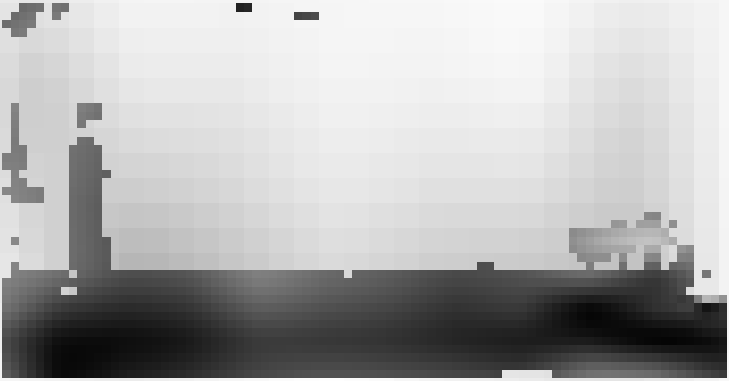

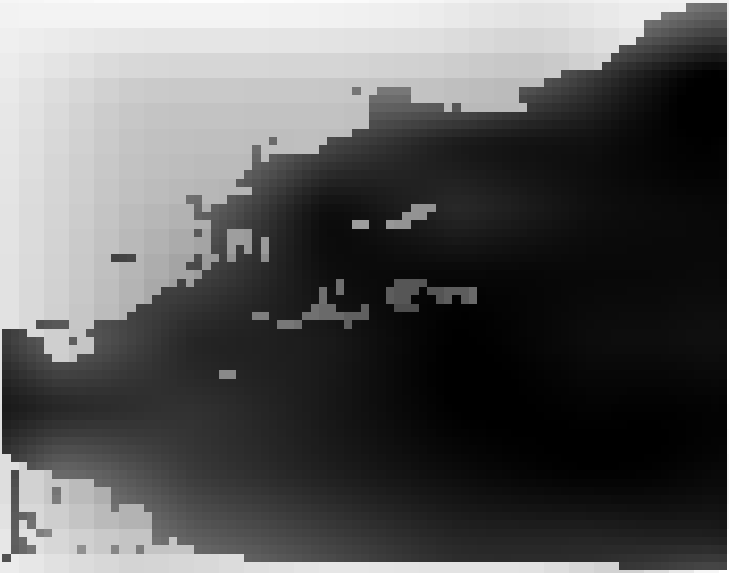

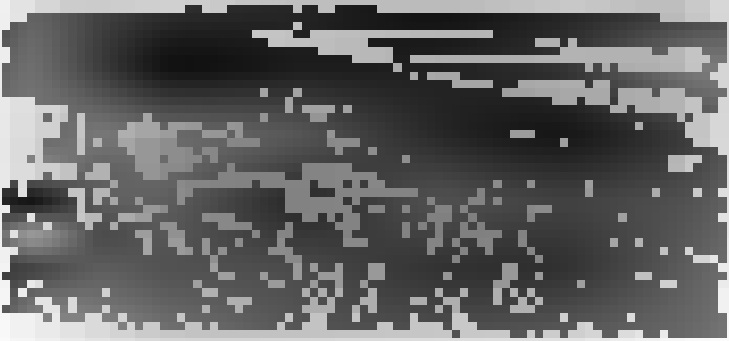

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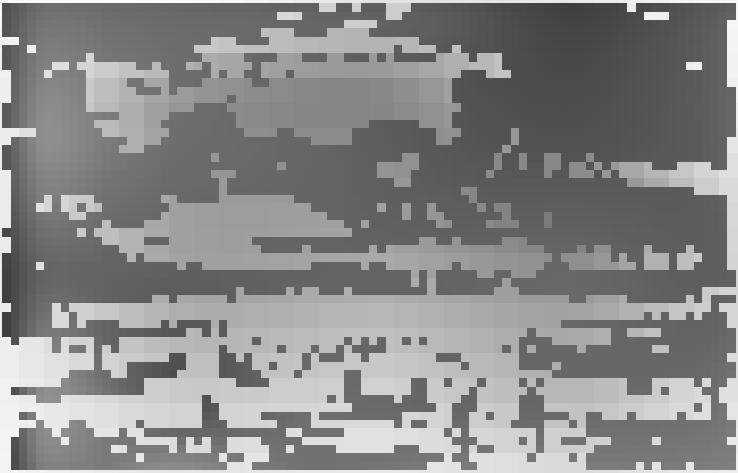

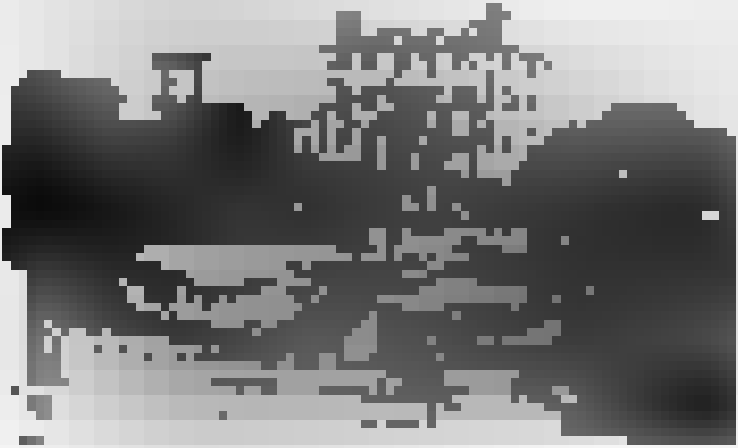

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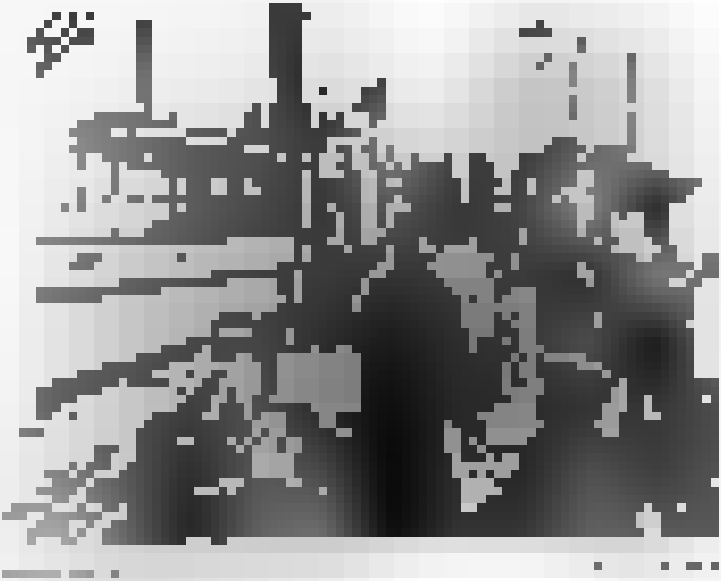

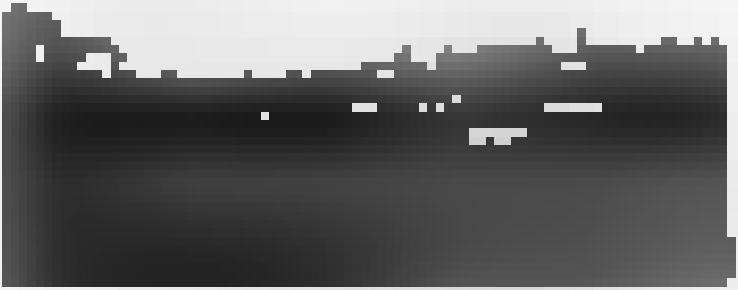

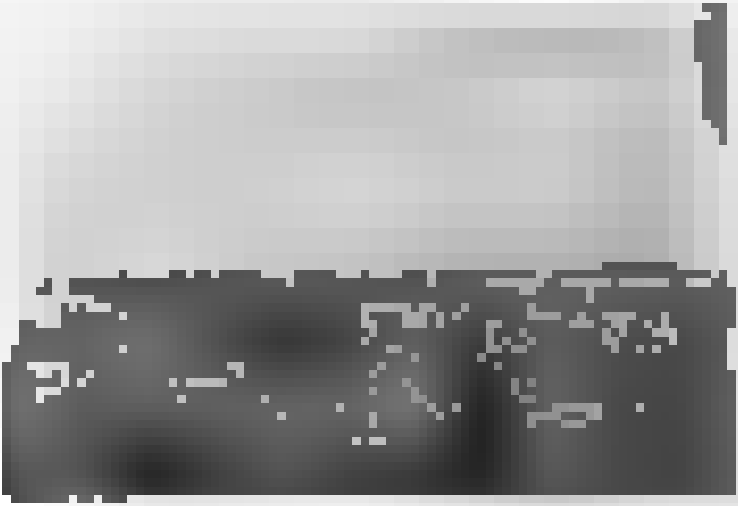

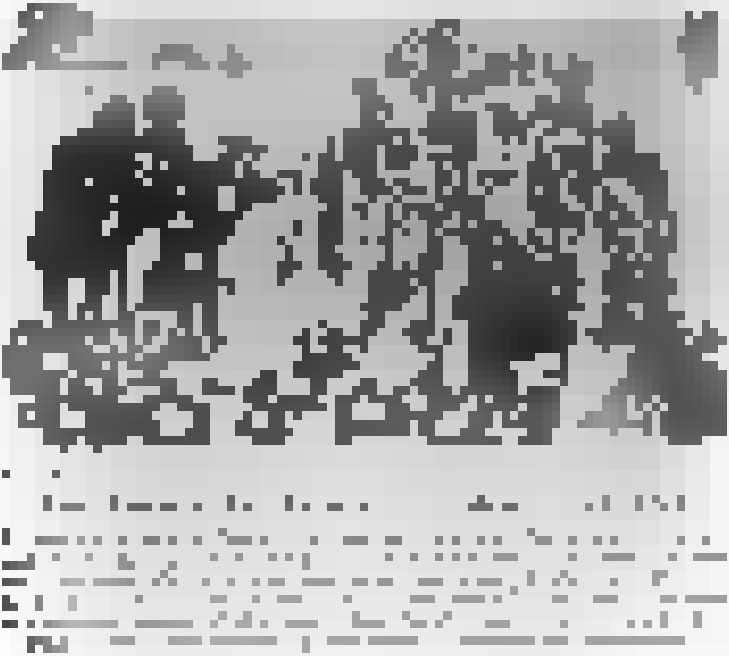

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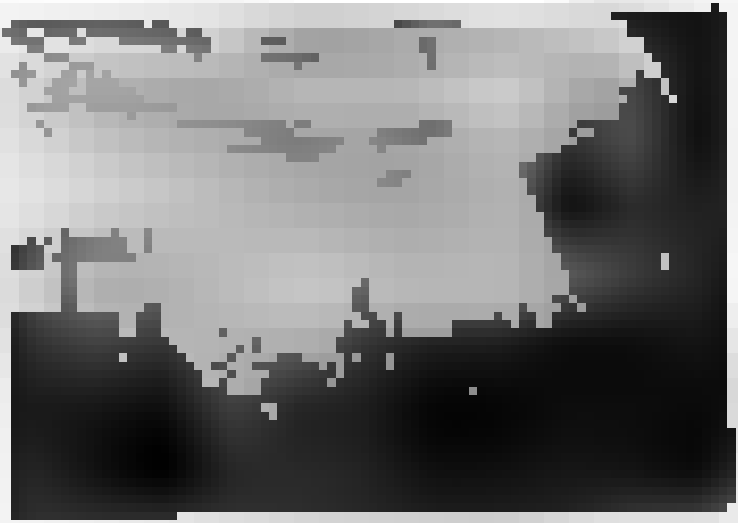

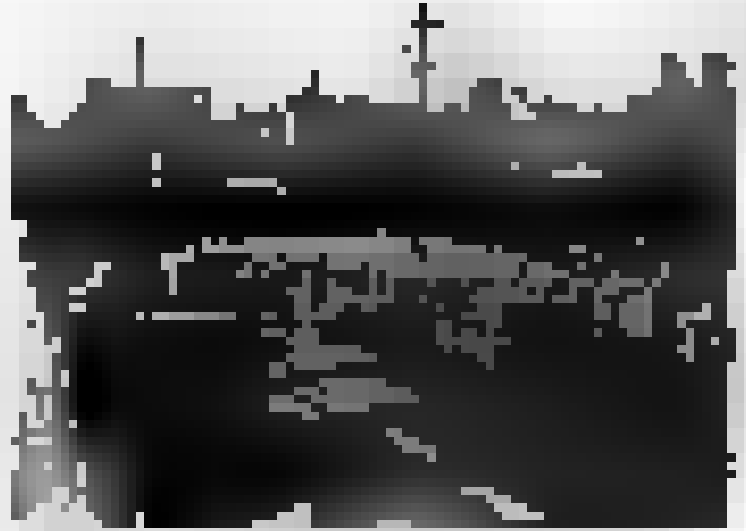

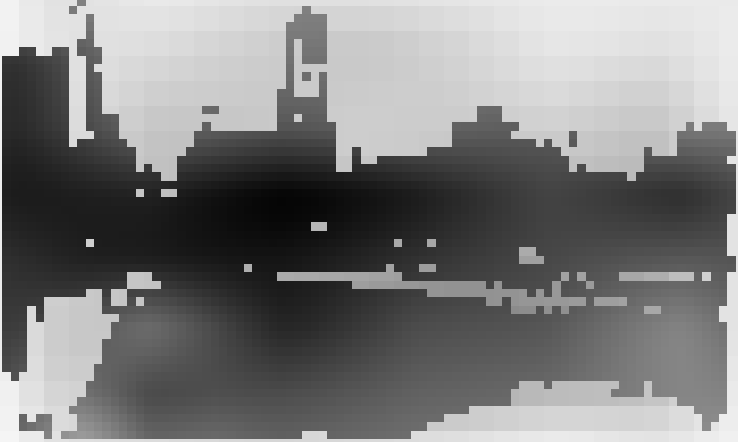

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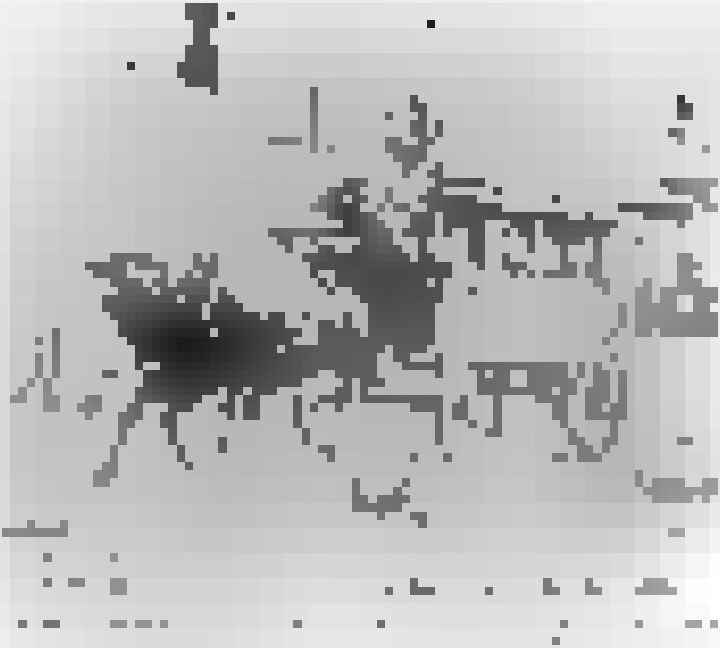

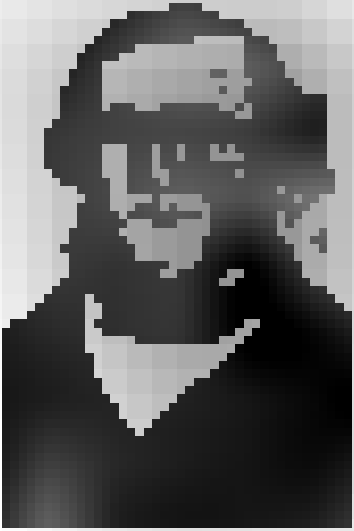

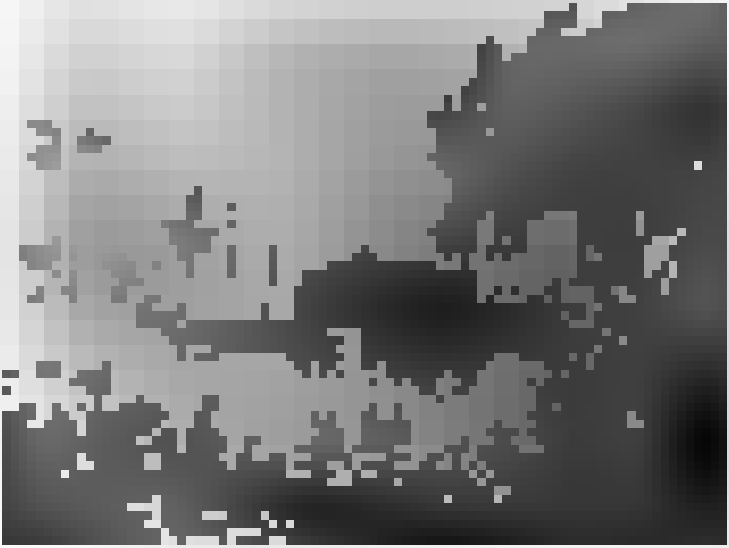

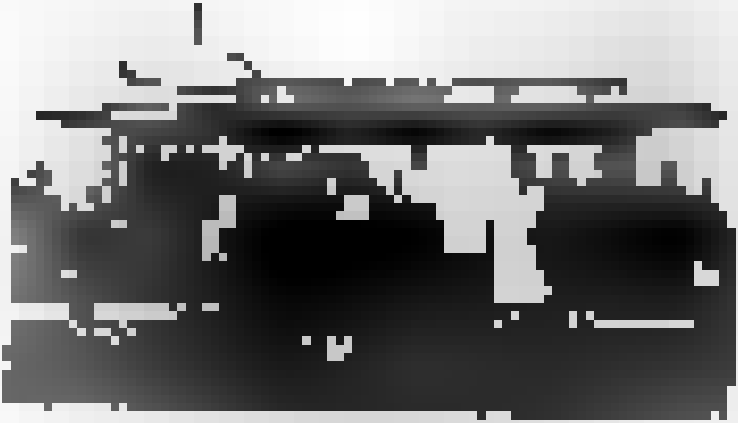

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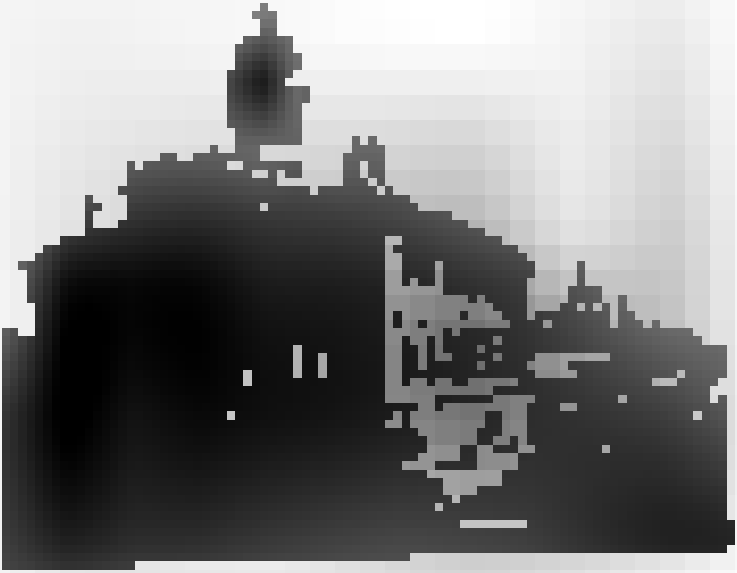

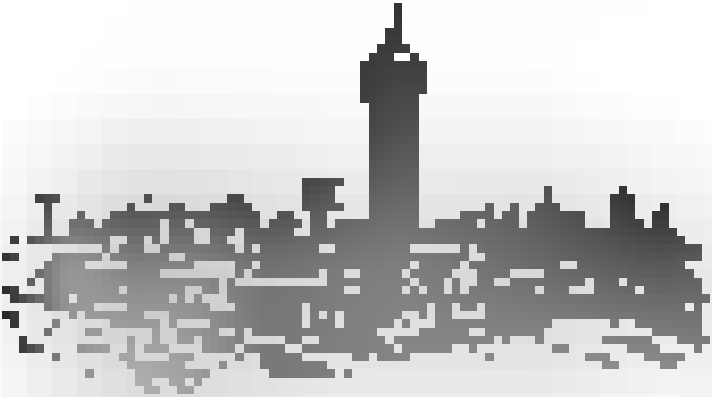

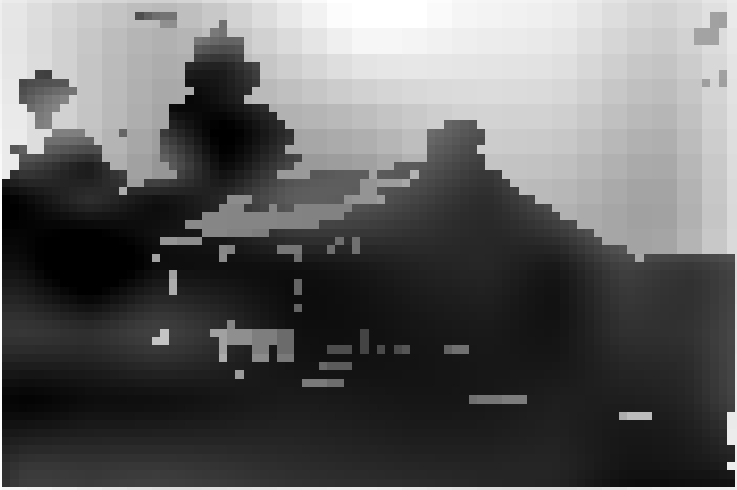

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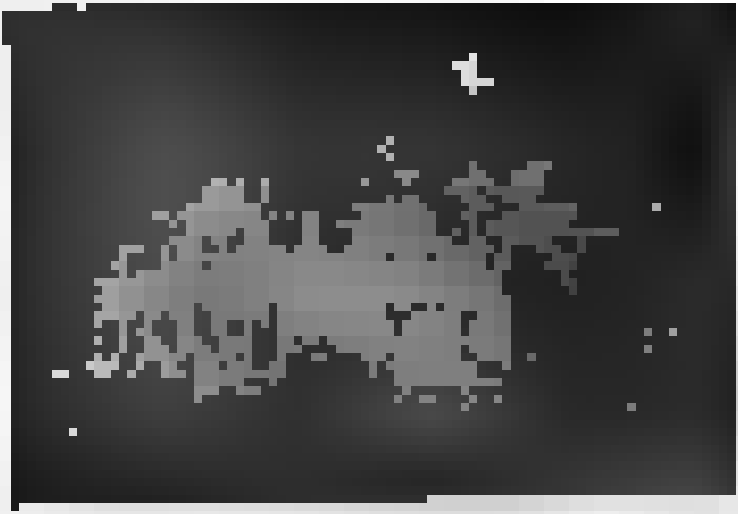

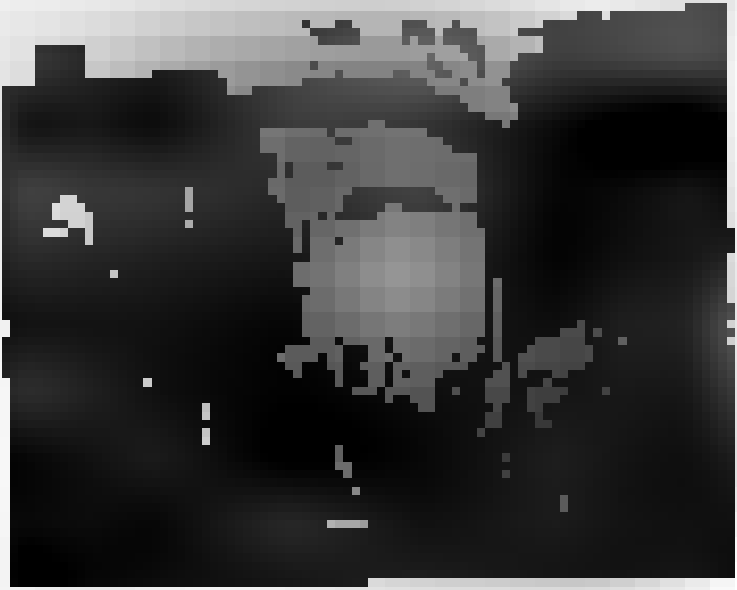

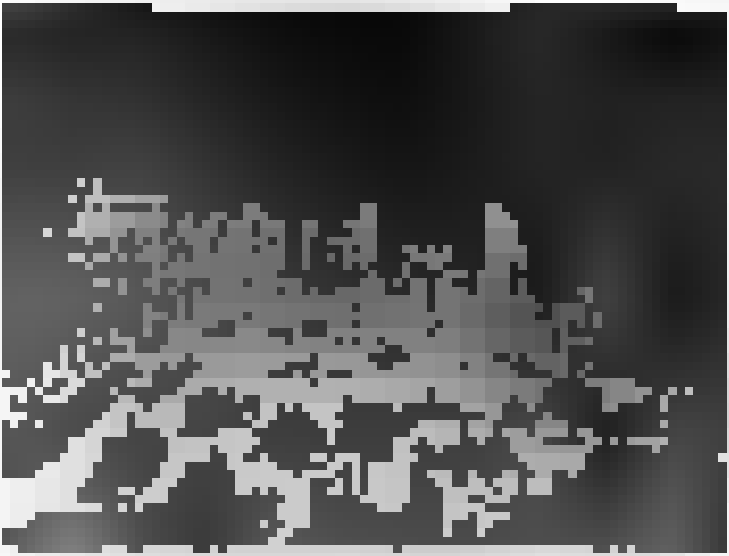

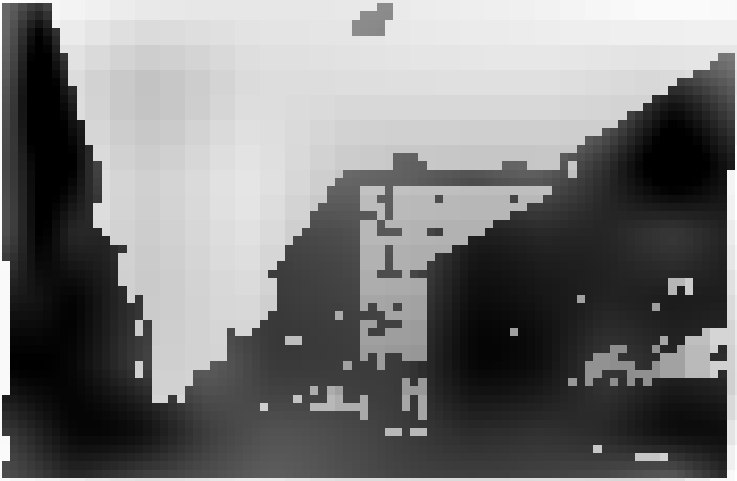

Section 3

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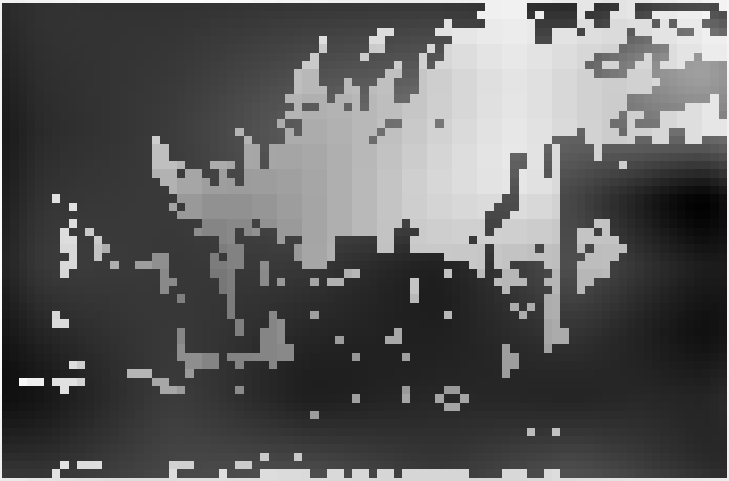

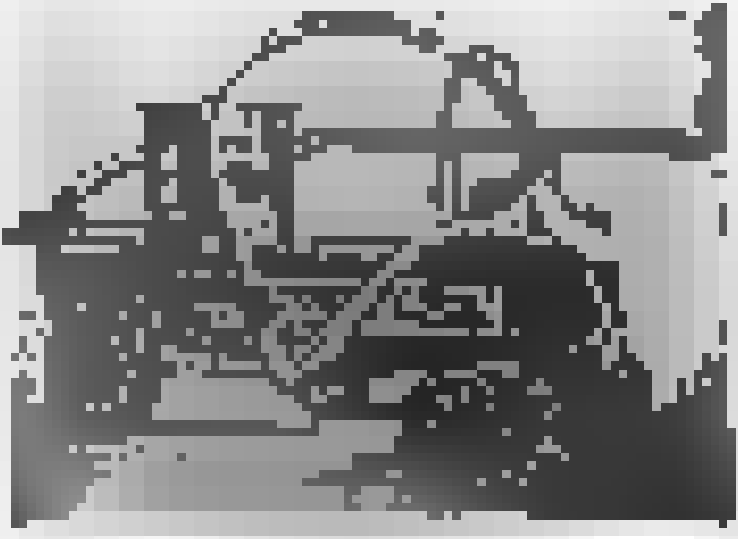

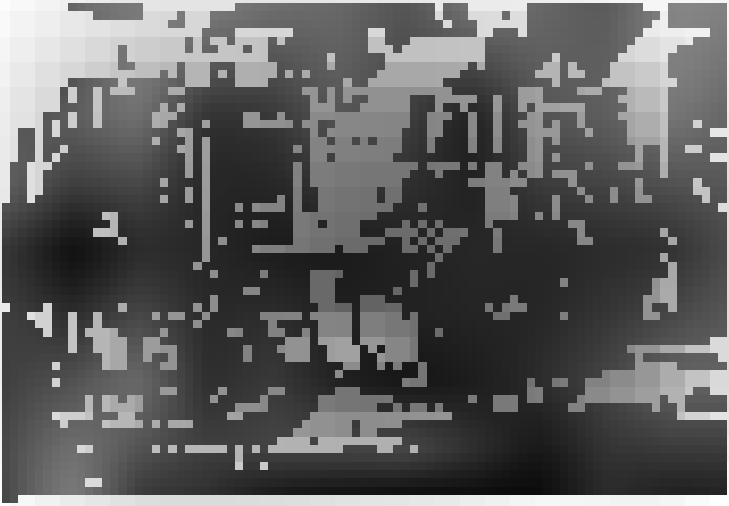

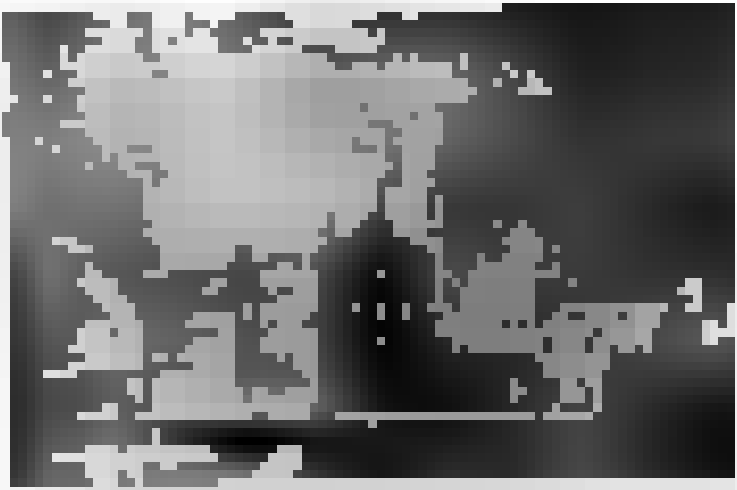

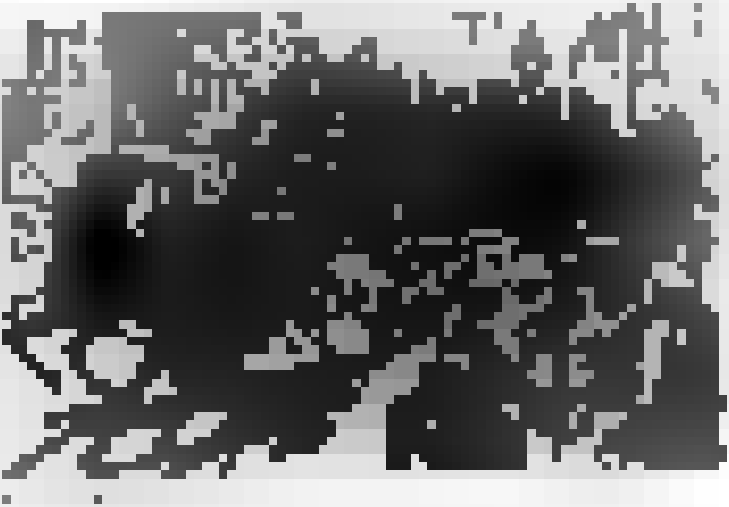

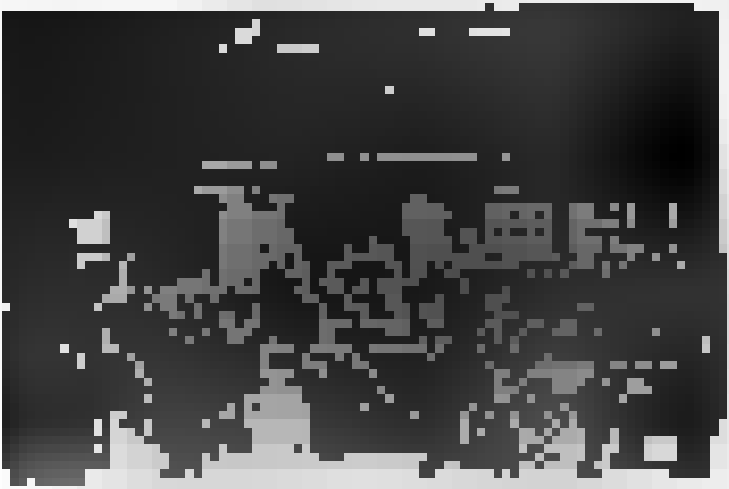

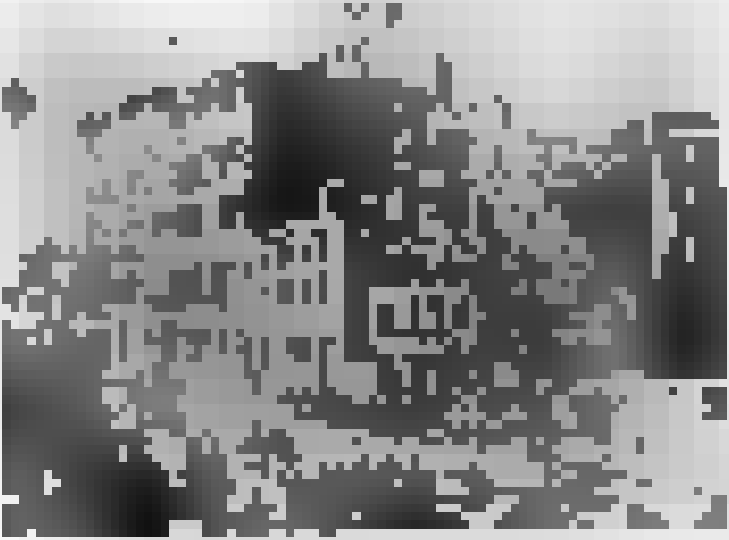

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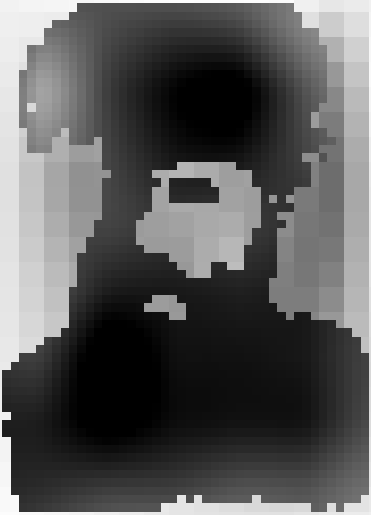

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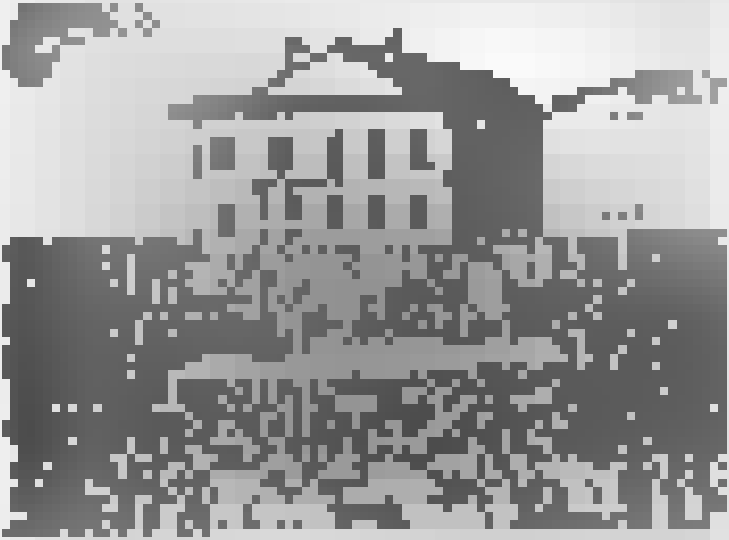

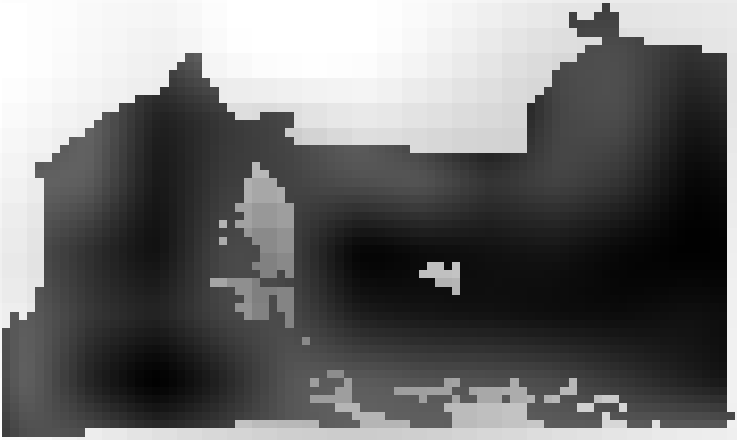

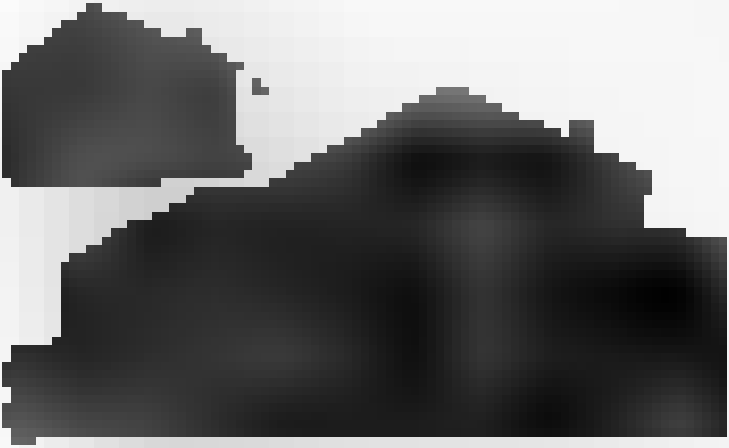

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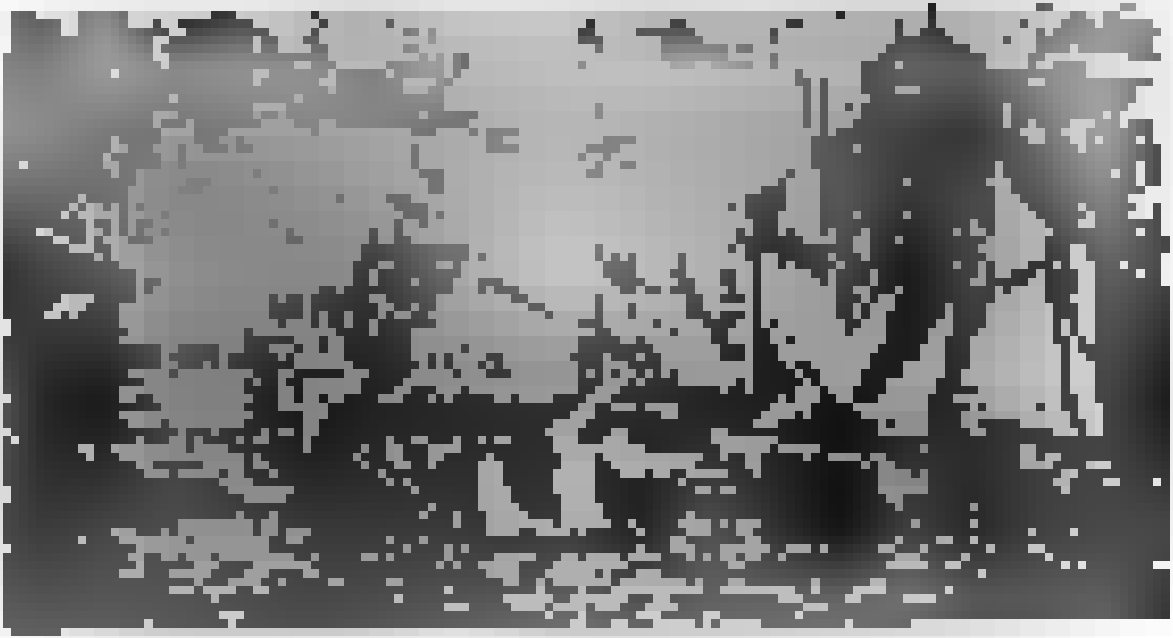

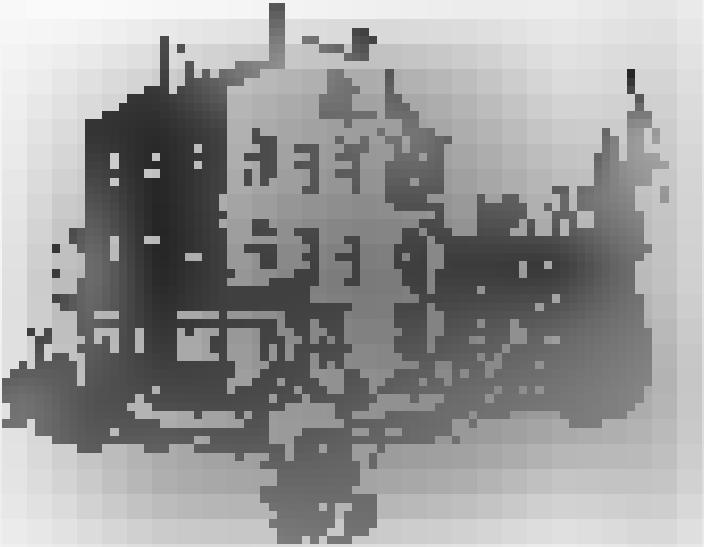

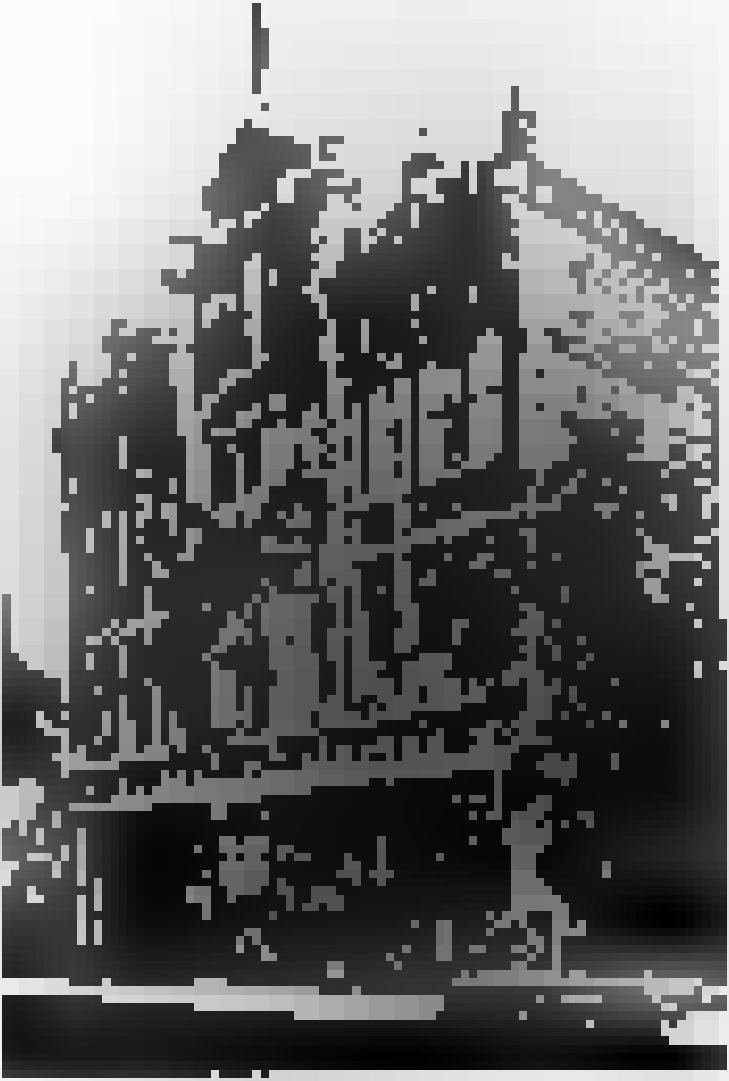

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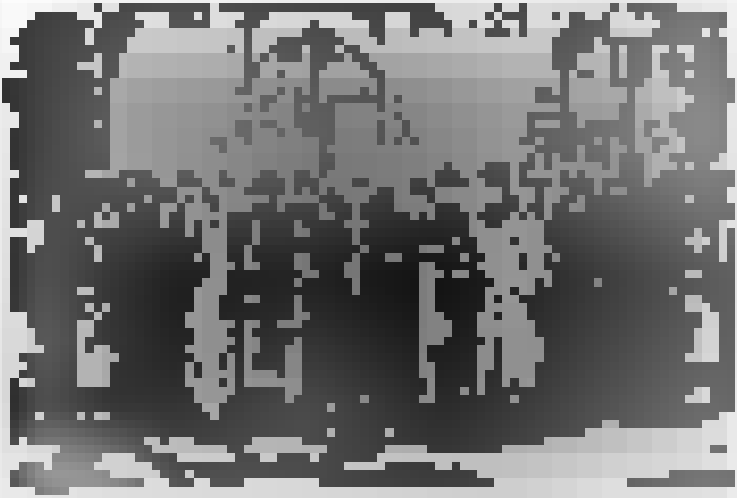

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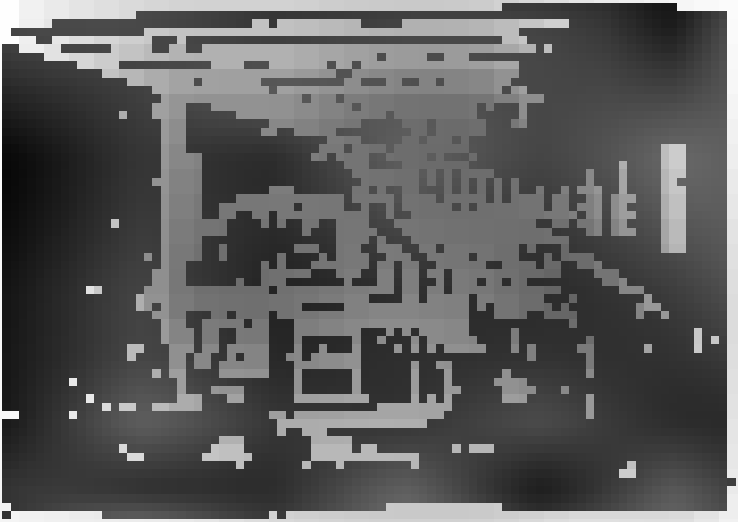

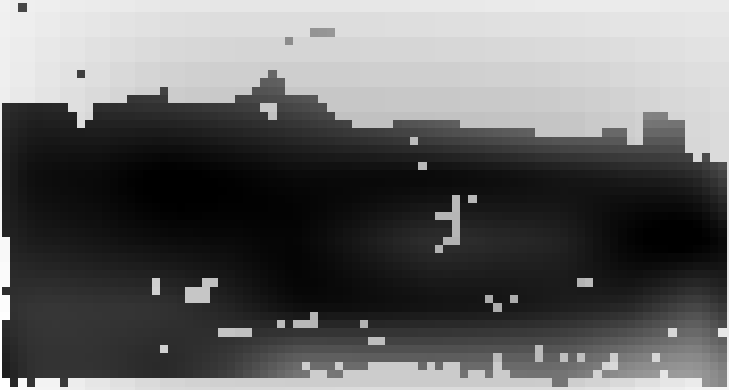

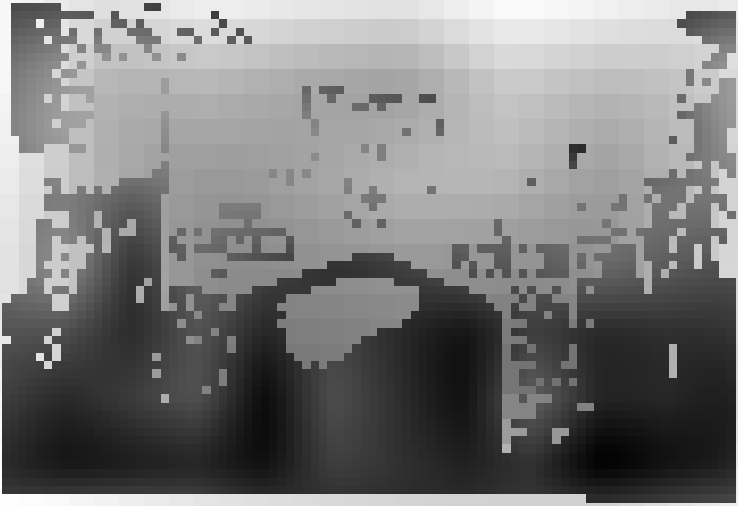

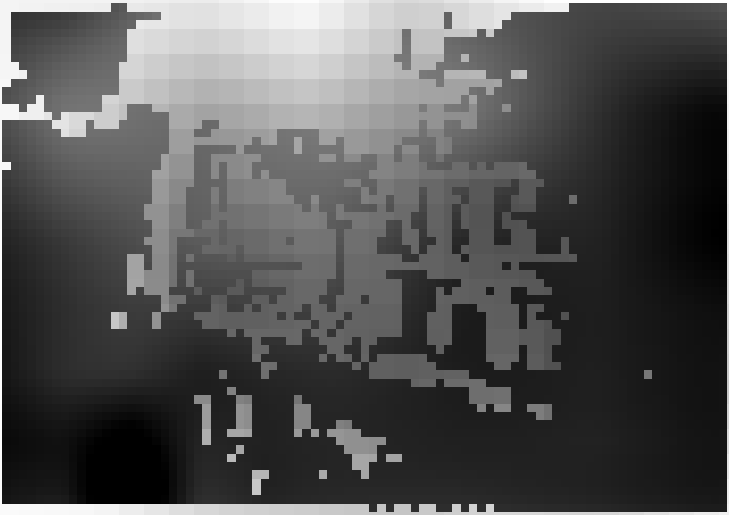

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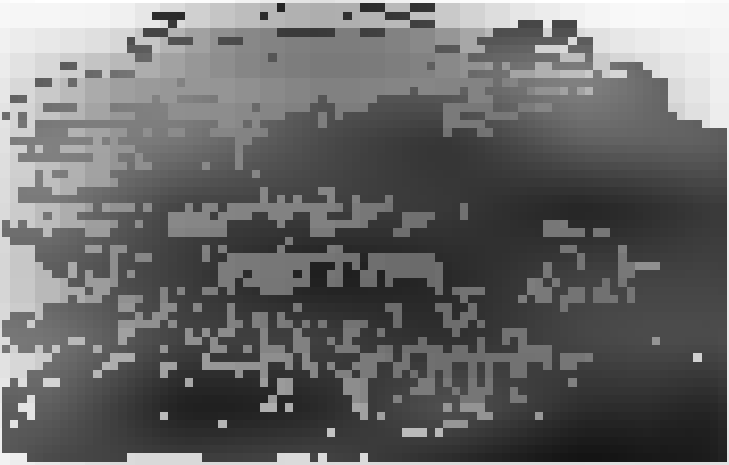

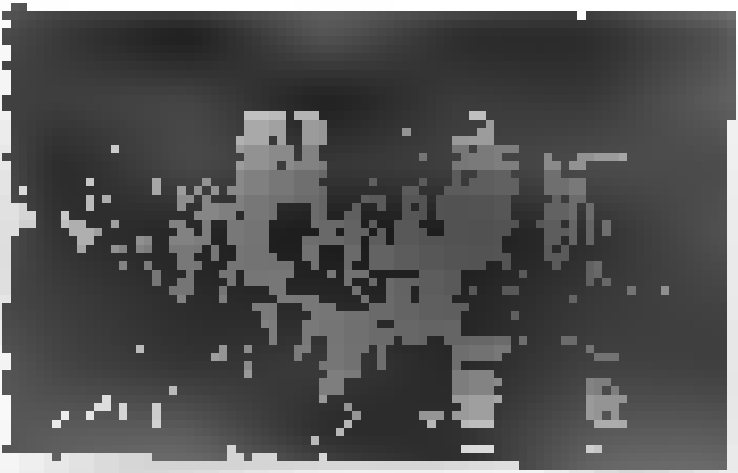

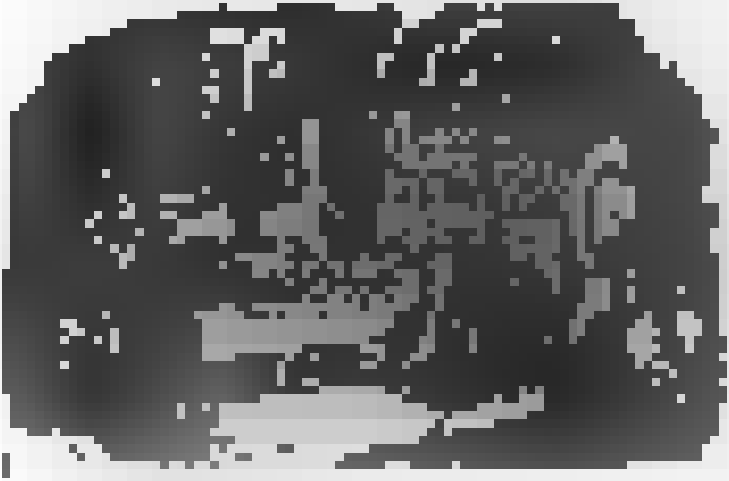

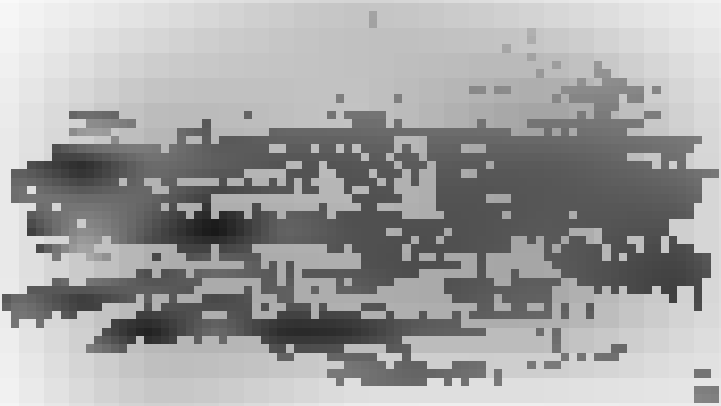

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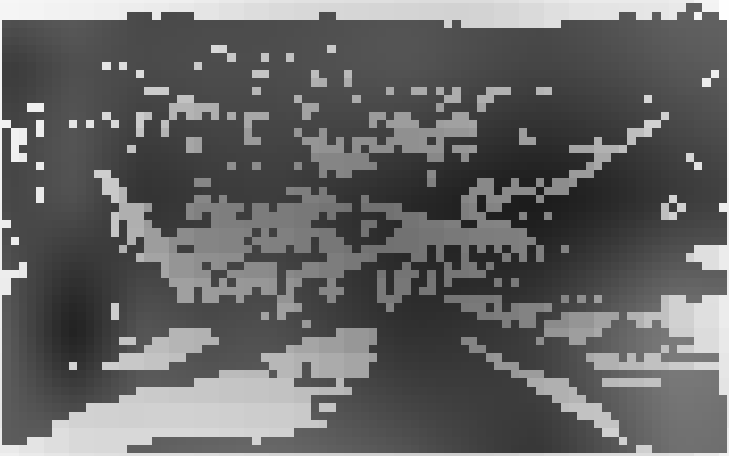

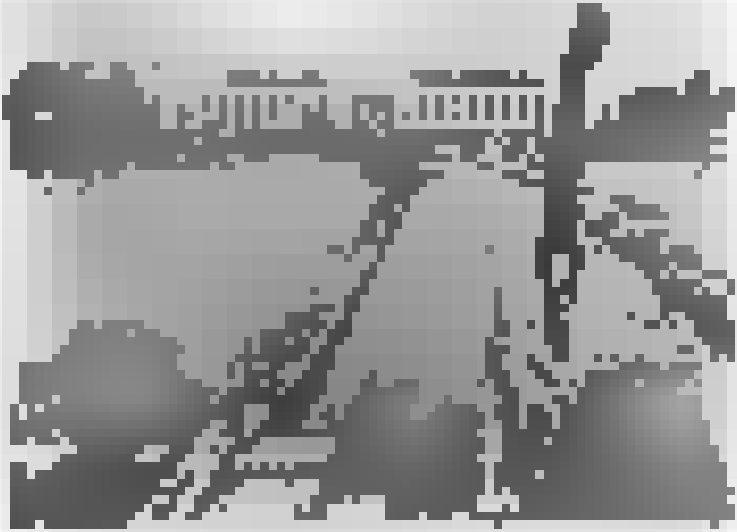

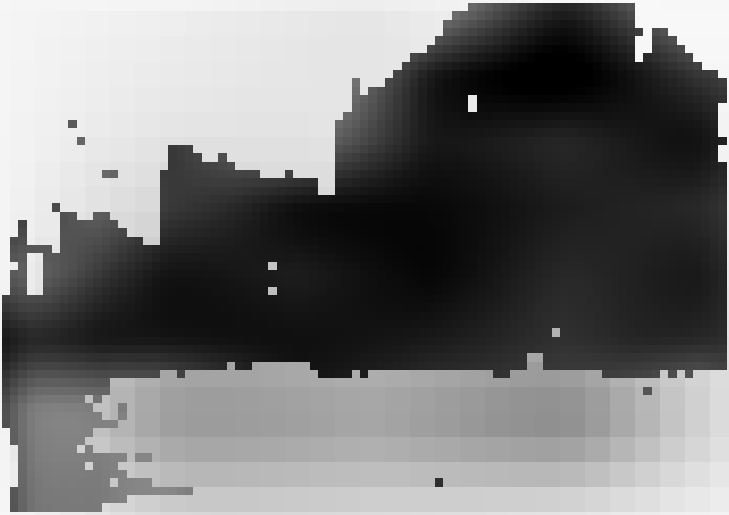

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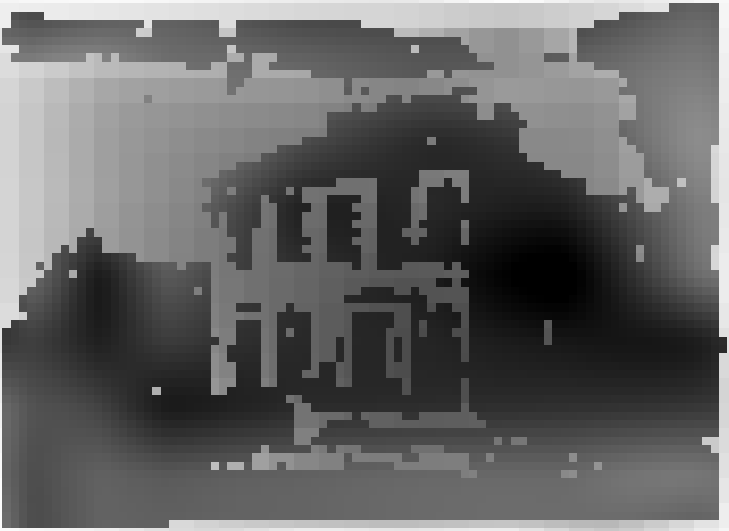

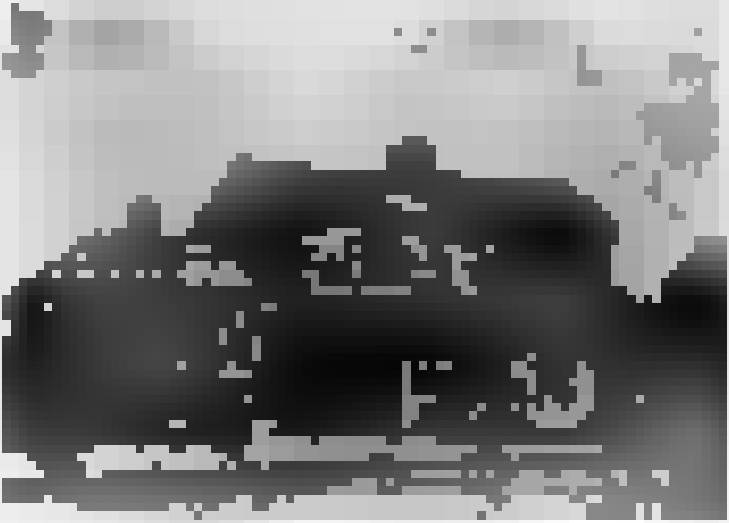

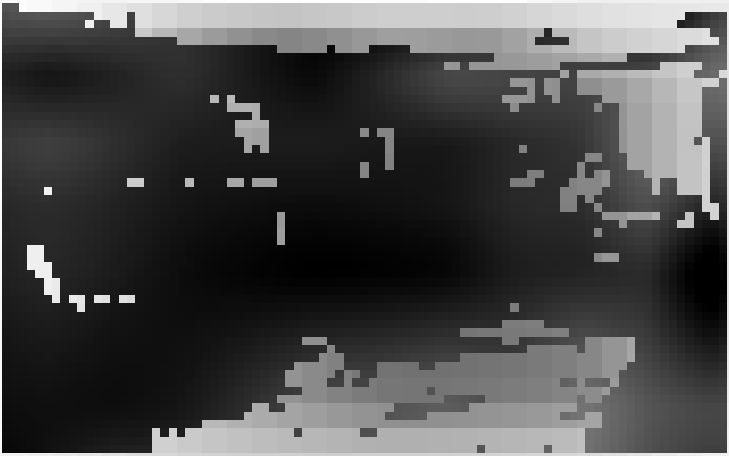

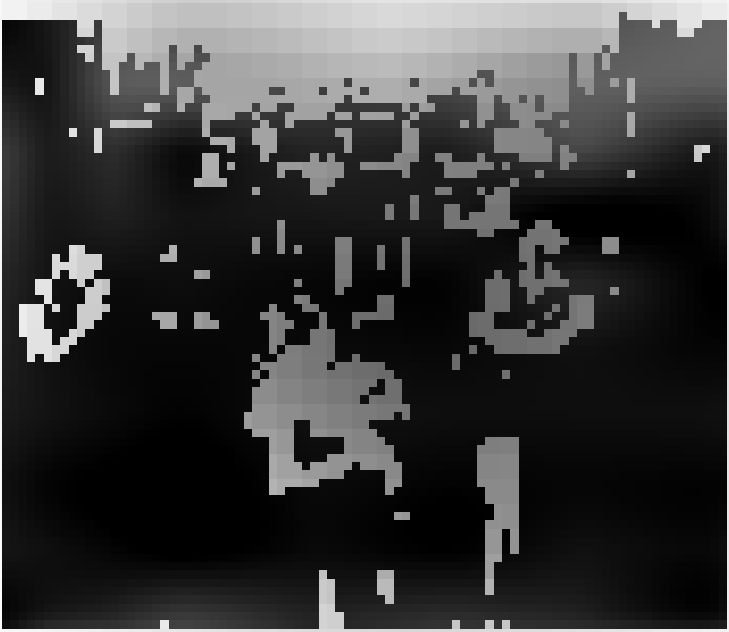

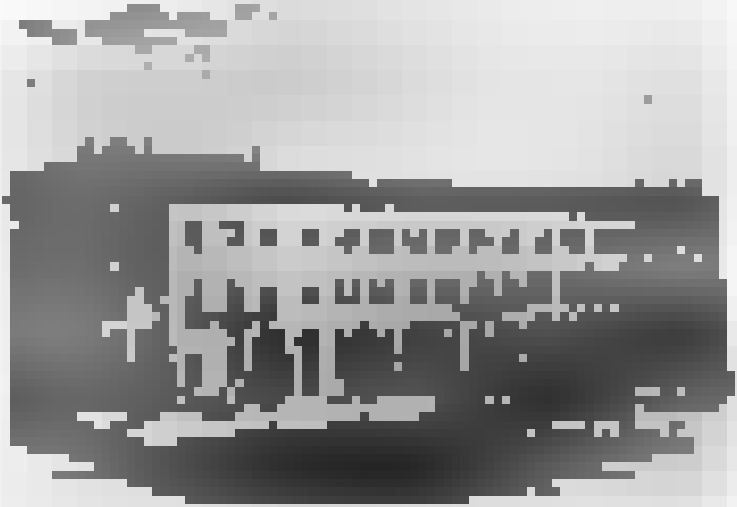

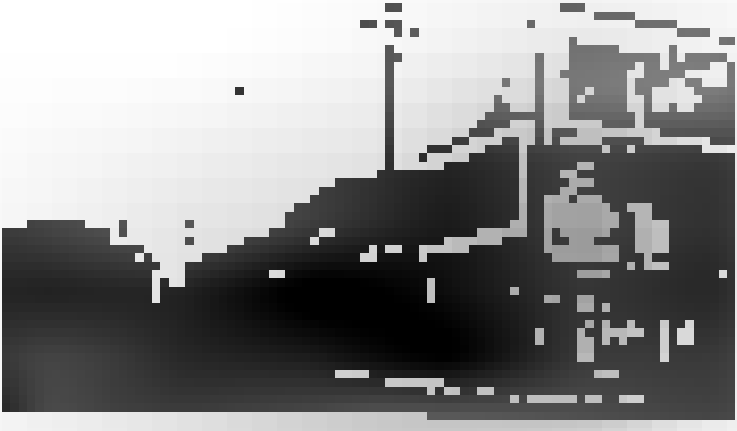

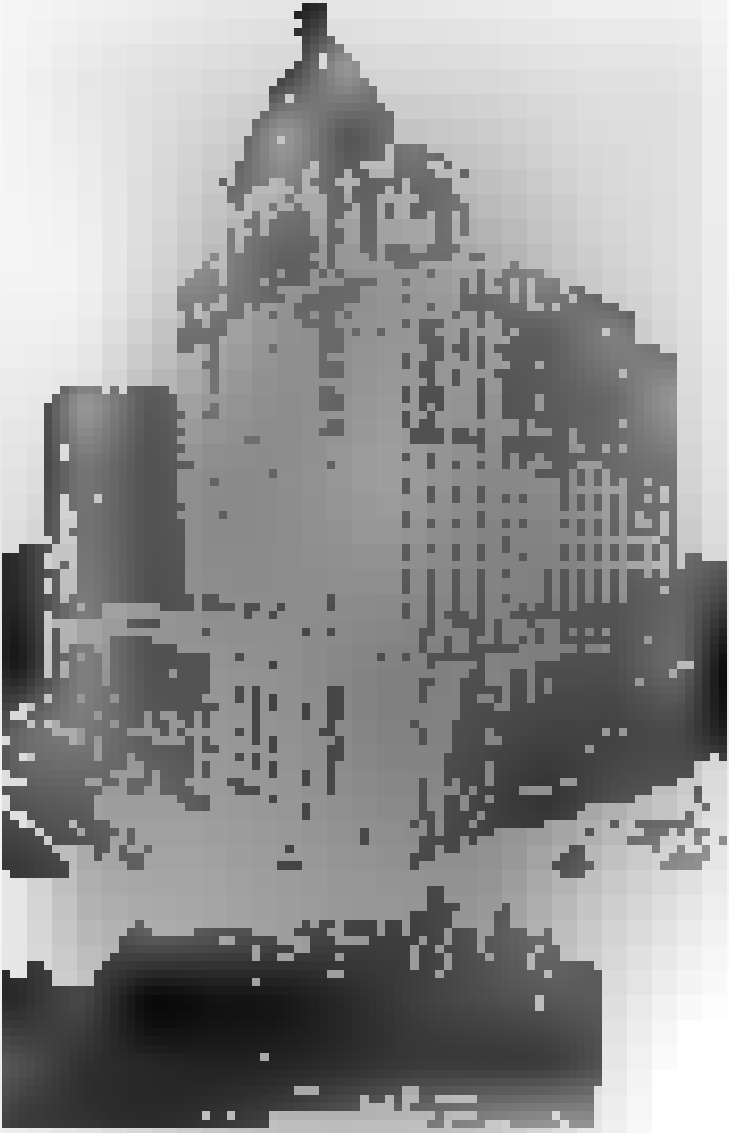

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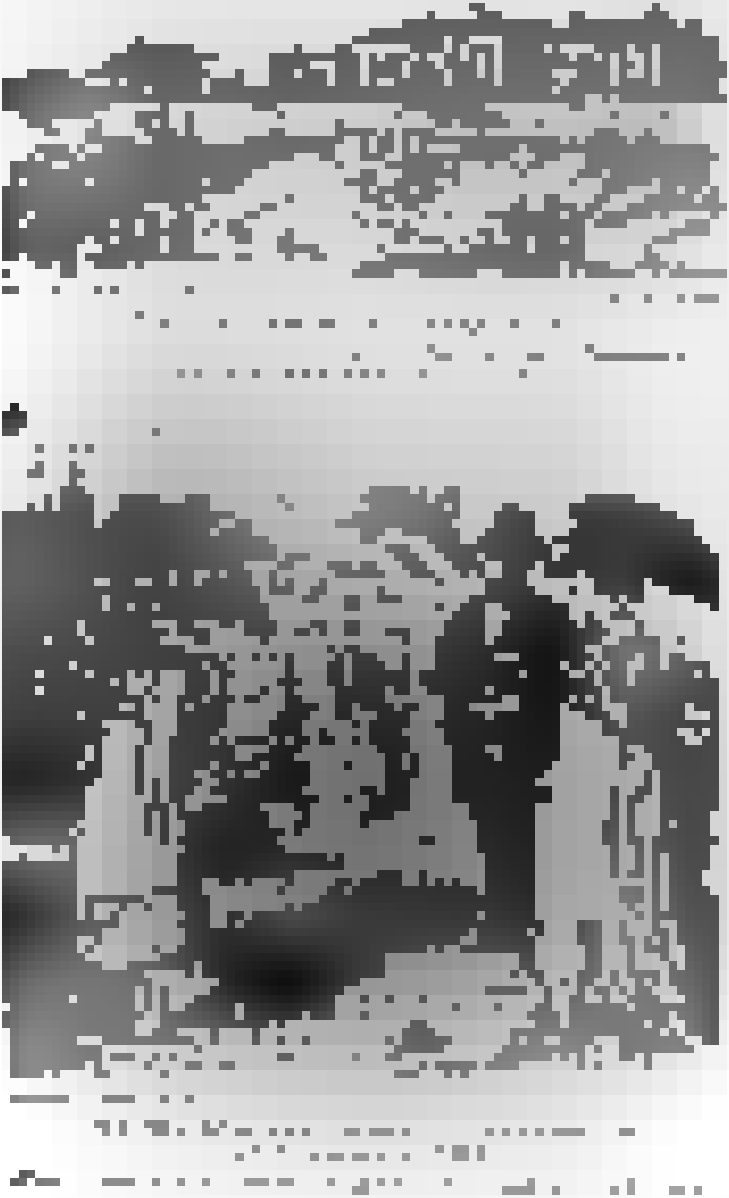

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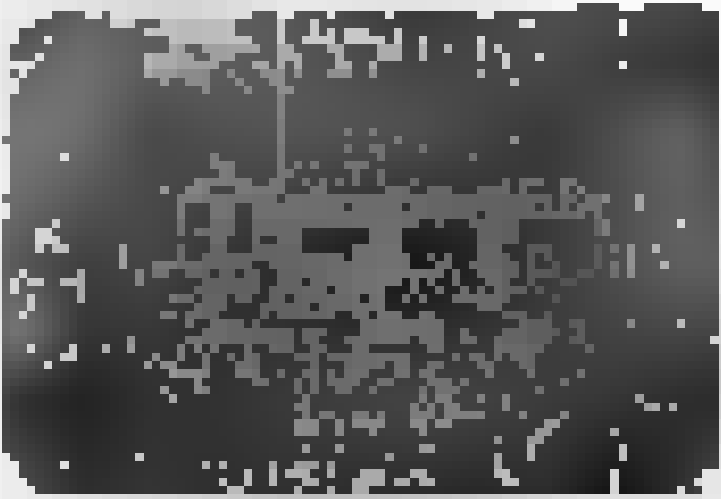

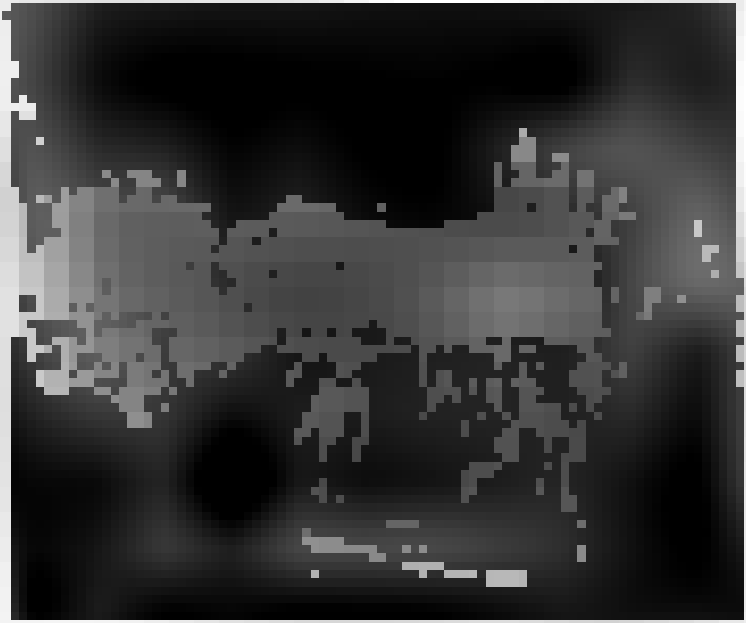

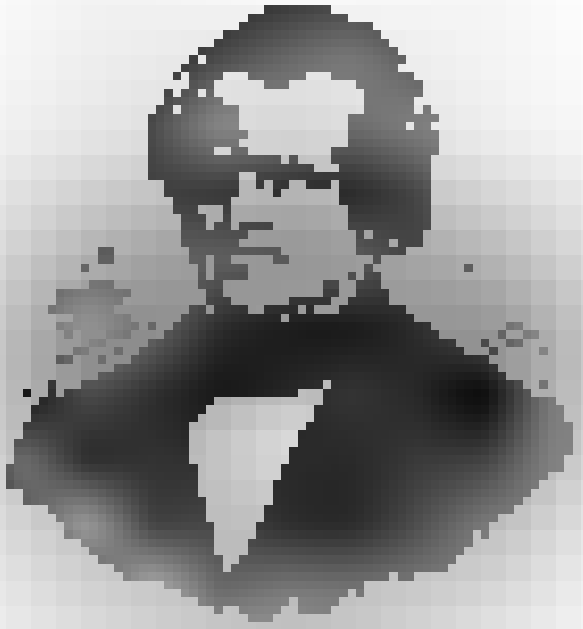

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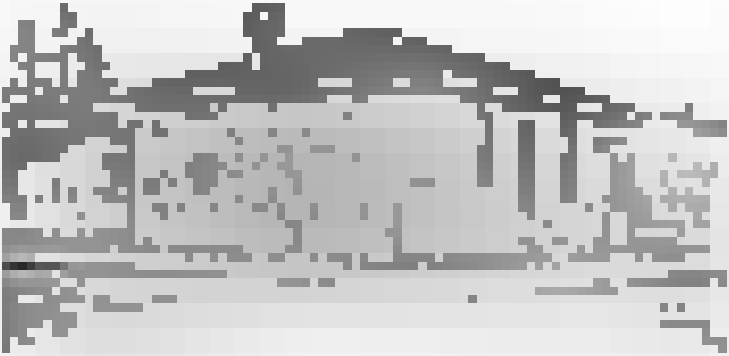

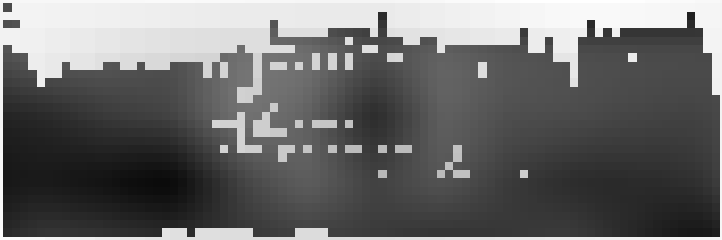

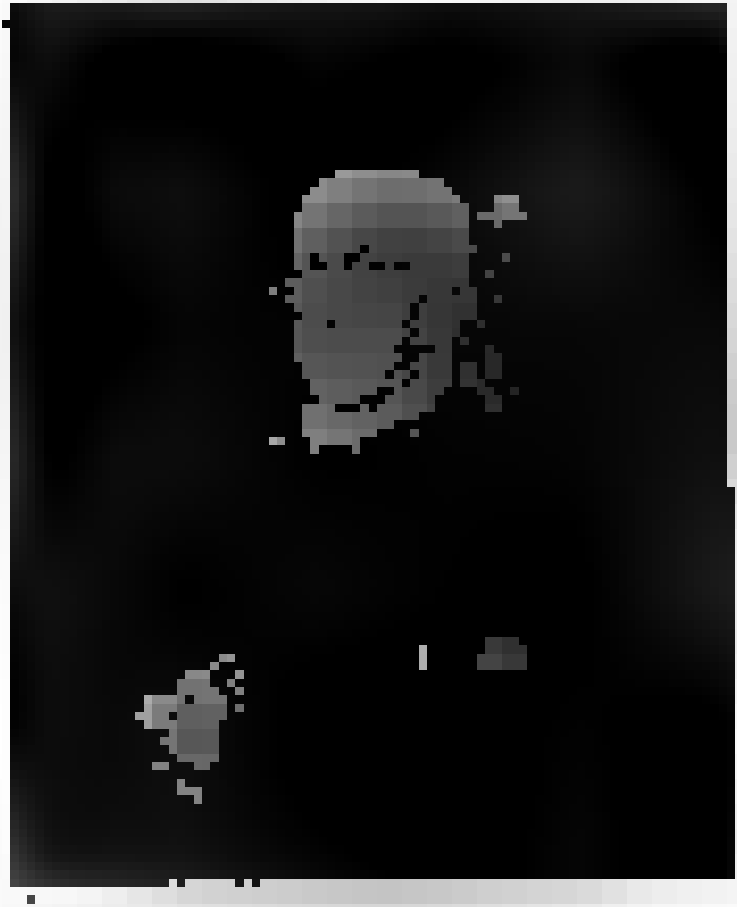

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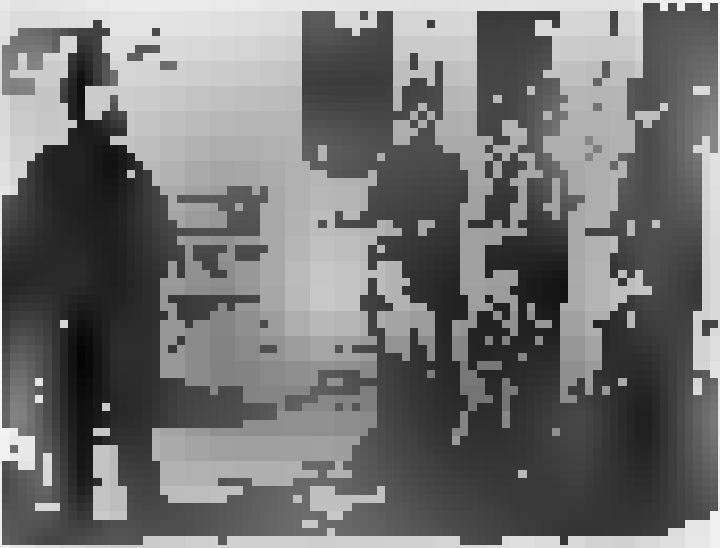

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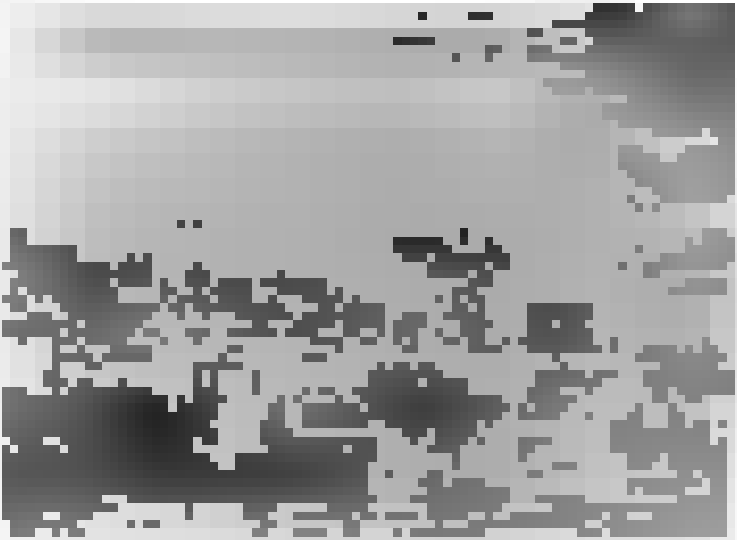

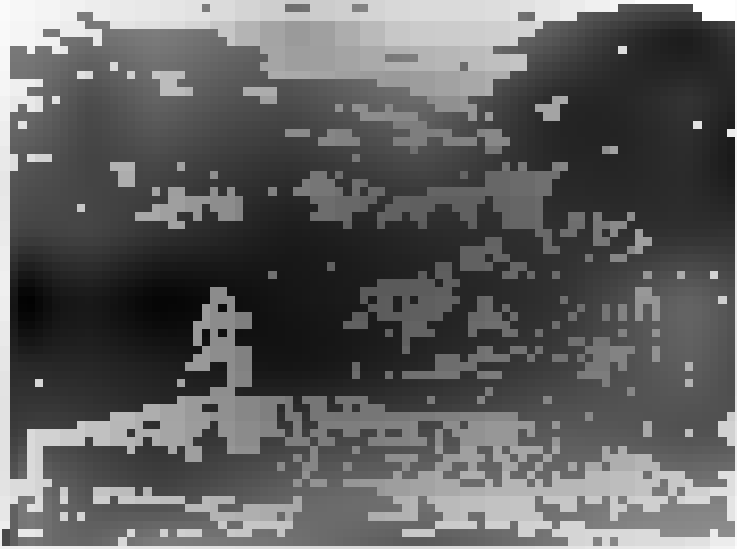

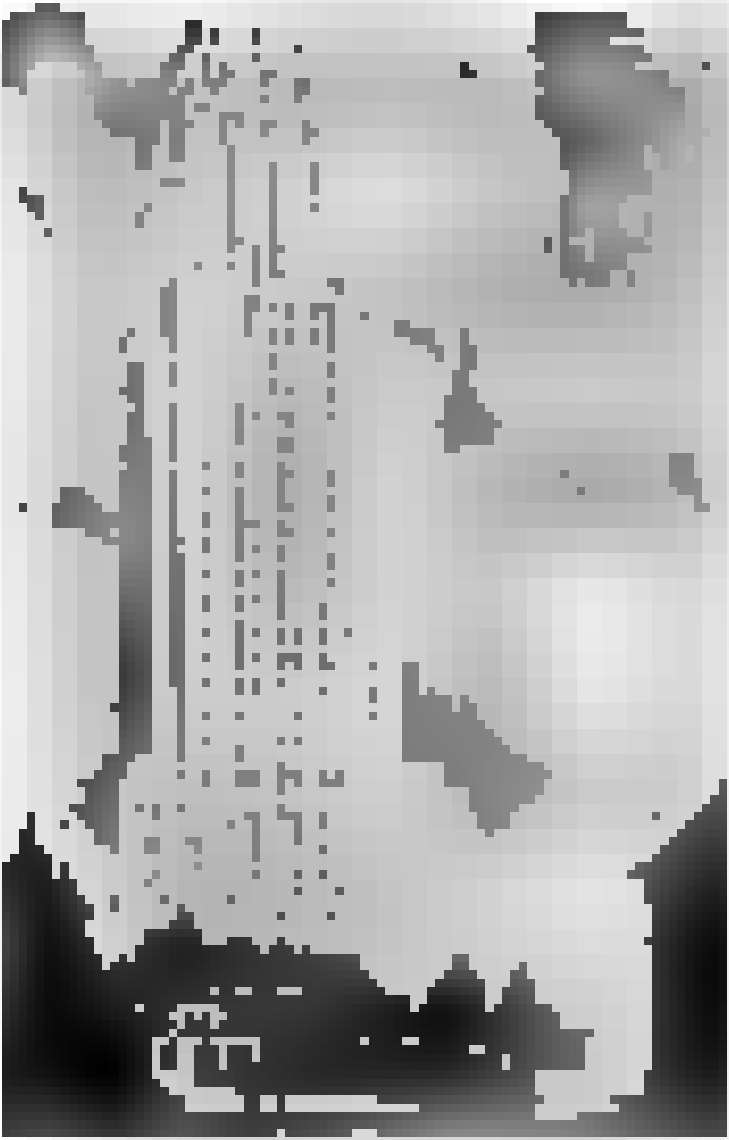

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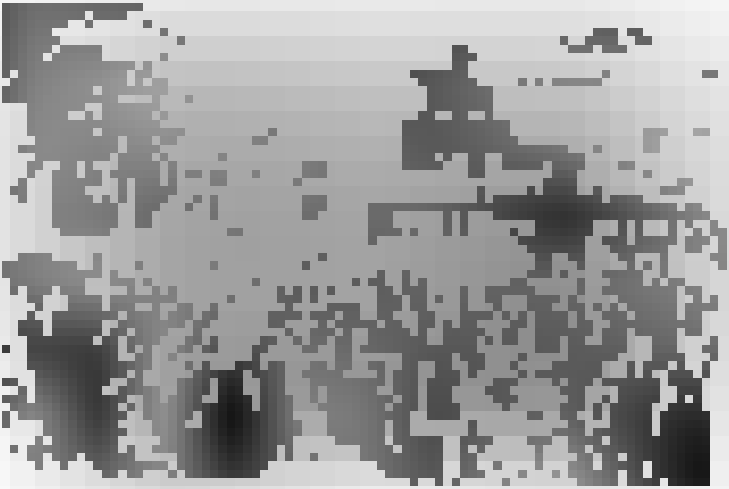

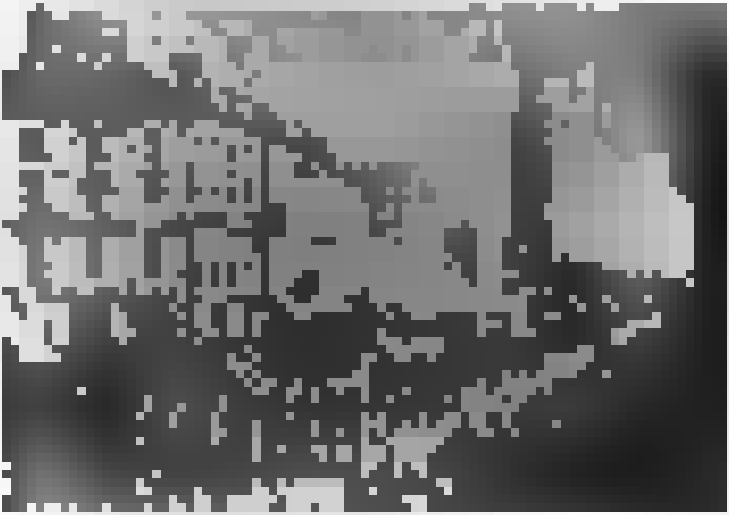

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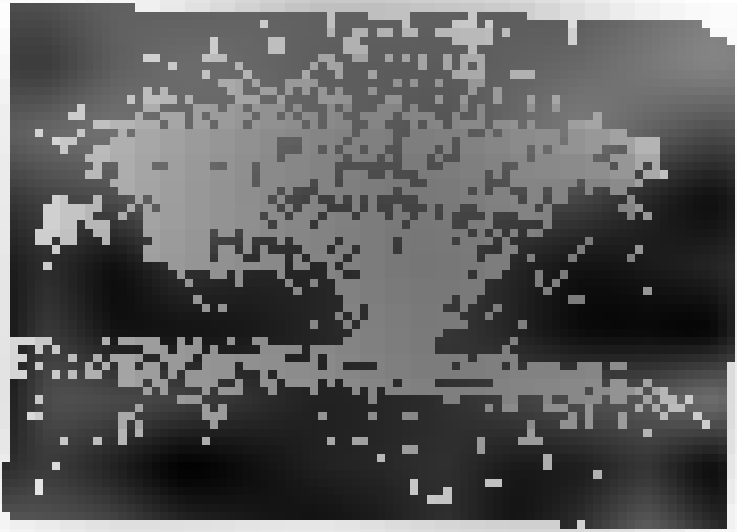

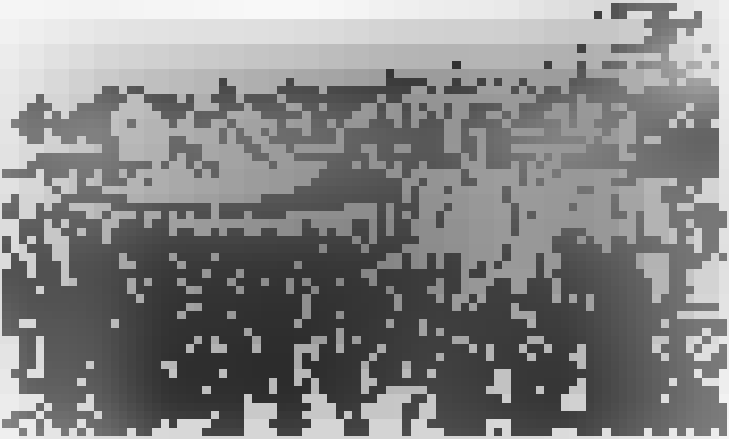

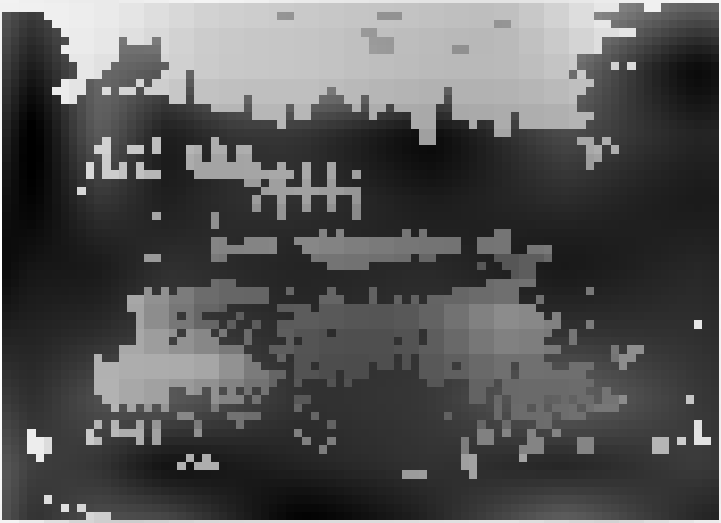

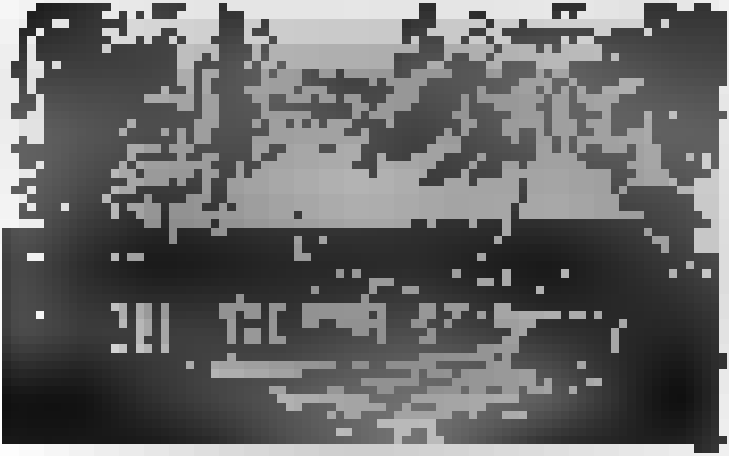

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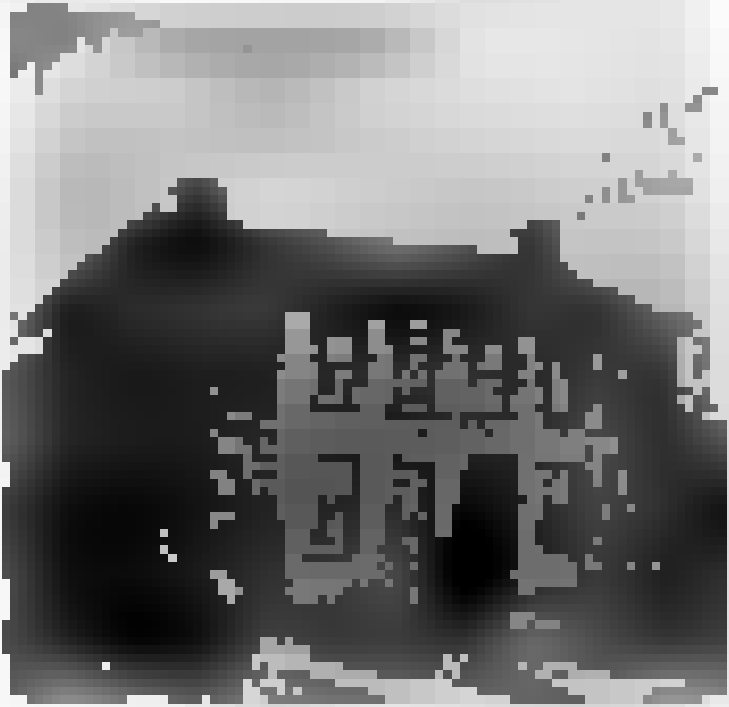

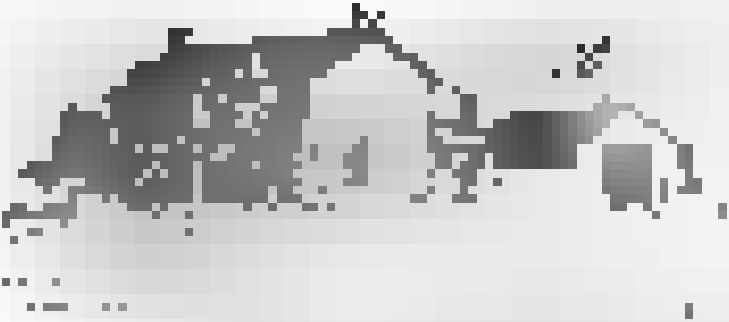

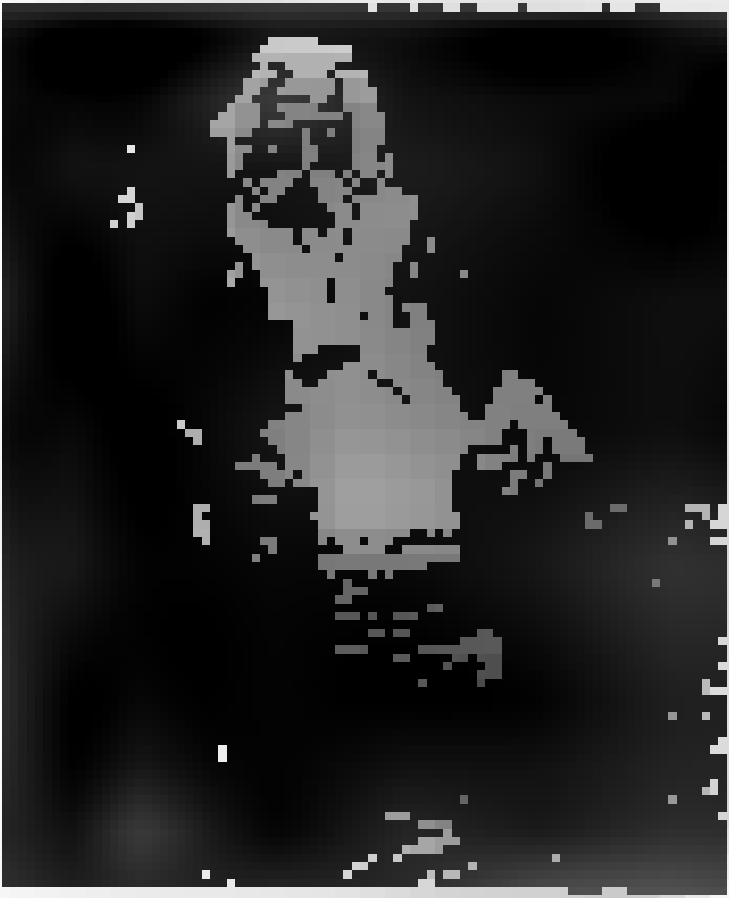

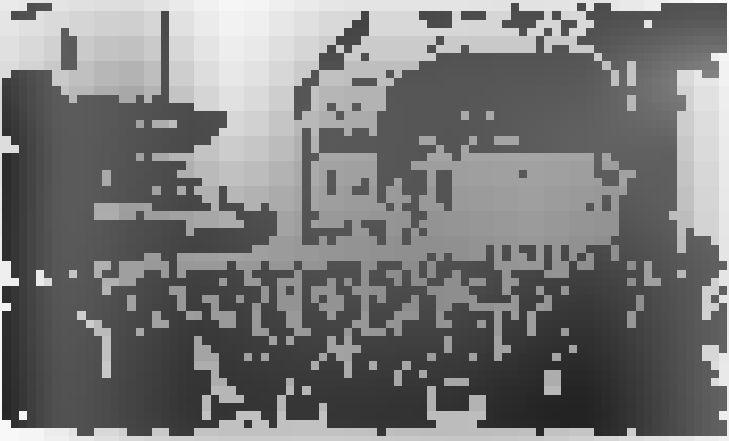

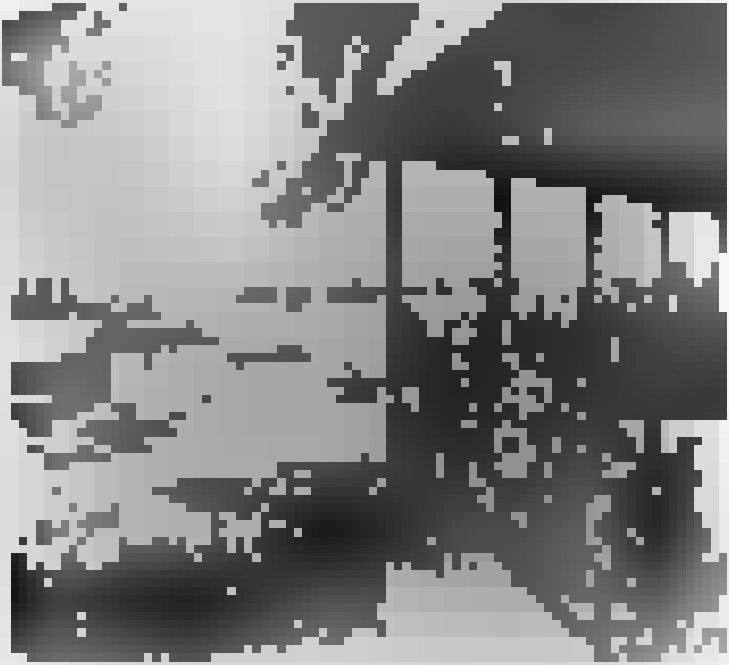

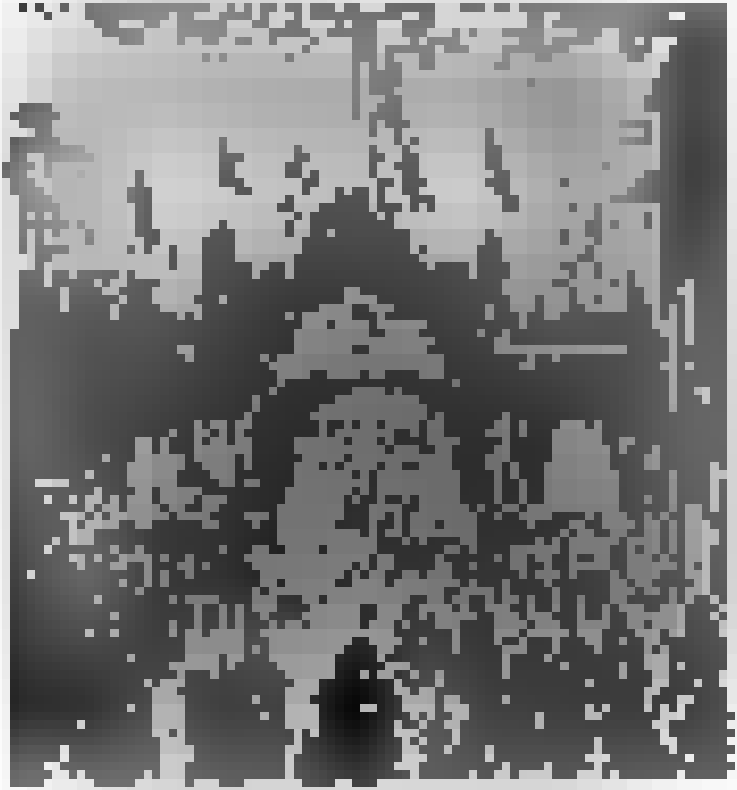

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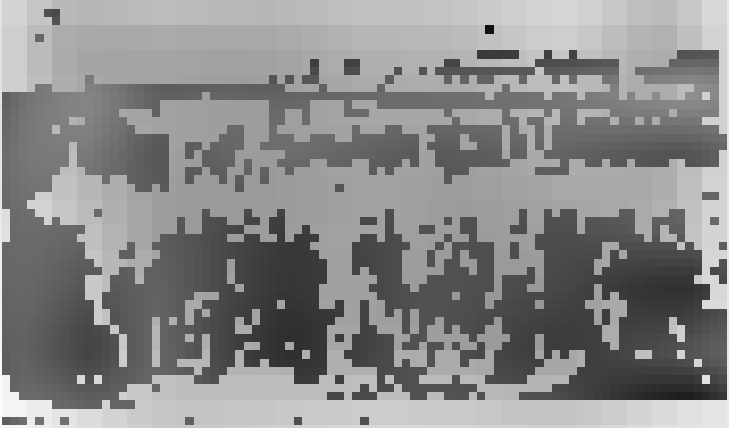

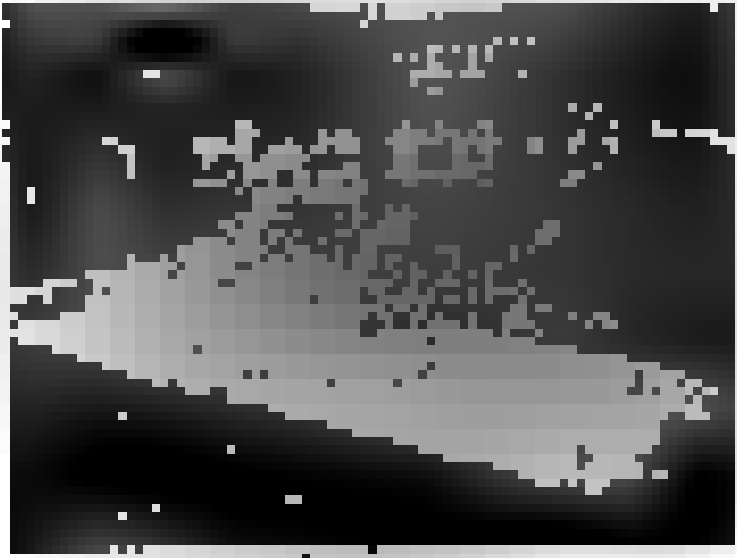

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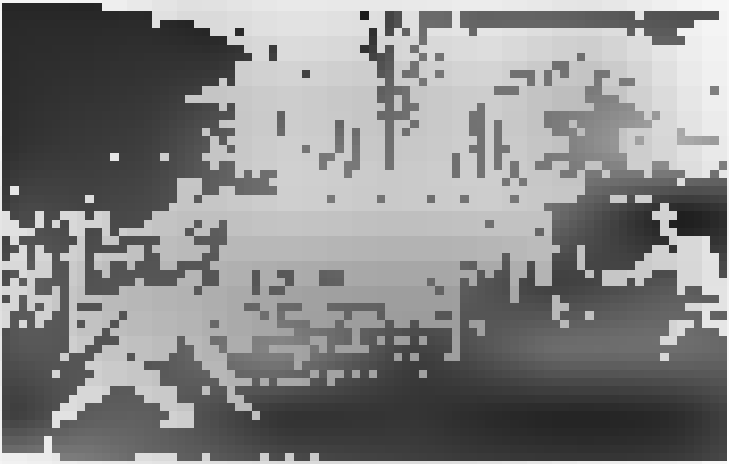

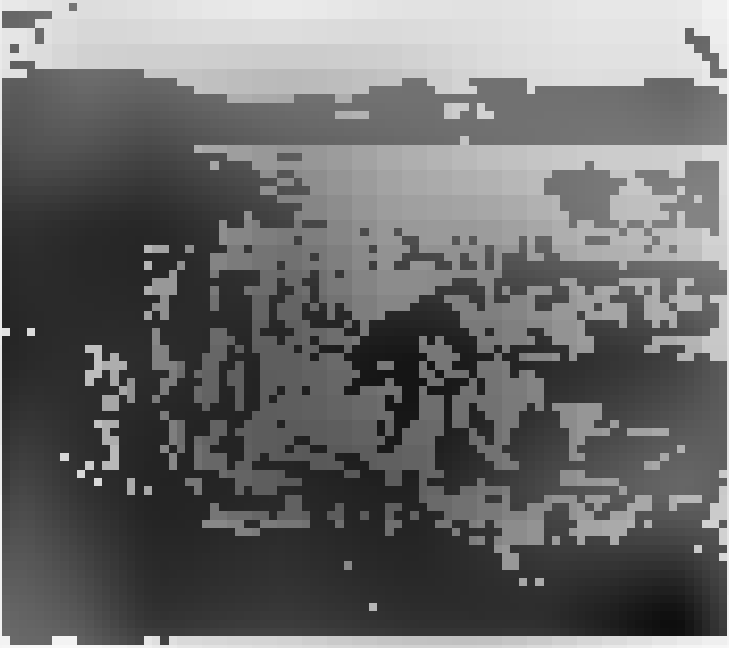

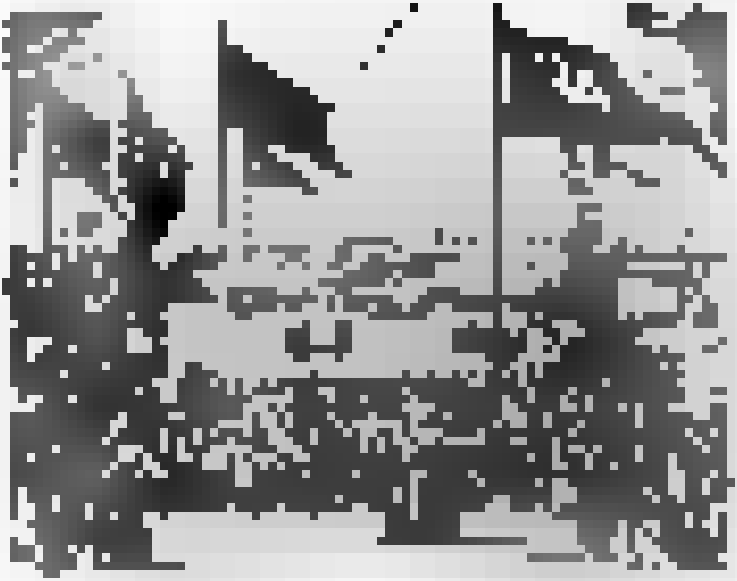

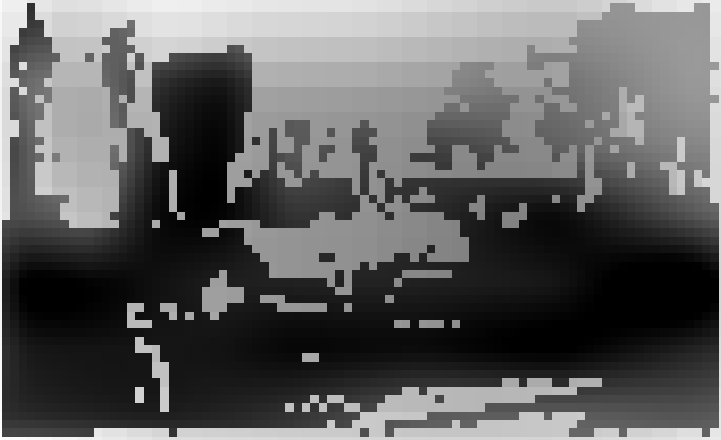

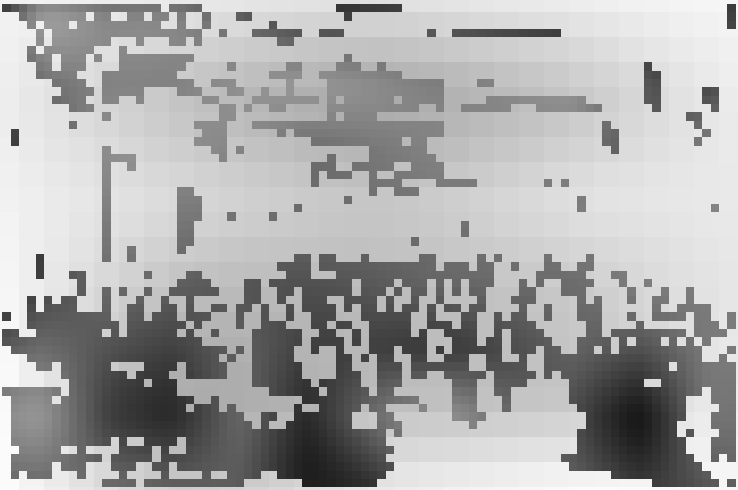

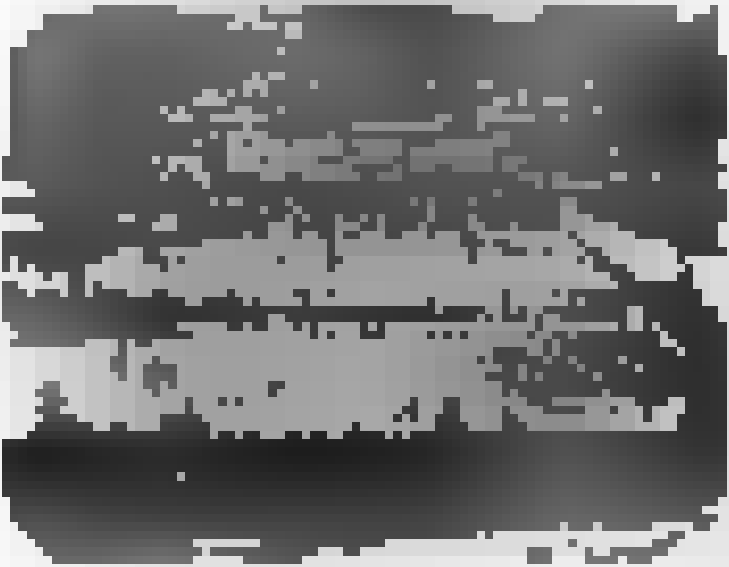

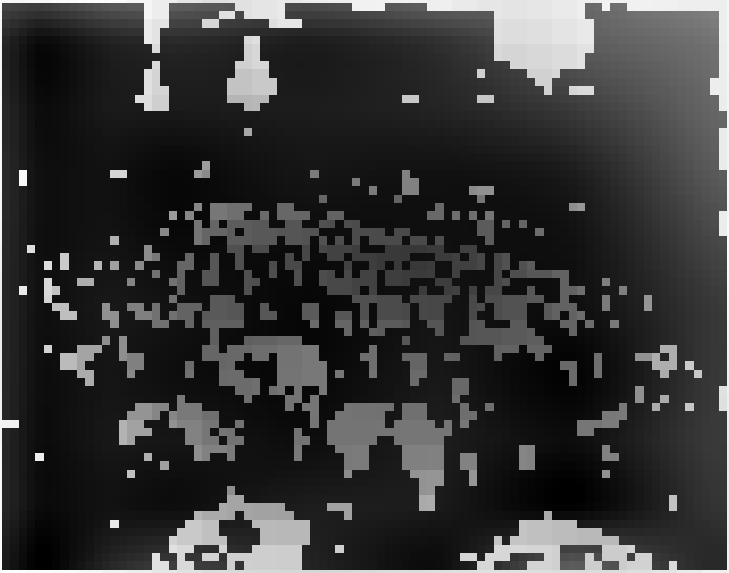

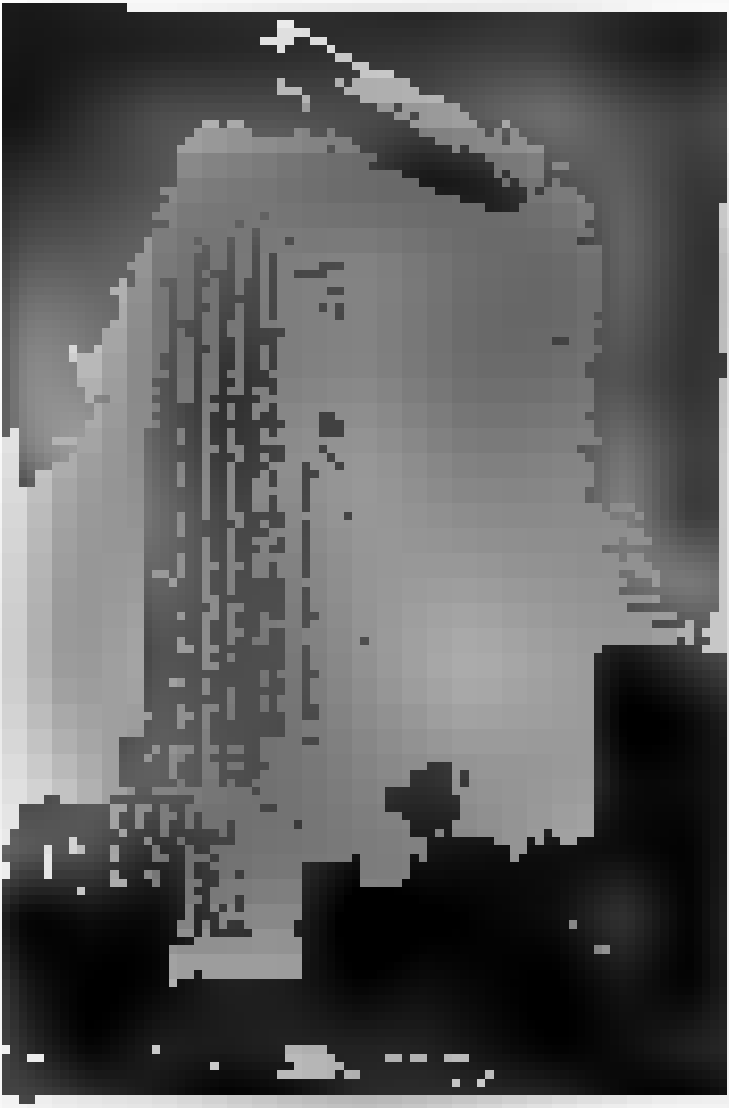

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